

February 8, 1989

Report of the Provincial Auditor (continued)

Mr. Chairman: — We can proceed at this point. Even though there is no quorum we can ask questions, and maybe one of the first things we could do is just meet *in camera* and ask Mr. Wendel just to run through the section on Parks and Renewable Resources and see if he's got any comments that might help us in our consideration of this department.

Mr. Wendel: — Mr. Chairman, paragraphs 17.00 to 17.03, those concerns remain for '88; the regulations haven't been amended yet.

The section from 17.04 to 17.09, the minister has responded to our concerns and advised that in future treasury board approval will be obtained if they undertake new programs.

Mr. Neudorf: — Mr. Chairman, could I just have you repeat those, please. I'm having trouble finding my place here.

Mr. Wendel: — Okay, page 85. Paragraphs 17.00 to 17.03, that concern remains. The regulations have not been amended yet.

Paragraphs 17.04 to 17.09, the minister has responded that in future they will get treasury board approval before they put new programs through the revolving fund, so that should not be a concern in the future.

Mr. Martens: — I have a question for Mr. Wendel. It's obvious that the departments ought to know that there's a process involved in some of this. Although that is a fact, I think sometimes there is a problem in them identifying all of the procedures and they maybe miss one or two. Do you supply . . . or do you, Mr. Kraus, supply to the departments the methods that they use?

And then the second question is, are they all the same? For each department, are the methods of reporting all of the processes of getting regulations to deal with the problems and getting the processes in place, are they all the same for every department, or are there different ones regulated by legislative Acts that set up different procedures that each one has to have? Is that why there's always this confusion?

Mr. Wendel: — Well perhaps I . . .

Mr. Kraus: — I'll speak to that. The department should administer their department in accordance with the Act, their own Act, if they have a departmental Act. And I believe that would be the case in all departments. Or else there might be some special program legislation for a program they're administering, but first they should be following that.

Secondly, we do have accounting and reporting policies that are issued by treasury board which give them further guidance in these kinds of affairs.

And finally there's the financial administration manual that would even give them more direction.

But to answer one of your questions, yes, there may be some differences in what a department would be expected to do with respect to a grant program. And if there were differences though, I suppose it would be indicated in the legislation. There might be differences, but by and large the principles are the same. The grants and payments of that sort or contracts over a certain dollar amount should require regulations. In this case there's undoubtedly regulations were required.

And I would argue that . . . I'm not sure whether I'm defending the departments here or just stating the fact. I suppose they get caught up in getting the job done and they forget that they're supposed to get a regulation passed, or whatever. It's not really an excuse though. I mean they should know their rules, particularly when you would think that many of them, at least the administrative people, have probably been in the government for quite a few years and should know the rules.

Mr. Martens: — That answers the question. I just was concerned that we get different kinds of . . . or a lot of these kinds of issues are dealt with in your report, and they all are typically the same or have an underlying current of being similar. And it concerns me that they always come up with just about the same kind of a problem.

Mr. Kraus: — I was going to say one other thing too, is that sometimes there's a decision to change the way they do things. And I think in this particular case they're proposing to remove these regulations if I'm not mistaken. I believe they've changed the way they're doing business and they'll . . . I mean, the decision may be fine to change, but they're a little slow in getting some of the paper work done. For example, they're proposing to make sure that these regulations are amended or removed in the spring of '89, for example. It's just a bit of tardiness on their part to get it done too. They know they should do it. They want to get the job done, and they don't worry about getting all the red tape taken care of.

Mr. Martens: — Thank you.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — On the first two sections here, 17.00 to 17.03, could you elaborate on the problem? I understand that the permits aren't being returned, but what kind of a problem does this create? Can you elaborate on the issue?

Mr. Atkinson: — The problem really is that the timber permits are being issued without the prior permits being returned or an affidavit signed. There's just no control to insure that, say, the permits are out there. They should be returned or an affidavit signed . . . (inaudible) . . . and new permits are being issued prior to that happening. That's the essence of the problem.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — And as I say here, the regulation 14(c) that's referred to here, they're intending to amend and delete.

Mr. Atkinson: — We've been informed that they are intending to amend or delete it, I'm not sure which.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — I had a question too in the year under review on the issue of polling or market surveys, the amount of money that might have been spent in the department. Was there any money spent on polling? Market research?

Mr. Chairman: — We can ask the departmental people when they're called in and they could advise you of that.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — All right.

Mr. Chairman: — If I might, just one further question on those 17.00 to 17.03. The minister's indicating that they're a department . . . or the minister's advised the department would develop firm plans to remove section 14(c). Do you know if that's been done yet? Any follow up to that?

Mr. Wendel: — Until 1988 it has not been done.

Mr. Chairman: — It has not been done?

Mr. Wendel: — No.

Mr. Chairman: — But as I read this, my interpretation would be here's a case of, well this section really isn't serving us well and it needs to be changed or withdrawn, and your concerns here are more about non-compliance with this than anything else perhaps.

Mr. Wendel: — That would be correct, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: — Should we call the department in?

Maybe I'll just back up. We never did formally move out of the auditor's report or current issues, but you had indicated that you might have some motions or some things you might want us to consider in that respect anyway, right? Okay.

Good morning. We might ask first of all if you would introduce your officials.

Public Hearing: Parks, Recreation and Culture

Mr. Cressman: — My name is Doug Cressman and I'm deputy minister of Parks, Recreation and Culture. On my left is Alan Appleby, the assistant deputy minister of renewable resources division. On his left is Keith Rogers, assistant deputy minister of sports and culture division. On my right is Dick Bailey, assistant deputy minister of sports services division. On his right is Ross MacLennan, executive director of operations division. And seated behind us, directly behind me is Bill Marr, director of management services branch. And on his right is Joe Warbeck, who's head of our accounting operation.

Mr. Chairman: — Thank you very much, Mr. Cressman. I want to, on behalf of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, welcome you and all your officials to the meeting this morning. As officials you should be aware that when you are appearing as a witness before a legislative committee, your testimony is privileged in the sense that it cannot be the subject of a libel action or any criminal proceedings against you. However, what you do

say is published in the minutes and verbatim report of this committee and therefore is freely available as a public document. And it should go without saying, but I'll say it anyway, you are required to answer questions put to you by the committee.

Where a member of the committee requests written information of your department, I ask that 20 copies be submitted to the committee Clerk who will distribute the document and record it as a tabled document. And I would ask you to address all comments to the chair, and again that's a request that I also make to all members of the committee. And having said that, we'll start with questions.

Mr. Hopfner: — Just a clarification, Mr. Chairman. When you're asking the department officials to answer the questions, that's questions that they are able to release for public knowledge. Am I correct? There are very fine lines. Now you could be asking questions of the bureaucrats that they would just as soon have the minister answer those questions. Are they aware of that?

Mr. Chairman: — If I might on that, the ruling in the committee basically has been is that questions be put about the year in question, in this case the 1986-87 *Public Accounts* and the Provincial Auditor's report as it pertains to the department. In addition thereto, we're not asking officials to give us any policy interpretation; that is to say, why the minister or why the government might want to do certain things. But I think outside of that the officials have an obligation to answer any and all questions of facts related to these public accounts.

Mr. Hopfner: — To the best of their ability.

Mr. Chairman: — Yes. The general process has been quite informal. Members ask the questions unless other members of the committee say, well that's an inappropriate question, in which case then the committee should decide whether or not the question is appropriate and can and should be put. By the same token, you don't need to feel obliged to answer all the questions yourselves. You may want to delegate that kind of responsibility.

Mr. Cressman: — just a point of clarification as well before we start. We are an amalgamated department. We represent the '86-87 Departments of Parks and Renewable Resources and Culture and Recreation. So the question is, where are we going first? When you asked for questions, I wasn't sure where we were going to come from.

Mr. Chairman: — We had intended to start with Parks. Any questions?

Mr. Lingenfelter: — I had wanted to ask just a few general questions. First, I was wondering in the year under review whether or not any money had been spent in the department on market research or polling. That would be a very broad question, I guess, any kind of surveys or . . . that I guess I would include the game surveys that would have been done in terms of hunting licences or things like that. I'm not even sure what all you might think about doing market research on, but I'd like to know how

money was spent in the year under review on that kind of issue.

Mr. Cressman: — Our figures indicate that we spent \$20,000 on a park visitor survey that year. We were interested in collecting information on park visitors and their activities.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Would that have been done right at the park entry or exit, or would that have been a mail-out in general?

Mr. Cressman: — That was done right at the park, right within the park.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Just the one survey. Would it be possible to get a copy of that, of the survey itself?

Mr. Cressman: — The survey document, the actual questionnaire?

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Yes.

Mr. Cressman: — I don't think there's a problem. We can provide that.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — And the company that did the survey, was it done by the park employees, or was it done by a company?

Mr. Cressman: — It was done internally. Our own staff did that.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Okay. If you'd get us a copy of that.

Mr. Cressman: — Yes, and as I understand it we would . . . I don't have a copy with me. We can get a copy. We provide that to the chairman, is that . . . and 20 copies.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Yes. Now this would have been a market survey as such. The other question I guess that I wanted to ask is: in terms of polling, the direct question of polling, was there any polling done in the department?

Mr. Cressman: — No.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Of the residents of Saskatchewan at large or anywhere else.

Mr. Cressman: — No.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — The other question I wanted to ask deals with the travel done by first of all by the minister. Can you give us a list of trips that may have taken place, and I want to know now out of province as opposed to travel that would have been done internally within the province visiting parks or wherever. Also when you're giving that answer if you could tell us who was with the minister, the names of the people, total cost of the trip, the destination, number of days, and just a brief explanation of what the purpose of the trip was.

Mr. Cressman: — On April 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 the minister went to attend the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers meeting in Ottawa. The total cost of the trip was \$4,292.63. He was accompanied by Kathryn Wiegiers,

John Law, and Paul Brett.

On May 6, 7, and 8 of '86 he attended a wildlife colloquium in Ottawa where there was a discussion on the North American waterfowl management plan. He was accompanied by Kathryn Wiegiers and Dennis Sherratt, and the total cost of the trip was \$3,016.85.

On June 17, 18, and 19 he attended a parks ministers' meeting with federal and provincial ministers in Ottawa. The cost of the trip was \$4,960.90. He was accompanied by Kathryn Wiegiers, John Law, Alan Appleby and Dennis Sherratt.

On July 21, 22, 23, 24, and 25 he attended a Canadian Council of Forest Ministers meeting in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Total cost of the trip was \$3,979.93, and he was accompanied by myself and Paul Brett.

On January 24, 25, 26, and 27 of '87 he attended a Canadian Council of Forest Ministers meeting to launch the national forestry awareness program. Total cost of the trip was \$4,635.10. He was accompanied by Kathryn Wiegiers, John Cook and myself.

On March 8 and 9 of '87 he attended a Canadian Council of Forest Ministers' meeting in Toronto. Total cost of the trip was \$2,416.15. He was accompanied by Kathryn Wiegiers and myself.

On March 19 through 26 he attended the 52nd North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Quebec City. Total cost of the trip was \$3,452.25. He was accompanied by Kathryn Wiegiers and Dennis Sherratt.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Now you give the total cost of the trip. Is that for the minister, or would that include the staff that went as well?

Mr. Cressman: — That includes the staff that went as well.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — So that would be the total entourage that went and their total expenses.

Mr. Cressman: — That's right.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Would that include air fare? I would expect it would.

Mr. Cressman: — Yes.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — The next question then. This would be the last one that I intend to do right now, but would deal with contractual services that the department would have been involved in, in the year under review. Have you got a complete list of contracts that would have been engaged during that year under review?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes, we have a complete list of the contracts.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Could you make that available to us?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes, we can make that available.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Okay. Have you got it with you? I've got some questions that will flow from that, and if I . . . I guess what I'd ask is that you give that to us and then I'll stop questioning and wait until we get a copy of it and then we can . . .

Mr. Cressman: — I don't have 20 copies with me. I can give you one copy now if that's all right.

Mr. Anguish: — In the department in the *Public Accounts* on page 351, it's listed as payees under \$10,000, and it amounts to over \$2 million. Can you tell me what the bulk of that would be made up from?

Mr. Cressman: — Sorry, I'm not sure I understand.

Mr. Anguish: — Well there's listed "Other expenses" and there are a number of companies who have been paid, they're listed, that have been paid amounts of over \$10,000, and at the end of the statement it has payees under \$10,000, and that amounts to 2.2 million. It seems fairly high for the department, and I'm wondering if there's one single company or groups of companies or an item of expenditure that makes up the bulk of that.

Mr. Cressman: — No, just all of that entire amount is made up of payees who would have received less than \$10,000 per job done. So it could range everywhere from people doing individual work for us for \$500 on up through to close to \$10,000. So it'd be quite a long list of those.

Mr. Kraus: — If I could just add to that, if there was any particular party that received more than \$10,000, that would have been printed, so each party would have had to receive less than 10,000.

Mr. Anguish: — I understand that, Mr. Kraus. I'm wondering though if there's one type of contract work that would make up the bulk of that 2.2 million, or is it just such a wide cross-section of activities that were paid out of that pool that you couldn't even try and list what the number one item would be that those payments went out to.

Mr. Cressman: — No, that deals with a great diversity of things, everything from the work we do in running the parks to any other area that we're in.

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Minister, I'm sure that you're familiar with the movement towards leasing out of park facilities in various places throughout the province, and I'm wondering what the department's role is in determining what tenders or what proposals are accepted. Is it the sole discretion of the department or is it a combination of other departments that finally award contracts to take over parks and golf courses?

Mr. Cressman: — We as a department are the ones that award the contracts, as opposed to us in conjunction with someone else. However, we consult with other departments when we're looking at awarding a contract, for example the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. At this point in time we would consult with them.

Mr. Anguish: — The final decision though rests with your department?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes. Or I should say it depends on the size of the actual activity, it can go to cabinet where the decision is made.

Mr. Anguish: — Well take for example The Battlefords Provincial Park and the activities that are ongoing there. Is that solely your decision as to who the tentative, I guess, contract is awarded to in that case?

Mr. Cressman: — Could you tell me the activities you're mentioning in particular, because in the year under review I'm not sure that there were activities in The Battlefords park.

Mr. Anguish: — Well it seems to me that there was a tender to provide golf carts which started sometime, I believe, in the fiscal year that's under review. And secondly, there was a tender calling for proposals for private development within the park. And I'm fairly certain that those also happened in the fiscal year that's under review as well.

Mr. Martin: — Point of order, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: — Point of order, Mr. Martin.

Mr. Martin: — You asked that very same question in estimates last year, the very same question having to do with golf cart tender, and Colin Maxwell told you then that it was a sealed tender. There were two tenders submitted.

Mr. Chairman: — What does this have to do with a point . . . Is that a point of order?

Mr. Martin: — Well then you can rule if it isn't a point. I just wanted to make the point.

Mr. Chairman: — Well that's not a point of order.

Mr. Martin: — Well are you ruling the point of order out of order then?

Mr. Chairman: — I'm saying that's not a point of order.

Mr. Martin: — Okay, fine.

Mr. Chairman: — And it's not a point of order well taken. I'll certainly put your name down if you want to ask questions.

Mr. Anguish: — There was also a tender calling for proposals of private developments within The Battlefords park. And it's hard to tell exactly what year these would fall into public accounts, but certainly it's now taken place over almost three years, coming into this season.

And the developers that you awarded the contract to — you're saying that you have the sole discretion to do that — still have not been able to put together the financial resources to honour their proposal. And I suppose I'm wondering at what point could you make a decision to say, look, you've got enough time to raise the money;

they've tried everything from selling lifetime \$10,000 memberships to venture capital corporation, neither of which have worked, and now they're looking for funding outside of the province of Saskatchewan to continue with their proposal to make an all-season development at The Battlefords Provincial Park.

So I suppose my question on this specific item to you is how long do you wait and still have your employees run the park in the interim while these entrepreneurs are seeking out funds to go ahead with their development?

Mr. Cressman: — Mr. Chairman, I find that a particularly difficult question to deal with because the actual leasing activity I believe that Mr. Anguish is talking about didn't happen in the year under review.

Mr. Neudorf: — Not only that, Mr. Chairman, but I would suggest that, on a point of order if that's necessary, that the question now is leading to an opinion on behalf of the witness. And I don't think that he's in a position to speculate on something like that because it will become a policy decision as to when the minister decides what's going to happen. And certainly it does not address the function and the purpose of this committee.

Mr. Chairman: — I didn't get that sense, but it's kind of academic if it's not dealing with the year in question. He asked a question and the deputy said that it's not dealing with the year under review, and that none of the question is applicable to the year under review. This is what I understand him to say. Is that correct?

Mr. Cressman: — That's right.

Mr. Anguish: — You're telling me there were no activities at all regarding the tendering out of some services or awarding contracts for some services in The Battlefords Provincial Park? There was no discussion of that in your department in the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987. Is that correct?

Mr. Cressman: — The specific things that you asked about, Mr. Anguish, the contract for the golf course, nothing was happening in the year under review that I'm aware of. The contract for the golf carts was awarded in fiscal '87-88. And I believe — and the fellows are just checking that now — I believe there were some contracts for sewer and water in fiscal '86-87. They're checking that now.

Mr. Anguish: — For sewer and water expenditure to the provincial park?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes.

Mr. Anguish: — But it had nothing to do with contracting out any services within the park?

Mr. Cressman: — No, not that I'm aware of.

Mr. Anguish: — Contracts may not have been awarded and that's why you say it doesn't deal with this fiscal year, but are you telling me that there was no correspondence, no discussions with any officials in your department concerning the commercial enterprises that were looking

at developing in the park and preparing for . . .

Mr. Neudorf: — Mr. Chairman, I find that totally out of order, a question like that, when he's going to be asking whether there are discussions in the privacy of the minister's office as to what the policy's going to be in some future. We're here to perform a very specific function, and I'll just quote a very eminent parliamentarian here who states:

The purpose of the Provincial Auditor is to make sure that the expenditure of the public dollar is carried out according to the statutory and other dictates of parliament or the legislature.

I get that from *Hansard*, April 2, 1981 by the Hon. Roy Romanow. And that is the dictates of this particular committee. Let's stick to the facts and stick to that premise, and then I think we'll do nicely.

Mr. Chairman: — If I might just on your intervention, Mr. Neudorf, first of all I want to point out this is the Public Accounts Committee and we are not the provincial auditors, and that our line of questioning may well be different than that which the auditor has. We may well be concerned about how well money has been spent.

Mr. Neudorf: — That's not our concern . . . (inaudible) . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Oh yes. Oh yes, it is.

Mr. Neudorf: — The value for money spent is a relative matter. That depends on your objectives and my objectives as at different sides of the House. So don't tell me that we're going to sit here and pass judgement as to the value of money spent. That's not the dictates of our committee.

Mr. Chairman: — No, we may well want to determine that and we may well want to ask questions. We may well want to ask questions that allow us to make some evaluation that way.

Mr. Neudorf: — There is a different forum for that, Mr. Chairman, and we certainly respect you . . .

Mr. Chairman: — I have the floor. I have the floor, okay? I listened very patiently while you were talking. I didn't interrupt.

Mr. Anguish asked some questions about discussions in the department. He didn't ask about what was being said in the minister's office, like you implied. I think it's fair for him to ask if there were . . . he's concerned about a particular thing, and he's simply asking if there was any activity in the department in the year under review on that particular matter. And I think it's legitimate for him to ask that. I think that if he were to ask, well what was said in discussions between you and the minister? well that might not be appropriate. But certainly he's trying to ascertain some facts here about what activity took place in a department on a particular subject. That's fair ball.

Mr. Neudorf: — What you just said, Mr. Chairman, part of it, concerns me very, very greatly, that you are prepared as Chairman to allow this committee to indulge

in value for money spent. You just finished telling me that you are prepared to let this committee decide on how well money has been spent, and that concerns me a great deal because you are usurping the authority of the chair if you allow that to happen.

There is a different forum in this Legislative Assembly for discussing value for money spent, and I suggest to you this is not the one.

Has the money been spent with proper legislative authority? You have my fullest co-operation along that line.

Mr. Chairman: — Mr. Prebble. I take it this is all on the point of order.

Mr. Prebble: — It is. It is, Mr. Chairman. I want to speak to the point of order and say that it's not the role of this committee to make the final determination about whether money has been spent wisely or not. But it is not inappropriate for members of this committee to ask questions about how money was spent, and we may well make determinations about the value of that outside the committee on the basis of information acquired during questioning in the committee. Now that is not inappropriate, and I think that's a very important difference.

Mr. Neudorf: — As long as its within the legal mandate.

Mr. Prebble: — Yes. And therefore I don't feel that Mr. Anguish's questions were out of order. But I do feel that it would be out of order if we attempted as a committee to reach a deliberation on whether or not money had been wisely spent without acknowledging collectively that that is one of the additional roles of our committee.

Mr. Hopfner: — On the point of order, Mr. Chairman, I'd like you to clarify the point for me then as to whether we're here to discuss the legal spending within the departments, or if we're here to discuss the policy. And upon your answer there, then I will get back to speaking on the point of order.

Mr. Chairman: — Well we're here to discuss . . . we're here to ask questions about all the expenditures that you see for Parks and Renewable Resources for the fiscal year '86-87, and furthermore to discuss any comments the Provincial Auditor may have made or has made with respect to the department in his report, and we're asking.

Mr. Hopfner: — Then I'd like you to make a ruling, Mr. Chairman, because I feel that Mr. Anguish has been . . . his questioning was more on a question of policy line than it had been on a question of expenditure. And if you were following the question, or if you go back in the verbatim, you would see that he was questioning policy, not the actual spending.

So if you were to be fair in your assumption and would listen to the line of questioning, you would call the member to order.

Mr. Chairman: — Mr. Lingenfelter, on the point of order.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well on the point of order, it seems to me what is happening here again is basically an attempt by members of the government to cover up. What we're dealing with here is trying to get some information on a buddy of this government who got a contract for some golf carts in North Battleford, a defeated cabinet minister. That's what we're talking about.

Why are you so sensitive if there's nothing to hide? If it's all above board, why don't you just say . . . answer the questions. He was given this much money for the golf cart contract; it was tendered in this manner; these are the other people who bid on it; they didn't get it because of this and this and this. What's the cover-up? Like, if it's legitimate . . .

Mr. Martin: — You asked the question last year in estimates and got the answer.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — I'm not directing my question to you; I'm talking to the chairman on the point of order. And the reason that I bring this up is because every time we get to an issue where you people have something to hide, then you start using the committee and saying we can't ask the question. Well if we can't ask the question on issues like this, this is how ministers in the federal government get put in jail for contract tendering and covering up.

A Member: — You're grandstanding.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — It's not grandstanding at all. It has to do with taxpayers' dollars.

A Member: — Ask the question.

Mr. Chairman: — I ask you to put your comments through the chair, Mr. Martin; you too, Mr. Anguish.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Like if the federal government in committees hadn't dealt with Mr. Gravel and had hidden behind the smoke-screens the way you people are doing today, he never would have been sentenced this week to a year in jail and a massive fine.

And I just say to you that every time we get to an issue where you people are doing something that even hints at misappropriating money — and we're not saying that you are — but in this case we would like to know the detail of that contract. Why did a former cabinet minister get the contract rather than other people who bid . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well then tell us what the other bids were and then we'll make that decision, not for our sake, but for the public who are paying the bill.

And I could go through the list of other Tory hacks who have gotten contracts in this government. And I say to you that every time we try to ask significant questions about that, you people use this committee and your majority to cover it up. And I say that's unfair, and it's not democratic.

The member from Rosthern in his heart of hearts, if he is an honest person, knows that, otherwise you wouldn't jump in every time we get close to one of your buddies. That's the only time you get involved. That's the only time you get involved. And I say to you that it's not the way we

should be conducting this committee, because if we can't ask any pressing questions about government spending where there may be misappropriation or contracting that favours your friends, then there's no reason for this committee to sit. Because that's what it's about, is the spending of public money.

And my friend from North Battleford has some concerns about a contract that was let in his constituency. All you have to do is answer the questions. If it was there and Mr. Myles Morin should have got the contract, then tell us all the detail. What's the problem? Well, tell us.

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Chairman, I have sat in this committee quite a few years already, and I've made this observation over and over again, that when you have to deal with things out of the context of the parameters of what this committee has the authority to investigate, and that's the auditor's report, the *Public Accounts*, we can ask questions all day on these *Public Accounts*. But the deputy has indicated that the matter was not under the year under review, and I don't think he has any authority to ask those kinds of questions. And that's the point of order.

And I think that we will hassle this thing through every instance there is if members have not the discipline within themselves to say, this is the year under review; ask those questions. And I think we are going to flounder in this committee for ever if that's the way we're going to run it.

I don't think that the committee has a problem with dealing with those questions, providing they are under the year under review, and that has to be consistent and it has to be maintained. And I think that's the only way to run it.

Mr. Hopfner: — Well, I concur with the member from Morse on what he had indicated, and basically, Mr. Chairman, if the questions are directed . . . If a direct question without a lead-in to whether or not there are assumptions that, because of what has transpired in 1987-88 was there any discussion in 1986-87, has nothing to do with the expenditure. It has something to do with ongoing talks, etc. But if there is a direct answer been given to the member under the year under review that there was no expenses and there was no moneys paid out in regards to his line of questioning, then the topic should be ended there.

When the member from Elphinstone gets off on his high horse on innuendoes and accusations against ministers and members of this committee, I tend to think that he's in a very, very narrow-minded capacity within this committee. And I cannot believe that he would even subject himself to speaking those kinds of accusations in this room.

We're here to discuss the report. If he sees, or if any of the members of this committee see some expenditures that may not be legitimate, that's what this committee's here for, just to ask those questions. And if he's got something directly to bring forth to this committee, then I challenge him to do so, or I ask him at the same time then to hold back on his tongue because he's walking a very narrow

line here in this committee.

Mr. Chairman: — Thank you for your well-chosen comments, Mr. Hopfner.

Mr. Muller: — Well, mine will be very short. I guess it's all been said. But I feel that the deputy minister answered the member from Battleford when he said that it wasn't the year under review; there was no moneys expended in that year on any contracts pertaining to what he's talking about in the North Battleford park.

I have to agree with Mr. Hopfner that the NDP member from Elphinstone bringing in federal members who have been prosecuted, and all that, is irrelevant to this committee. We're here to deal with the expenditure of money in Saskatchewan. And I mean, if we want to go back into the NDP hacks that got all kinds of things from government, from the NDP when they were in power, we could spend a lot of time at it. But I think that the line of questioning is out of order and I would ask the chairman to so rule.

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Chairman, I don't know how many rounds you're going to have members speak on the point of order.

I'd like to see you rule on the point of order so we can get back on to questioning of the department.

Mr. Chairman: — Yes, I'm prepared to rule.

Mr. Anguish: — And I can well accept that Mr. Muller says that there was absolutely no expenditure in the year under review, then the deputy minister made the appropriate response. However, I don't think it has to be a direct expenditure of money or contract awarded to someone. If there were employees within the department consuming their time and their energies and their travel in meeting about contracting out of services in provincial parks, then I think it is valid to in fact question the department on the items that I was asking questions.

In terms of Mr. Neudorf's remarks about that we only have the mandate to examine whether the legal authority was there to spend the money . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . or whoever made the comment, that's absolutely wrong. The Provincial Auditor has the mandate to examine whether or not the legal authority was there to spend money. And it's been a long-standing tradition of public accounts committees anywhere in Canada to examine value for money . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well it has been. You can check the record. You can ask for an opinion of the officers of the legislature if you want, but we do go beyond in this committee asking whether or not the department had the legal authority to spend that money. I don't think there's any question about that.

In fact this is the first time I have ever seen this question in the Public Accounts Committee. I've sat for four and a half years in Ottawa in public accounts and this was never an issue. It's never been an issue in the past in this committee in the province of Saskatchewan as far as I know.

And I think that all you're trying to do is every time

someone or some member or some committee gets close to something that's sensitive, you want to cut it off, you don't want to talk about it. just another example of you not wanting to be accountable to people in the province of Saskatchewan. What is it you're trying to hide? I don't think the point of order should continue on and on to debate the point of order. I want to get back at asking the department questions.

Mr. Chairman: — One more brief comment from Mr. Neudorf and then I want to rule.

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you very much for your indulgence, Mr. Chairman. I was going to just summarize what my point of order was all about but then unfortunately we had Mr. Anguish showing once again what danger a little bit of knowledge is. I would much rather take the word for the eminent scholar, Gordon Osbaldeston, and I suggest to Mr. Anguish that he read his articles on accountability, and perhaps then he will get to have an understanding of what Public Accounts Committee functions are all about.

And that is why, Mr. Chairman, one of the reasons why I brought up that suggestion yesterday about a review on the mandate of this committee, so once and for all we could put out very distinctly and clearly for all members in short form, simply written, so that we can all understand the mandate of this committee, not just some of us.

To summarize, Mr. Chairman, the point of order was based on two fundamental principles. The questions asked by Mr. Anguish were dealing and leading very strongly toward policy decisions — that is unacceptable. Secondly, it was not, and they were not, dealing with the year under review. It is those two points that I base my point of order on. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: — Thank you Mr. Neudorf. I want to deal first of all with the matter of the year under review and that narrow point. I would have to rule upon reflection that perhaps that the question is out of order but I don't state that very strongly.

A Member: — Either it is or it isn't.

Mr. Chairman: — It's out of order, but I would say, in commenting on that, that it would be appropriate for Mr. Anguish or any other member of this committee as opposed to asking, well were there general discussions in your department about this or that, I think it's fair to ask, was there any active planning with respect to this topic; were there proposals considered with respect to this topic; were there studies done or undertaken, examined with respect to this topic; that is to say, to try and pinpoint some particular activity that might have been taking place during the year under review, even if it's about something that subsequently transpired. I think that's a fair question to ask.

Anyway to ask generally about discussions, I would say that's out of order, but to ask and elicit information about particular things that might have been done in that department, activities and so on, that's legitimate if that was done during the year under review. That's point

number one.

The point of order also seemed to dwell on, more generally, the mandate of the committee. Now the committee doesn't have a text or a book that says, well this is your mandate, other than the 1964 report and as subsequently amended by the Legislative Assembly, agreed to in 1982.

And I want to read here from a copy of a report that was concurred in by the Legislative Assembly in November of 1982. November of 1982, if memory serves me correct, it was a Conservative government, NDP opposition, the chairman was Mr. Shillington.

The Assembly concurred in part in the following from the committee:

The written statement of role and responsibilities comprise a general statement of purpose and a list of issues that the committee is to examine and assess, report on to the legislature and follow up with the administration, including:

- (a) the reliability and appropriateness of information in the Public Accounts to provide a full and fair accounting of operations and financial transactions;
- (b) the collection of, and proper accounting for, all taxes and other revenues due;
- (c) the maintenance of expenditures with the limits and for the purposes authorized by the legislature;
- (d) the adequacy of the safeguards to protect assets from loss, waste, and misappropriation;

But I think more appropriately for our discussion here:

- (e) the regard for economy in the acquisition of goods and services;
- (f) the regard for efficiency in operations; and
- (g) the effectiveness of programs in achieving their stated objectives.

So my ruling is that the general line of . . . my ruling is that value for money, that's something that this committee can and should be considering if we go back to this '82 interpretation of our mandate that was agreed to by the Legislative Assembly. It's not stated that succinctly, it's stated in terms of economy and efficiency and that's certainly our role here.

But again, under the year under review, I invite Mr. Anguish to restate his question to ask about particular events that may or may not have occurred during the year under review.

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can you tell me whether or not there was any correspondence or discussions with departmental employees concerning the contracting out of services of The Battlefords Provincial

Park in the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes, the department considered what the options were, and on March 4 the department tendered for the contract, advertised a tender.

Mr. Anguish: — March 4, 1987?

Mr. Cressman: — 1987.

Mr. Anguish: — So then there was activity concerning the privatization of some services in the park during the fiscal year that's under review. Is that correct?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes.

Mr. Anguish: — Now from the time that — just so we get some sort of knowledge of the time frame that we're dealing with — how long would it take from the time the decision is made . . . you know, you've discussed the policy within the department, you've discussed it with the minister. From that point where you've made that decision, how long does the process usually take from having the idea to do it — whatever it is you want to do until that actually comes into place, if there's a contract awarded for someone to commercialize some activity within a park?

Mr. Cressman: — From the time the idea first comes up it's really impossible to give you an average. It depends on the complexity of the kind of thing that we're doing. It depends on the size of the contract actually being considered. It depends on the difficulty that proponents might have for obtaining financing. There's a whole number of variables there, so there isn't really a rule of thumb that we have.

Mr. Anguish: — What was the significant thing that happened on March 4, 1987?

Mr. Cressman: — On March 4, 1987 we tendered publicly for the provision of motorized golf carts in Battlefords park, with respect to your specific question.

Mr. Anguish: — And how many responses did you receive?

Mr. Cressman: — We didn't close the . . . I'm a little uncertain, Mr. Chairman. We didn't close that tender until April of '87, so in March of '87 we had no information. We had floated an ad calling for tenders. So I'm a little uncertain now of . . .

Mr. Chairman: — As of the end of the fiscal year there were no responses.

Mr. Cressman: — As of the end of the fiscal year there was no response. I shouldn't say there was no response; I don't know whether we've received any. We don't track.

Mr. Chairman: — The process is still ongoing.

Mr. Cressman: — Yes. So as I say, I'm a little uncertain about how to deal with this, given your conversation about the year under review.

Mr. Chairman: — I think he understands the answer.

Mr. Anguish: — Were there any discussions in the year under review with Mr. Morin, who is a former cabinet minister of this administration, by you or any of your department officials in respect to the contract?

Mr. Cressman: — None that my officials are aware of, or that I am aware of.

Mr. Anguish: — By March 4 when you had tendered for golf carts in The Battlefords Provincial Park, you must have had some idea as to the cost. What was the cost savings that you expected out of the decision to tender?

Mr. Cressman: — Mr. Chairman, what we were doing was we were re-tendering to replace a contract that had been in place on golf carts, so it was normal practice for us to do it. It wasn't that we were expecting a savings; we were just replacing a contract that had expired.

Mr. Anguish: — Who had the contract prior to the awarding of the new contract?

Mr. Cressman: — H.D. Golf Carts Ltd.

Mr. Anguish: — And how long have they had the contract?

Mr. Cressman: — From May 5 of '82 until October 31 of '86.

Mr. Anguish: — During this same fiscal year were there discussions, correspondence, within the department concerning the contracting out of other services as operation of the golf carts, building a new facility, remodelling facility? Did anything happen during this fiscal year in regard to that?

Mr. Cressman: — Mr. Chairman, we're having some difficulty confirming our information on that. Generally we've had fairly broad-ranging discussions within the department on a whole variety of public participation type activities within a whole variety of parks. And so what we're trying to do at the moment is just determine if we have anything on record that shows that we did something specific, and I'm having my staff check that because, as I understand it, the question relates to North Battleford's provincial park.

Mr. Chairman: — We'll take a two-minute break and refresh our coffees and invite your officials to do the same.

I call the meeting back to order.

Mr. Cressman: — Our records indicate that we received an unsolicited proposal for accommodation in Battlefords Provincial Park in 1986-87.

Mr. Anguish: — Who was that proposal received from, Mr. Cressman?

Mr. Cressman: — A man named Murray Trapp.

Mr. Anguish: — And was it that unsolicited proposal that moved the department towards tendering out those services in the park?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes. If I could just clarify that, our approach typically as we look at the park system and try to determine the kinds of things that we think the customers or the visitors to the park want; however, we also look and we're prompted by individuals who suggest this may be a service that would be of value.

Mr. Anguish: — Could you tell me what contracts were awarded in the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987 that concerned the privatization of any services in any provincial parks in the province of Saskatchewan?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes, we can provide you a list of that. It will take a few minutes to generate that. And that was a contract for any service, Mr. Anguish, a contract for any service. Like, are you talking about a plumbing contract, a heating contract, or what exactly . . .

Mr. Anguish: — I'm asking for any service in a park that had traditionally been performed by park employees or departmental employees that would, in this fiscal year, be contracted out — for example, the operation of a golf course, the rental of accommodation.

Mr. Cressman: — Yes, I understand.

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Cressman, also if you could tell us whether or not there were any studies during this fiscal year relating to the privatization of services in provincial parks, and if so if we could get copies of those please?

Mr. Chairman: — Mr. Anguish, is it necessary that they provide you with these answers now. Do you want to wait for that, or can they provide it to the Clerk and table it with the committee in writing?

Mr. Anguish: — Yes.

Mr. Chairman: — He can table them. Mr. Cressman, Mr. Anguish indicated that it's quite acceptable to him that if you provide those answers to the Clerk in writing at some subsequent point, hopefully in the near future.

Mr. Cressman: — Okay. In both cases we'd prefer to go that route because it will take some valuable time here and we can put together a list of the actual things that were contracted out as distinct from new services that were added, services that we hadn't provided before. And in terms of studies of privatization, we can provide what information we have on that as well.

Mr. Chairman: — Thank you very much.

Mr. Prebble: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the deputy minister a series of questions on a proposal from Messrs. Darryl Binkley, John Dutchyshyn and Vaughn Binkley with respect to the development of a two-storey lodge at Duck Mountain Provincial Park. Now this lodge was constructed in 1987, so I want to limit my questions to the year under review, but I'd like to ask whether there was, in the year under review, any unsolicited proposal or solicited proposal

from these gentlemen with respect to the development of this lodge?

Mr. Cressman: — We'll just get a date here. In the case of Duck Mountain Provincial Park accommodation, we solicited proposals unsuccessfully. We later accepted an unsolicited proposal after advertising twice.

You referred to Darryl Binkley, Vaughn Binkley and John Dutchyshyn?

Mr. Prebble: — That's correct. I think they are . . . the company would be known as . . . see if I can find it here. I believe it's corporately known as . . . it's a partnership known as Duck Mountain Lodge Incorporated.

Mr. Cressman: — The original bid was not from those individuals, it was from an individual named Pat Donovan, and those three individuals were brought into that corporation subsequently.

Mr. Prebble: — And was the contract entered into in the year under review? I believe there is a \$375,000 grant provided to these individuals. Now I don't know whether that was done in the year under review or not, or if the agreement was established in the year under review.

Mr. Cressman: — The contract was awarded April 8 of '86, so it was in the year under review, and the agreement was signed subsequent to that.

Mr. Prebble: — Subsequent to that. Could we get a copy of both the contract and the agreement?

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Cressman, when you talk about the contract and the agreement, are you also referring to the \$375,000 grant under the Canada-Saskatchewan tourism agreement, or are you talking about the contract to actually be the operators?

Mr. Cressman: — No, the grant is operated through the Department of . . . it's Economic Development and Tourism now, and I believe it was then as well. We aren't involved in grants.

Mr. Anguish: — Your department has no involvement in the grant?

Mr. Cressman: — No.

Mr. Prebble: — If we could get copies of all contracts and . . .

Mr. Cressman: — What we'll do . . .

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Chairman, point of order. I wonder if . . . I'm sorry.

I'd be prepared to let that question go if it was a general question on the kinds of contracts. But if you're going to ask for an individual contract that might have individual specifications and the competition in basis of that relating to new developments coming in, what are you going to do to those people who are going to say: I'm going to bid and I hope it's a contract that I can have a reasonable amount of security in knowing that it isn't going to be

spread all over the country?

Then I would say, if it's a general kind of a question, fine. If it's a specific contract to this, I think you're begging the question. We've had other questions in relation to individuals' accountability with Ag Credit Corporation, for example, individuals who have a contract with specific itemized, detailed lists of things that occur in that contract. And I don't think you should be asking for those kinds of things because I think that might be a breach of trust.

Mr. Chairman: — I just ask on that point, the contracts . . . do you have any stipulation as a public agency representing the Crown, and someone enters into a contract with you, is there any stipulation, any understanding, any agreement that the terms of the contract will remain buried; that is to say, excluded from view from anyone else except departmental officials? Or is it understood that the contract is entered into at the public domain and therefore the terms of the contract are public information?

Mr. Cressman: — When a contract is approved by order in council, if it's attached to that order in council it becomes public information. In cases where it's not approved by an OC, we then retain that secure so that the individual who we contract with feels some comfort knowing that the provisions of the contract are between himself or herself and us.

Mr. Chairman: — Can I ask in this . . . the question that Mr. Prebble was asking, about the contract he was asking about, where does that one fit in?

Mr. Cressman: — We can make available to him whatever was attached to that OC. I don't have that with me, but we can make available to him whatever was attached to that OC, because had he, as I understand it, showed up when the OC became public information, he could have had a copy of it.

A Member: — I want to . . . (inaudible) . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Is it on the point of order still?

Mr. Martens: — Yes. I have no problem with my point of order if that's the context that we're dealing with. I have no problem at all.

Mr. Chairman: — So the point of order is . . . well it's not well taken at this point. It seems that the information can be made available. I just might add as an aside that we may well run up against that one again, Mr. Martens, and we may want to get some legal opinions at some point.

Mr. Martens: — I'm concerned about that breach of trust, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Cressman, can you tell me, in line with what the chairman was asking, if you call for a tender and there's proposals submitted by, say, five individuals or companies, when those tenders are opened, can the public not attend the opening of those tenders; or is it restricted to the five or whatever number of proposals you've received?

Mr. Cressman: — It depends. You're using the word tender and proposals interchangeably and we treat them differently. In the case of tenders, there's a public opening of tenders, and anyone who attends that public opening can collect the information on what is read out at that opening. We, however, don't retain that and make that information available. We feel that since the public is given notice that it is public information; if they want it they can go and go it.

In the case of proposals, however, we frequently and, if I'm not mistaken, without exception open those privately, the point being that we aren't asking for people to submit a tender on a very specific thing that we want done. We're opening it up to a range of ideas and we feel that the parties putting forward those proposals have some right to the ideas that they are putting forward. So we keep those private.

Mr. Anguish: — Would you feel free then if there was a tender that came under this year in review right now and we asked you in this committee, would you tell us what those tenders were?

Mr. Cressman: — The way I believe we've approached that in the past is that if you as individuals were at the tender opening, you would have been able to get that information. What becomes of interest to us after is only the successful bidder.

Mr. Anguish: — So you would not have those records to give to this committee. I'm not talking about us as individuals; I'm talking to you about us as a Public Accounts Committee.

Mr. Cressman: — We have those records, and as far as providing them, I'm uncertain as to precedent. I know that if someone from the public calls us and asks us, what did so and so bid on something, we don't divulge that information.

Mr. Anguish: — But this isn't the public. This is the Public Accounts Committee. And it would seem to me that if at some point those tenders were public at the time of opening, that this committee would in fact be able to have access to them if you had the information on file and they were requested, that you could provide them to the committee.

Mr. Martens: — I think that if, like I said before, where you have a contract that is public and it deals with public funds and it has been authorized in a public fashion, I think that is in itself a measure of regulating whether the tenders are accepted or rejected or whatever.

When the contracts from that point on, or the tenders from that point on, are to be discussed, I think that this committee should worry if we were to ask for those individuals to have that tender provided by the department to us as a committee. If the individuals who bid on the tender wanted to provide those individuals who want to seek that information, I have no problem with that, because then we are not in breach of trust in relation to the department.

And I think that that's the point that I wanted to make here earlier. If you go to those individuals and you know who they are, you can ask them what they bid. Then they have the freedom to determine for you what that was. And that is . . . I think it goes back to this breach of trust I think that the department has to maintain. And I think that that's clearly in my opinion a very important point.

Mr. Chairman: — Mr. Anguish, can you just restate for me your specific question on this matter.

Mr. Anguish: — Well suppose the department, Mr. Chairman, decides to issue a tender and Mr. Muller and myself and x-limited company decide to respond. And we say, well we'll do this for x amount of dollars. As I understand it, when those proposals or those responses to the tender are opened, it's accessible to the public. Peter can go there, Mr. Muller can go there, I can go there, a representative of the company, John Doe — we can all go there and see the response.

Now what I'm asking is that at some future date, since that information was public at one time and if the department has that information on file, and if this committee asks for that information, are they obligated to provide that information to the Public Accounts Committee — not to us as individuals, but to the committee. That's my question.

Mr. Chairman: — It's a good question.

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Chairman, you have been on a council in the city of Regina, I've been on municipal council, and those tenders that are opened in the public are, at that meeting, public. And after that I believe that if that question was asked of you I think that you would determine from the practice that you would have some hesitancy in disclosing that kind of information in a public document to the individuals who were asking, not knowing what their agenda was in determining it. I think that's what we're talking about here and I think that that's a breach of trust.

Mr. Chairman: — If I can just — Mr. Hopfner bear with me — if I can just rely back on my previous experience and also look at the objects of this committee, and one is the regard for economy in the acquisition of goods and services.

Reflecting back on my experience, I think you're right. You don't normally advertise or put out information about losing contracts, or people who bid and weren't successful. We don't publish that information, go out of our way. But there are many instances in tendering in municipalities where there's always a proviso the lowest bid is not necessarily accepted. And it's not uncommon in a case such as the council I was on for people to appear before council and say, I want you to examine that bid again because you didn't give it to the lowest; or you did give it to the lowest but you didn't take into account, your people didn't take into account the fact that they're located outside the city boundaries while we're in the boundaries and we pay taxes and therefore that should be taken into consideration.

It is not unusual under those circumstances to have

information brought forward to council and again to the public about those who tendered what they bid, and any other terms or conditions that might be appropriate to the contract. So there can be, if you like, a rehashing of the tender in public.

I would say in this instance that if these documents were provided, you know, publicly, there's a public tender, if there was some room for discretion in terms of awarding the contract, if there's question about economy in the acquisition of goods and services, then this committee can feel obliged, and rightfully so, to ask questions about a specific process and who was awarded the contract and what was the nature of the call, who else bid, what was their price, and I guess in that way try to ascertain whether or not the department got good value for its money, that there was economy in the acquisition of goods and services, that that would be my ruling on this one.

Now there may well be other instances, given the nature of the process, meant that there was some confidential relationship between themselves and a department that the department is legally bound to not release certain information to us or to anyone else. And that's one we'll have to deal with when we come to it, but in this case I don't sense that's what's happening. That is a public tender, people bid.

Mr. Anguish now has some questions about the economy that might have resulted in this case, and the questions I think are appropriate. That would be my ruling in this particular case.

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, Mr. Chairman, I think probably the questions arose from the question that Mr. Prebble was asking, not Mr. Anguish, in the releasing of a contract.

And it's an unsolicited proposal and it was explained where the department releases documents that are accompanied with certain OCs (order in council) where they're not released and the department is very uncomfortable in releasing and setting a precedence on a practice that they haven't done before.

And these practices, I think, should be honoured because people, as it has been explained, are well aware of the fact that . . . and it is advertised publicly that if anyone in this province has an interest into the contract that is going to be open, the public contract that had been tendered for is going to be open, that they're welcome to come and sit in and gain this information. Once that's disclosed and it is no longer attached to this particular OC and this information then goes into the . . . whether it goes into the archives or where it ends up should be basically to no one's availability because of the fact is that it does lead into a very uncompetitive situation. There could be the workings of one various company versing another in their thoughts and imaginations as to how they could or are successful in obtaining tenders or are successful with the particular department.

And this forum here is probably as public a forum as you're going to get because anything that . . . any information that flows through this forum here is, once again, very public. Everything is in verbatim and if I got

my hands on those documents I could see how a various company would set their practices of tendering. I could very well adopt their practices and it would be kind of I think unprofessional of a department to give away those kinds of secrets.

Now if the members opposite had specific questions to the costs and the various prices that they may be questioning within that contract, that's fine. I can understand that ... (inaudible interjection) ... Well yes, I don't think we should ask the department to be releasing these kind of documents because of the public forum that we're in.

Mr. Chairman: — Thank you, Mr. Hopfner.

Mr. Martens: — I have just one point ...

A Member: — Was I not ahead of ... I'm after him then, am I? Am I after ...

Mr. Chairman: — No, you're before him. I'm sorry, Mr. Martin, Regina Wascana.

Mr. Martin: — I want to remind you too, Mr. Chairman, that over an hour ago I asked you to put my name on the list to follow Mr. Anguish and you subsequently let Mr. Prebble in after him.

Mr. Chairman: — Now that's my error. I'm sorry about that.

Mr. Martin: — Yes, that's why I wanted to remind you of it, and remember I'm still after Mr. Anguish, okay?

However, now on this issue what disturbs me about your remarks where you used the phrase "in this instance," and the concern I have is that if you allow this to go through that you are setting a precedent whereby every sealed bid, every tender, that sealed bid that has been open to the public can then be asked by one of the members of this committee for all the details of that even through it's been open to the public.

And I find that somewhat disturbing because they've already had this opportunity. I have no problem ... I mean I don't know why he just doesn't ask the question about a specific tender, about a specific bid, and ask for the details on that one.

Mr. Prebble: — Well I did; that was the question I was asking.

Mr. Martin: — No, no, no, that's not what I'm talking about. So it's just ... It was your phrase "in this instance" that concerns me because I think we may be setting a precedent here which could be an unfortunate one.

Mr. Chairman: — Okay, well I agree with you that every ruling I guess adds to tradition and tradition sets our precedents.

Mr. Martens: — I have one question that I think that we have to deal with. Is the document the property of the department or is the document the property of the individual who submitted it? And I think that if we assume

that the document is our property and we can do with it what we want, I think that is an assumption that is a breach of trust, and that's what I'm talking about.

Mr. Chairman: — So if it's our document, what you're saying, it's fair to ask the questions or to ask for the information.

Mr. Martens: — What I understood the discussion to be, Mr. Chairman, was that these be provided to all of the committee and then that all the committee has the right to look at them. And that's where I say that the question here is whether the document is our property, property of the department, or the property of the individual who supplied him with it. I believe that it is the property of the individual who supplied him, and that's where the breach of trust exists.

Mr. Chairman: — Obviously if something's not the property of the department, the department can't provide it. And I think, you know, the deputy minister would say that, well we don't have that information; it's not ours; you'll have to ask such and such a company. But in this case, I think it was Mr. Anguish who was asking some information about ... Was it Mr. Prebble that was asking for information that was submitted to the department and I assume to be within the ... Is property of the department.

Mr. Hopfner: — He was asking ... If I can clear it up for you so you know what he was asking for. He was asking for a contract to be submitted to this committee, and that was ... that if it is public information then we agree that it could be released to the committee. If it is not public information, and if the department is concerned about setting a new precedence, then I do not agree that that contract should be released in this forum. And that's what ...

Mr. Chairman: — I think we dealt with it some time ago and the deputy indicated that the contract under question was something that was attached to an OC (order in council) and that he'd be prepared to provide that. Am I correct on that, Mr. Cressman?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes, my understanding of what ... Did you want my understanding of what Mr. Prebble was asking?

Mr. Chairman: — Please.

Mr. Cressman: — My understanding of what Mr. Prebble was asking for was all the tenders submitted by individuals for a certain tender call. He wasn't just asking for the one that was awarded. And that was your point, or my point. If it was awarded and it was an OC decision then it was public information.

Mr. Chairman: — So the successful one you certainly will provide, and the committee's having a discussion about all the other ones that might have been submitted with respect to that tender call.

Mr. Cressman: — That's right.

Mr. Martens: — That's the one point. The other point is that Mr. Cressman made a very distinct difference ... He

didn't know whether this one had been on an CC, and if it was on an OC that is public information. I have no problem with that one either. But where the others are and who owns that, or who has the right to that, I think that's where we have to be very careful what we do with it.

Mr. Chairman: — Well I think in this case again, the committee has an interest in economy. And if Mr. Prebble wants to ask for bids that were submitted to the department on a particular tender call because he's concerned about the economy that might have resulted as a result of the bid that was ultimately successful as opposed to those that were not, then I would say that he has the right to ask that.

Now if the department can't provide that because they have some arrangement which precludes them from giving that information, then we'll have to cross that bridge when we come to it. But I don't sense that that's the situation here.

Mr. Hopfner: — Just discussing your ruling there, Mr. Chairman, it's not a form of challenging. You have total agreement from this side that if it's not setting, or if we're not putting the department officials in some sort of rare kind of unjeopardized situation, that's fine. But I think we should give the department officials the right to be able to discuss this with their boss, if you will, to make sure that they are not setting a new precedent in giving information away or they were going to get their hands slapped.

Mr. Chairman: — I think the deputy should tell us that look, there are legal implications here; there are problems that may result for us; we may not be able to answer your question today; we want to come back to you.

And I use as an example the questions that were put both by Mr. Anguish and Mr. Neudorf to Mr. Lutz about, how did you determine who you were going to let go when you were down-sizing your office. And Mr. Lutz said that, or at least I understood him to say that rather than answer that today, I need to get some advice because how I answer the question may depend, or may result in, lawsuits on the other hand.

And so I think it's legitimate then if the department has a concern, to state that concern. And I think that the committee would be willing to say well, take the time that's necessary to come back to us with an answer. We don't necessarily have to have the answer today and if there's legal problems created, or you can't answer the question, then we'll have to deal with it at that point in time. So my feeling is that if you feel that you can answer the question . . .

Mr. Cressman: — My preference would certainly be to get back to you on that because I just don't want to put us in a position where we breach a trust that people have placed in us, and that can be done very quickly.

Mr. Chairman: — Is that acceptable to the committee that we'll have to get back to Parks and Renewable Resources at some subsequent point in the week and discuss this issue further? But we can go on with other questions at

this point.

Mr. Cressman: — Mr. Chairman, if I might, that was all relating to Duck Mountain that the question was being raised, I believe. And if you recall, there actually was only one unsolicited proposal that we considered in Duck Mountain, so it's a moot point in the case of Duck Mountain.

Mr. Prebble: — That was one of the reasons was why some people were having a great deal of trouble understanding why this whole debate had taken place. But nevertheless let's not worry about that at this point.

But I would like a copy of the proposal, and if it's possible a copy of the contract. And you'll get back to us in terms of whether that's possible or not?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes.

Mr. Anguish: — Can you tell me if there are any other unsolicited or solicited proposals from either Darryl Binkley, Vaughn Binkley, John Dutchyshyn, or any company they represent, or Pat Donovan, for other parks or other operations that would fall under your department?

Mr. Cressman: — We're not aware of any in that year.

Mr. Anguish: — You mentioned that your department was not in any way involved with the \$375,000 grant that these gentlemen received from the tourism agreement.

Did they request any funding from your department in their unsolicited proposal, or was there any funding offered to them from your department?

Mr. Cressman: — I'm not sure whether they requested any of us in the proposal. There definitely was none offered by us. We aren't in a position . . . we have no programs to provide funding to these people.

If I could just add to that, there's one area that we do provide assistance in these kinds of things. For example, if the infrastructure such as water, sewers, things like that, are required, that's our responsibility . . . to the lot line. We operate much as an RM or a municipality would in that regard.

Mr. Anguish: — How much do you plan on spending, or how much did you spend on infrastructure for Duck Mountain Park in 1986-87? I'm specifically interested in it relating to the lodge itself.

Mr. Cressman: — Mr. Chairman, in 1986-87 we spent \$97,557 on sewer and water system in Duck Mountain Provincial Park. We spent \$150,491 on sewage lagoon and access road, and I don't have that broken down.

You can appreciate that when we're doing this that the lodge is not the sole reason for expanding the sewage lagoon, for example. Where we're upgrading something like that it's a common facility that serves our other needs as well.

Mr. Anguish: — What would your other needs be there,

Mr. Cressman, in the Duck Mountain Provincial Park?

Mr. Cressman: — The revenues?

Mr. Anguish: — No, no. What would be the other reasons . . . I know that the lodge is there. I'm not intimately familiar with Duck Mountain; I know I've played golf there and I've been to the lodge. So the lodge would be served by the expenditure of some \$247,000. What are those other items that would be served by that expenditure?

Mr. Cressman: — There are numerous cottages in the park. There are camp grounds that are serviced by washroom facilities there. There's the administration centre. I believe that year Ministik Inn was still operating. I believe the golf course also has washroom facilities. So if you look at water and sewer demands, it applies to the entire park. There's quite a variety of demands for that service.

Mr. Anguish: — This water and sewer system, it was upgrading of the system; or was a new system put into place for part of the existing system?

Mr. Cressman: — In the year in question, I understand it was an upgrading of the system in place, in the year in review. And I must admit that I don't have the detail of the exact expenditures here with me.

Mr. Anguish: — So you couldn't break it down as to how much that would be solely service to the lodge, how much was to the golf course; you can't break that down?

Mr. Cressman: — No, I think the best that we can do right now with the information we have with us is a very general description.

Mr. Anguish: — Could you provide the chairman of the committee with a breakdown of that some time in the near future?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes, we can try.

Mr. Anguish: — Okay. I ask your guidance, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to move on from parks unless some of the members on the other side have some questions in regard to parks. But I do want to go on to other items under this particular department. And I'm wondering do you want to . . .

Mr. Chairman: — I think we should finish up with Parks and let Mr. Martin who had his hand up for . . . then Mr. Hopfner.

Mr. Martin: — I guess what I wanted to do was I wanted to make the point, I think specifically to Mr. Anguish. We, yesterday, spent — and to you, Mr. Chairman — we spent several hours talking about, or was it . . . whenever it was, about the need for a list of questions being sent to each department. Our argument was that these questions are asked in estimates and many of the same questions that we're hearing here today are going to be asked or have been asked in estimates.

And the reason I brought that up was because Mr.

Anguish at one point mentioned the golf cart issue and he was going to get into it. Subsequently, he did not, but he did mention it and so it gives me an the opportunity to speak on it. And that very same question was asked in estimates last year by the same member and he got . . . he would have gotten the same answer today as he received then, back last spring, concerning the tender on that.

And so my point is this, is that we tried to say that these questions . . . there's a serious amount of duplication going on here and that they're questions that could have been asked in estimates. That's really the only point I wanted to make.

Mr. Anguish: — Is this a point of order, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. Martin: — Which isn't to say that some of the questions they ask here are not asked in estimates, or that some of the questions asked in estimates are not asked here. And he knows the answer to that question. That's my point. And I really see no reason why we have to go on and on and on about that same . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Well can I just say that maybe Mr. Anguish didn't score a hole in one in estimates and is still putting around, and he's got a right to do that. Thank you for your opinion.

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Chairman, I wish to respond to Mr. Beattie's . . .

Mr. Martin: — Mr. Martin.

Mr. Chairman: — Well I've got Mr. Hopfner next on the list. Mr. Martin is free to express an opinion.

Mr. Martin: — It's just an opinion.

Mr. Chairman: — I have Mr. Hopfner next and I'll put you on the list after that, Mr. Anguish.

Mr. Martin: — I hope that Mr. Anguish will not deprive me of his company on the golf course next year because of my questioning of him today.

Mr. Hopfner: — Okay. I want to stay on the topic here. It's just a question that on the Battlefords park area there. You said the proposal to tender out was submitted by Mr. Murray Trapp. Who is Mr. Murray Trapp? What capacity would . . .

Mr. Cressman: — I don't know. What kind of information do you want in him exactly?

Mr. Hopfner: — No, but I was just wondering, is he anything to do with the parks?

Mr. Cressman: — Not, no. You mean an employee or . . .

Mr. Hopfner: — Yes.

Mr. Cressman: — Not that we're aware of.

Mr. Hopfner: — Okay.

Mr. Anguish: — First, just to respond to Mr. Beattie

Martin's comments about me having previously asked questions in estimates. For the record, I do acknowledge I did ask those questions in estimates and I asked them in question period but I didn't get the answers that I wanted.

And what we want to determine is to make sure that the taxpayers in Saskatchewan are getting good value for their money. I mean, when you start looking at former cabinet ministers and former PC candidates for nominations and things like that, we want to make sure that there isn't interference in the awarding of those contracts, and we certainly can't determine that through the political process. So I thought maybe we could determine that through the department, so you can expect the same questions to be asked again next year during public accounts.

Mr. Martin: — . . . (inaudible) . . . respond to the member on that particular issue. The minister, if I remember correctly, and perhaps the deputy minister can correct me if I'm wrong, advised you that there were two tenders for the golf cart concession at The Battlefords Provincial Park, and one of whom was a former member of this government, Myles Morin, who was, along with his partner or his friend, the successful bidder because he bid lower than the other gentleman or the other people. And these were sealed bids opened in public. And it could not have been clearer than that.

And if you had wanted to be there to see whether it was on the up and up, then you should have been there. And maybe your other guy could give you the answer to that. And that's the answer you got yesterday. So . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Stay tuned for next year's public accounts, I think, on the opening of the tender.

Mr. Martin: — . . . I don't know why, you know, you're trying to find something being hidden here and it isn't.

Mr. Anguish: — The other guy tells me his tender was lower and better, and what we're trying to determine is that, we're from Missouri, mister; please show me.

Mr. Chairman: — But not this year.

A Member: — But not this year. It's not the year under review so I think we should continue on,

Mr. Chairman: — Can we move on now with questioning, having . . .

A Member: — Your point's well taken, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: — My ruling is that we should move on and ask more questions of the officials who are here.

Mr. Anguish: — I'd like to go to forestry for a while, under Renewable Resources and I'd like you to tell me what the budget was for reforestation and how many trees were actually planted in the fiscal year under review?

Mr. Cressman: — Mr. Chairman, while my staff are looking for the actual budget for the year under review for silviculture, we planted 6,835,000 trees in '86-87.

Mr. Anguish: — Does your department do any kind of check to see how many of those trees actually survive, how many of those seedlings grow, and how many die. What's the projection that you make as to how many of those 6,835,000 will actually live to come to a mature tree?

Mr. Cressman: — We do survey work. First when we're planting them we look for a survival rate . . . or a proper planting rate. Our people inspect in the field as the planting is going on, supervise the contractors, if you will. Subsequently, there is some survey work done to see how the plantations are coming, but I don't have any information with me on survival rates if that's what you were looking for.

Mr. Anguish: — What was the . . . the year under review, what anniversary was that of the department planting trees in the province? How many years have you been planting trees?

Mr. Cressman: — I don't know. We can get that information for you if you wish. I don't know.

Mr. Anguish: — Well, I think somewhere in the planning of your department there must be projections done as to how many trees we need annually to restock our forests, and over the number of years of experience that you've had in planting trees you must have some idea of what the survival rate is otherwise how can you make your projections as to how many trees you should plant. And I know you're constrained by budgets as to how many trees you actually can plant, but how do you determine that? There must be some rule of thumb that you use in your planning and I'd like to know what that rule of thumb is if you have it available.

Mr. Cressman: — I'm sorry, I don't have it with me. The sort of track that we're on is a target of 10 million seedlings annually. And I say that with some trepidation because that decision was subsequent to the year under review.

Mr. Anguish: — That 10 million annually that would just be for that year, and this year it could in fact be 15 million. Could it? That's an annual assessment that you do.

Mr. Cressman: — No, it's an annual target planting rate. We want to see 10 million trees planted.

Mr. Anguish: — With the 10 million trees planted annually, if you could plant that amount of trees, how long would it take to adequately reseed our forests in Saskatchewan, the commercial forests?

Mr. Cressman: — That's an area that we're having some difficulty with at the moment. For example, when softwood was the only species of any significant value, a forester would look at a plot of land and say, if this isn't growing back in to softwood in certain volumes of softwood, then he considers that area of land non-sufficiently restocked forest. However, with the advent of hardwood pulp mills we suddenly find that what was considered to be non-sufficiently restocked forest is now stocked with merchantable timber, and we currently have not got a revision on our inventories in that

regard.

Mr. Anguish: — What did it cost you to plant the 6,800,000 trees?

Mr. Cressman: — Mr. Chairman, the numbers that we have with us show contracts over \$10,000 on tree planting, and it shows \$653,137. I would have to confirm that, but I don't believe there were any contracts let for less than \$10,000 on tree planting.

Mr. Anguish: — Is there other tree planting in the province that takes place, done by companies who harvest the forest, by individuals who harvest the forest, that wouldn't be reflected in the 6.8 million trees that you plant?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes. My best guess here is that we planted roughly 65 or 70 per cent of those trees. Simpson Timber, Weyerhaeuser, and SRC planted the balance.

Sorry, Mr. Chairman, I'm going to have to correct a number that I gave you earlier. I believe the question — correct me if I'm wrong, Mr. Anguish — the question was: how many were planted. And I gave you the number that we contracted to be planted, and there were less trees planted under our contracts than we contracted for, through things like weather or problems like that. So if I could give you that or go back to that information, we planted — although we contracted for 6.8 million — we planted 5.2 million, and industry planted 2.8 million approximately, for a total of 8 million seedlings actually planted.

Mr. Anguish: — When the private sector plants trees, do they do that under contract with their forestry lease agreements? Are they obligated to plant so many trees?

Mr. Cressman: — The FMLAs that we have in place now I believe there's only one of those. Weyerhaeuser was not in place, I don't believe, in the year under review; neither was L & M. But there's a principle that I'm willing to talk about if that's . . . and the principle is — of the agreements — the principle is that forest companies, when harvesting, are responsible to see that the areas harvested are sufficiently restocked.

Mr. Anguish: — Does that mean then for each tree taken, one tree is to be planted?

Mr. Cressman: — No. If, for example, you want an area to regenerate to hardwood and you've harvested softwood off it, you probably require thinning or some other silvicultural treatment after. But you don't reseed it to, say, aspen. The point being, if you harvest one tree, you don't plant one tree. We're talking in a gross number. We want the same amount of wood fibre to be produced off the lease area or the licence area.

Mr. Anguish: — Who regulates that?

Mr. Cressman: — Our people inspect that. The contract is between . . . the FMLA that is signed is between us and the company.

Mr. Anguish: — Did you sign an FMLA with

Weyerhaeuser in the year under review?

Mr. Cressman: — I'm just going back in my memory, but I know that our report indicates that Weyerhaeuser planted trees, so I assume that . . . I'm just trying to recall the actual year. I don't know if . . . Your question is: what year did we sign an FMLA with Weyerhaeuser?

Mr. Anguish: — Yes.

Mr. Cressman: — I'm sorry, I can't provide you that information right now. The fellows are looking. I think it was the fall of '86. I think it was the summer or fall of '86 but I want to be sure.

Mr. Anguish: — Well I was just going to use Weyerhaeuser as an example, but there would have been FMLAs (forestry management licensing agreement) in place in the year under review. Is that correct?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes. I believe there was one in place for Simpson Timber and I believe we had one for . . . Let me try to list the ones that we had at that time. Simpson Timber had one in place; we signed one with L & M Wood Products of Glaslyn on March 6 of '87 . . .

Mr. Anguish: — Do you have the acres or hectares listed there as well, Mr. Cressman?

Mr. Cressman: — No, I don't. We can get that though. I'm sorry, we'll provide that information to you, the names of the FMLA holders at that point in time. I don't have it listed here, and I want to make sure.

Mr. Anguish: — Weyerhaeuser could have possibly . . .

Mr. Cressman: — I think Weyerhaeuser planted that year so I'm 99.9 per cent sure, but I just . . .

Mr. Anguish: — Well I guess what I'm getting at is that I have a concern of our forests running out. If there's a requirement that operators like Simpson Timber do some restocking of the forests or planting of forests and as well the department in the year under review put in 5.2 million seedlings, and now Simpson Timber give as a reason for their closure that they've run out of accessible timber. And so I'm concerned about the depletion of our forests.

I'd like to know how the department determines how many seedlings have to be put in by the private sector and how that's enforced, how it's checked. Can you just run us through that, because obviously our forests are being depleted at a much greater rate than they're being regenerated.

Mr. Cressman: — The difficulty of them having, is we have two different generations of FMLAs in place at this point in time. We have new generation FMLAs in place, Weyerhaeuser with NorSask and with the L & M Forest Products. And I believe Weyerhaeuser and L & M were the only ones in place. I know that they were the only ones in place at that time. NorSask is subsequent.

What we do is we go over a harvest plan under those new generation FMLAs. We review an annual cutting plan, a five-year plan, and a 20-year agreement with the

companies to determine cutting plans. We also review with them their regeneration plans on the basis, again, of the five-year blocks. And our professional foresters review the cutting versus the reforestation activities to determine that there's no net wood loss on the license areas. That's in the new generation of FMLAs.

The Simpson Timber agreement was in place for a number of years and I don't have the agreement in front of me or the dates on it. It, however, on the east side of the province, was not one that placed that heavy onus on the company to manage the forest. The approach that had been used historically was that — this is back into the '70s, I believe — was that the companies had less responsibility, the government had more responsibility for direct management of the forest. So you'll see for example that although there's a reforestation trust fund set up under the Simpson Timber FMLA that it doesn't provide for totally addressing the cut that's taken out. The industry on the east side of the province is effectively overbuilt and has been overharvesting for a considerable number of years.

Mr. Anguish: — The new FMLAs, the new breed that's coming into place, and I guess likely the L & M forest products is one of those that you said was March 6 of '87. Are there penalties under these new forestry management lease agreements for companies that don't fulfil their obligation to silviculture?

Mr. Cressman: — I believe there are. I'd have to confirm that. But there's a requirement, so I believe there would be a penalty built in.

Mr. Anguish: — Where does the department currently . . . I'd like to know what that penalty is, if you can provide that through the Clerk or through the chairman.

Mr. Cressman: — We can provide that, yes.

Mr. Anguish: — The seedlings that the department plants, where do you get those seedlings from?

Mr. Cressman: — We produce those . . . In the year under review I believe we produced them in four separate nurseries. A major nursery at Prince Albert; a major one at Big River; a satellite one at Chitek lake; and one at south branch — I believe it's sort of south of Prince Albert near Macdowall.

Mr. Anguish: — Were there plans made in the year under review to phase out those satellite nurseries?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes, discussions on the possible phasing out of those nurseries took place in early '87, late '86.

Mr. Anguish: — During that planting stage you must have had contingency plans for getting the seedlings from somewhere else. Where did you plan on getting the seedlings from once you phase out these satellite nurseries?

Mr. Cressman: — The two major nurseries. The one at Prince Albert and the one at Big River had sufficient excess capacity that they can satisfy the seedling

requirements that we have. I believe they can provide . . . yes, they can satisfy.

Mr. Anguish: — And the seedlings that the private sector plant, the 2.8 million they planted in the year under review, did they also come from the province?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes.

Mr. Anguish: — Provided by these nurseries?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes. We provide seedlings to those private operators free of charge.

Mr. Anguish: — Free of charge?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes.

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you. If I was to want some seedlings from these nurseries, can I also get them for my farm?

Mr. Cressman: — We do make seedlings available to some volunteer groups such as churches, youth groups, and farm wood lots.

Mr. Anguish: — Are those the only three?

Mr. Cressman: — Those are the types of groups that we're showing as having given them to, yes.

Mr. Anguish: — So applications can be made by any particular group to the department to acquire seedlings along with some kind of plan as to how they're going to utilize them.

Mr. Cressman: — For the most part, where we're putting our seedlings is into the hands of youth groups; for example, when the boy scouts want to plant trees on Arbor Day or something like that. That's by and large where they go. We also provide seedlings for our own requirements within the parks. We produce some seedlings for those requirements as well.

Mr. Anguish: — Was there any money that came out of your budget in the year under review to go towards access roads into forestry areas?

Mr. Cressman: — I guess while my people are looking in the capital budget, our approach has been to have the forest companies responsible for constructing their own forest access roads, and I believe the major access roads are the Department of Highways responsibility.

Mr. Anguish: — Do you not have anywhere in your budget an item concerning access roads?

Mr. Cressman: — I'm just having that confirmed because the actual case in point was that we had had some responsibility which we transferred to the Department of Highways. For example, when the Weyerhaeuser FMLA came into place our responsibility for any major roads was transferred to the Department of Highways. Minor roads are the responsibility . . . The true access roads are the responsibility of the licence holder.

Mr. Chairman, we have a number of budget items shown as roads, and the best of our information is that those were all upgrading of existing roads with one exception, the Birch Lake-Junor road was the construction of a new road. No, they were all upgradings of existing roads.

Mr. Anguish: — Can you tell me the aggregate amount spent on roads, the upgrading?

Mr. Cressman: — Do you want us to add them up or do you want us to just give you the actual . . . There's six roads that we're showing. Do you want a total dollar?

Mr. Anguish: — If you could give us a total.

Mr. Cressman: — Yes, we can do that.

Mr. Anguish: — I think what's my final question in this area is that: how many of those six roads were into the FMLA of Weyerhaeuser's 7 million acres?

Mr. Cressman: — That we're going to have to put . . . We'll have to check that. I can't tell you just off the top because I don't know the exact chunk of the road that the upgrade went on.

Mr. Anguish: — You understand the question, though.

Mr. Cressman: — Yes, you want to understand within the Weyerhaeuser FMLA, was there any road-work done of the roads that we're showing. Was there any of that happened within the Weyerhaeuser FMLA.

Mr. Anguish: — Yes, if you provide that through the Clerk or the chairman, we'd appreciate it.

Mr. Cressman: — Yes.

Mr. Muller: — Just a point of clarification on the roads. That was the year that the FMLA was turned over to Weyerhaeuser, and the FMLA was signed with Weyerhaeuser, I believe it was in the year under review, so those roads could have possibly been built prior to the transfer of the FMLA from PAPCO (Prince Albert Pulp Company) to Weyerhaeuser. Is that possible, or can you clarify that?

Mr. Cressman: — That's possible.

Mr. Muller: — Thank you.

Mr. Anguish: — Good point.

Mr. Prebble: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My first question is that I'm wondering if we could get copies of all FMLAs that were in effect in the year under review, or that were signed in the year under review?

Mr. Cressman: — I believe that each FMLA when it was signed was subject of an order in council. I believe as a consequence it's public information.

Mr. Prebble: — Could we receive copies of each of those please?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes. What I'll do is I'll check. I don't

know about the old Simpson agreement, for example, whether that was a subject of a FMLA when it was signed, but the new ones I know are, so I will provide you copies of all FMLAs that were made public through the OC route.

Mr. Prebble: — Or that were in effect and had been previously made public.

Mr. Cressman: — That's right, yes.

Mr. Muller: — Just a short question again. I was wondering if we could get the Simpson agreement also so we could make a comparison on how much better FMLA agreements we have now than we had previously.

Mr. Cressman: — If it's not part of an OC and the committee directs me to do that, I can provide that. I think it probably will be part of an OC though. I'd be surprised if it wasn't.

Mr. Prebble: — My next question is: did the department plan to spend any money with respect to the planting of trees in the Weyerhaeuser lease agreement in the year under review? Did it either plan any expenditures in that regard or did it actually make any expenditures in that regard, or are all costs for tree planting in the lease agreement being borne by Weyerhaeuser?

Mr. Cressman: — I can't answer the specific. I can answer the general part of your question, the general part being do we do any planting in Weyerhaeuser's FMLA.

The way that the responsibility has been broken down is that the licence holder is responsible for what happens from the point he takes over, onward. The backlog, if there is backlog, is the . . . both the federal government and ourselves have viewed as a government responsibility. We're not holding a current licensee responsible for a problem that he didn't create.

So the general principle is we would address backlog issues in Weyerhaeuser's licence area, but we wouldn't address current issues.

Mr. Prebble: — Could you tell me — just provide this in writing — could you tell me how much backlog planning you did in the Weyerhaeuser FMLA area in the year under review, and whether any plans were made with respect to further expenditures in that regard in the year under review?

Mr. Cressman: — So it's what was planted in the year under review and what was planned under the year under review? That can be provided.

Mr. Prebble: — That would be great.

Mr. Muller: — I hate to interfere but, you know, just for another point of clarification.

Mr. Prebble: — By all means go right ahead.

Mr. Muller: — The forest is very close to my heart.

Mr. Prebble: — Of course, no, no, that's fine.

Mr. Muller: — But in the new FMLA agreement that we have, my understanding is that the stumpage rates were increased to independents and to Weyerhaeuser and to L & M Wood preservers, or Wood Products, to enhance our reforestation. Am I correct?

Mr. Cressman: — And to effectively shift the burden for reforestation activities, the financial burden from government and the people of the province to the company that's operating the licence.

Mr. Muller: — Yes, the fund is set up . . .

Mr. Cressman: — That's right.

Mr. Muller: — . . . and administered by Weyerhaeuser, but the independents pay into it at the same level as Weyerhaeuser pays into it. And under the old agreement with PAPCO (Prince Albert Pulp Company) it was a lesser amount of stumpage than what it is today.

Mr. Cressman: — That's right.

Mr. Muller: — That's the point I wanted to get on.

Mr. Prebble: — I have two more questions in this regard, Mr. Chairman. I see it's 11:30. Do you want me to stop and we continue on after lunch or . . .

Mr. Martin: — Would that wrap it up for these guys?

Mr. Prebble: — No, we'll have other questions I think, so I want to respect the time.

Mr. Chairman: — Maybe we should wrap it up, but before we do that I just want to let you know that after lunch I'm going to be asking the following question — and you may want to prepare for that. In fiscal '86-87, the government projected a deficit in the range of \$389 million, but it miscalculated and in actual fact had a deficit of \$1.2 billion.

I'd like to know from you when were you advised by the Department of Finance, or became aware that your department would exceed its budget allocation for the fiscal year? And did the Department of Finance notify you, or did you notify them of the situation, and when? And I would ask you to table any documents in this regard.

And I ask this question in view of the fact — or will ask it — in view of the fact that your original estimate for the year was \$55.3 million, roughly. Your actual expenditure was \$58.1 million. That's not an insignificant difference and, therefore, I want to get the answers to that question.

But I wanted to put you on notice that I'm going to be asking those.

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Chairman, we just had a little meeting here. There's only a couple more questions, I think, from the three of us, and I'm wondering if we couldn't just wrap that up quickly and not have the department come back, and go on to the next department after lunch.

Mr. Chairman: — Mr. Martin still has questions. I would like to put this question either now or . . .

Mr. Cressman: — Mr. Chairman, perhaps an unusual question, or an unusual concern. A good friend of mine died and I'm to be pallbearer at a funeral this afternoon. My staff can handle the questions, if you wish.

Mr. Chairman: — Maybe not. We're also due to come back here, I think, at another point because there's an unresolved question here yet. Maybe we can just leave it at that, that you will come back, and work it through Ms. Ronyk as to when that will be later this week then.

Mr. Cressman: — The information that you've asked for, for example, we can bring back with us and it will take very little time to generate that.

Mr. Chairman: — Is that agreeable then?

Mr. Muller: — I would say that we accommodate Mr. Cressman, yes.

Mr. Chairman: — Yes. He's due to come back later this week at some point.

Mr. Martin: — Harry, the answers to your questions can be answered on paper, which is what Mr. Cressman just suggested, and they only have two or three questions left.

Mr. Prebble: — You could get those on paper too.

Mr. Martin: — Why don't we just wrap it up . . .

Mr. Muller: — Why don't you just give him the questions and allow them to respond on paper?

Mr. Chairman: — Can we do that? You may have to come back in any event because there were some questions that were asked earlier and you said you had to check. We may have further questions of you, depending what your answer is, so you will have to come back at some point. But if there are two or three other questions that you want to ask, put it to him now . . .

Mr. Prebble: — I've just got to put these all together, okay, unless there's questions of clarification.

One is that I would like an explanation of the expenditure of \$90,790 to Airquest Surveys Ltd. Second . . .

Mr. Martens: — Can you give him the page that it's on?

Mr. Prebble: — It's the very first one under "other expenses" in volume 3 of *Public Accounts*.

Mr. Martens: — Give him the page number.

Mr. Cressman: — The answer is, it was map preparation for forestry.

Mr. Prebble: — All of it was for that purpose?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes.

Mr. Prebble: — My second question related to an

explanation of the plans that obviously took place in the fiscal year under review to reduce spending on replanting in the following fiscal year, I think to some 3 and a half million trees. And I wanted to receive an indication of what the basis was for planning that reduction.

Mr. Cressman: — We can provide that.

Mr. Prebble: — I also wondered — and this may or may not be in order; I hope members of the committee won't have any objection — I just wanted to get a sort of a sense of how the numbers of trees that have been planted over the last five or six years previous to the year under review, had gone. In other words, I'd like to know what the number of trees planted by the department and the total number planted in the forest for each of the five previous years, if I could.

A Member: — Why don't you go back 10 years?

Mr. Prebble: — We can go back 10 years. I take it members don't have any objection to that, although that's not the year under review. Take it back for 10 years; that would be just fine.

Mr. Cressman: — If that's the committee's wish, we'll do that. And that's number of trees that actually went into the ground?

Mr. Prebble: — Right, both in terms of the department's contribution and the total contribution in the province.

I'd like to know if the department anticipated lay-offs with respect to the proposals for reducing forestation in the year under review.

Finally, I would like to get an explanation of what the economies are of not requiring reforestation, of replanting of softwoods, but presuming that simply allowing hardwoods to grow in their place will provide a sufficient source of timber for future hardwood processing operations.

Mr. Cressman: — That, you realize, can be a fairly broad ranging forestry discussion paper.

Mr. Prebble: — Okay, well I'd be interested in seeing such a paper if it's available. I'm just conscious of time here, and I'm summarizing the questions very quickly. But I'm just puzzled by the notion that one can plan on reforestation without having to plant any trees. I understand what you're saying with respect to silviculture, but I'd like an explanation of what the economics are of requiring replanting of softwood versus not doing it because I'm not sure that we want to envision simply depending on a hardwood forest.

Mr. Cressman: — You realize, of course though, that what we're talking about when we're talking about a sufficiently restocked forest is satisfying a demand that a timber industry or a wood using industry has. So we could plant softwood till the cows come home, and if they say, "but we don't want softwood; we want hardwood," we've done sort of a whole lot of work and waited for 90 years for no purpose. So I'm . . .

Mr. Prebble: — Well maybe you can explain to me, on the basis of the year under review, what the projected demands for softwood versus hardwood were going to be for the industry, and in that context, what the justification is for not requiring the replanting of softwood trees.

Mr. Cressman: — Okay, if I could try to tighten that down as much as I can. You're looking for an understanding of why we thought that the amount of softwood that was being planted was an appropriate amount. Is that right?

Mr. Prebble: — Yes, in the end that's what it all falls down to.

Mr. Cressman: — That's what you want? Okay.

Mr. Prebble: — Thanks very much.

Mr. Muller: — I'm just going to comment on that, Peter, being very close to the forest industry and seeing it every day. The amount of hardwood that's travelling into the pulp mill now in Prince Albert is just on a steady increase and their technology is moving so quickly that they're actually moving to, I would believe, more hardwoods than they are softwoods. And, of course, the projections are for total hardwood pulp production.

So we have to be very cognizant of the fact that maybe we have to look to the hardwoods for a faster regeneration than our softwoods and doing a better job for the province than what the softwoods have been able to do previously. Mind you, there's always some place for softwood, but the hardwood is on the increase and the use of it is on the increase.

Mr. Chairman: — Mr. Martens, did you have any question you want to put to them now?

Mr. Martens: — I can do it and they can give me an answer. The question is this: does the department regulate the FMLA according to the cycles of the forest and its age? And would some of this have been cause an early harvest? Would the forest have come to the place where it is if it hadn't been harvested? Or would it have less value if it hadn't been? Or would it . . . Do you make a value judgement on how that FMLA is used in determination in a forest management system?

Mr. Cressman: — Could you tighten that question up at all?

Mr. Martens: — Well, for example . . .

A Member: — The trees are 90 years old. Do you cut them now rather than leave them standing?

Mr. Martens: — Yes, leave them stand and rot. Is our timber industry required, because of the value of the forest today, to harvest it because the value will deplete if it's left for another 10 years or another 20 years? Will that harvest then have no value?

Mr. Cressman: — We certainly take into consideration the state of maturity of the forest. We send people into areas of the forest that require harvesting. So we're trying to avoid loss. We also look at areas that are burnt, for

example. We've had some severe fire seasons, serious losses to forest fire. We send folks in to salvage that because if we don't salvage it quickly it loses its value. So the FMLAs are managed in that regard, yes.

Mr. Martens: — Okay, you're department manages that?

Mr. Cressman: — Yes.

Mr. Martens: — Okay.

Mr. Neudorf: — Mr. Chairman, I can appreciate why we have a time overrun here to facilitate the officials, but I had also made plans for a certain length of time over the noon hour and I was just wondering if we could perhaps delay the start for approximately the same length of time that we have overrun now.

Mr. Chairman: — By 10 minutes? Sure, I don't think there's any problem.

Mr. Neudorf: — If it's all right with the committee, I'd appreciate that.

Mr. Chairman: — So as I understand it then, Mr. Cressman, you will be coming back to this committee. Would you make arrangements with Ms. Ronyk as to an appropriate time as to when we can sit down with you again and continue on.

Mr. Cressman: — Or did you want us to submit in writing the material you asked for, and then you, as a committee, will decide whether you want us back?

Mr. Muller: — . . . (inaudible) . . . make a decision after we see the submission in writing whether we need them back or not.

Mr. Chairman: — Well, okay, if that's done very quickly. I think this committee wants to reserve the right to call you back, because there is, on the one area you said you weren't sure whether you were going to be able to provide the information and if you say to us that you can't, then we definitely will want to have you back again.

Mr. Cressman: — No, we're more than happy to provide the information and I think we can do that probably by tomorrow noon. I see some blanching here.

Mr. Chairman: — Let's do that. You provide the information to her. We want to examine that and especially on that one question that if you can flag it as to whether or not very clearly, let her know, yes, you can answer it and here's the answer or, no you can't, in which case we'll want you to come back in.

Mr. Cressman: — I'd certainly like to say, too, thank you very much for considering the situation that I'm in right now. I appreciate that.

Mr. Chairman: — Well thank you for coming.

The Provincial Secretary coming up next and . . . do you have any comments, Mr. Lutz, on what's contained in the auditor's report on the Provincial Secretary? Page 137 and 136.

Mr. Lutz: — Page 137 I have a note in the margin opposite 28.04 that the matter reported has not yet been corrected.

Mr. Neudorf: — Mr. Chairman, over the last couple of days here, I think we are experiencing something here that has caused a great concern for me and I think also for you, and I think I would probably speak for all members of this committee and witnesses, if I indicated that it's a concern for all of us, and I specifically refer to the conduct of the meeting, where we're going, perhaps more accurately stated, where we didn't go for a great length of time here. And as the series of meetings are developing, I can sense that we are somewhat like a ship without a rudder. We have a great deal of disagreement within committee members and it's not just a partisan difference.

I couldn't help but notice this morning when I made that quotation from Mr. Romanow that there were members from his own party on this committee that said I disagree with that. And I do know that former members on this committee, Mr. Herman Rolfes, a man that has a great deal of experience and an individual for whom I have a great deal of respect, also disagrees with . . . stated his disagreement with the direction in which this committee seemed to be going.

And it seems to me that with the frustrations, with the quibbling, with the shift in emphasis from time to time, I do believe firmly that this committee in general does not have a clear indication of what it's mandate is all about. I think there's a matter of sharp disagreement on some very, very fundamental differences, some of them were raised this morning.

I know that if you care to check verbatims going back to my first appearance on this committee, I at that time, was already expressing certain doubts, but since it was kind of in my infancy and I did not really appreciate what was going on, I kept letting it slide. But it seems to me that in my own mind, my concerns are becoming consolidated to the point where I want to express them rather forcefully now and bring some of these issues to a head. I do not believe, for example, that we have unanimity in most of the appeared mandate that this committee has, and so I would like to see us take a good hard long look at where we are and what our mandate is, where we are heading.

Mr. Chairman: — Can I just stop you there, Mr. Neudorf, at this point? Are you suggesting we set aside the agenda and do that now, or are you simply saying that we need to find some time to do that? Because if you want to get into that kind of exhaustive review at this point then I think we should ask the committee if they want to set aside the agenda to do that.

Mr. Neudorf: — It is my opinion, Mr. Chairman, that this is a paramount dereliction of the understanding and I don't think that there's a consensus on this committee right now in terms of what the direction and the mandate of this committee is. And yes, I do feel quite strongly that we should pause and that we have a review of the mandate of this committee. And to that extent I'm quite prepared to move a motion to that effect, and I'll read that motion at this time.

Mr. Chairman: — Okay.

Mr. Neudorf: — Moved:

That this committee immediately proceed to hearings on the mandate of the Public Accounts Committee, and further, that during the next session of the Legislative Assembly recommendations on the mandate and the operation of the Public Accounts Committee be presented to the Assembly.

Mr. Chairman: — Mr. Neudorf moved a motion; I just want to give this motion a little bit of thought, the thought that it deserves. And what you're proposing by this motion is basically that we set aside the agenda. And I would have to rule that the motion at this point is out of order because the agenda calls for us to be dealing with the Provincial Secretary.

Mr. Neudorf: — Should I make a motion first of all that we set aside the agenda? Would that appease you?

Mr. Chairman: — That would appease me because then that's some direction from the committee that they want to set aside the agenda to consider other items.

Mr. Neudorf: — Well, Mr. Chairman, if I might just indicate to you that a vote on this motion would indicate the direction in which the committee would like to proceed.

Mr. Chairman: — I think that there should be a motion; there should be clear direction to the chair from the committee that they want the agenda set aside for consideration of other matters. Then I can take a look at your motion and say, well I don't have any other items on the agenda. The agenda has been set aside. We can deal with this. So I really think . . . I would rule your motion . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I don't want to rule it out of order because it may become out of order, but I would say that it might be appropriate for someone to move a motion that we set aside the agenda. Do you follow me on that, Mr. Neudorf?

Mr. Hopfner: — Well, Mr. Chairman, in rebuttle to your remarks there is a motion that has been presented to the chair and I would quite frankly ask you to rule on that motion.

Mr. Chairman: — Fine.

Mr. Hopfner: — I don't believe that there has to be . . . The motion is very clear and straightforward. If the motion is to proceed then it is very apparent that we'll move into the discussion of that motion. If it is not passed or not cleared, or out of order, then basically we will go on further to the agenda. But the way it is now there seems to be a confusion amongst the committee members in this room as to what the realm of this committee is all about. And when we hear various different directions that various speakers are going off on in one tangent or another, it's not helping the workings of this committee; it's not helping in speeding up the workings of this committee.

And therefore if we could have some sort of guide-line through our discussions as to what the meaning of our mandate is, then we could all work within that realm and speed up the workings of this committee. But we seem to be arguing more on the initiatives of various members in the direction that they're going whether they're basically in a . . . Is this committee basically in a comprehensive auditing mode or is it into basically a question of whether the committee is questioning the spending of the various departments and whether they're spent legitimately or fraudulently or whatever.

I mean, we all want to know this and we all want this information. But the direction that some members seem to be going fairly well, in using your terminology, on what I would indicate was a thin ice aspect of what the committee's mandate is actually about. And therefore I think that it's only proper that we get into the meat of the motion and deal with it duly.

Mr. Chairman: — Let me just say that at this point all I have . . . the only direction I have from the committee — that is the committee, not individuals on the committee — is that there's an agreement that we proceed to deal with certain departments. And we finished up with the Department of Parks and Renewable Resources or virtually excused them until another day if necessary. We have the Provincial Secretary waiting to be heard, all pursuant to an agreement that was established earlier about what we would be doing today and what our business would be.

We've just asked for some questions . . .

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you for cutting me off, Mr. Chairman. I wasn't finished. I was just trying to clear my throat here with my coughing.

Mr. Chairman: — My apologies, Mr. Hopfner. Please proceed.

Mr. Hopfner: — I indulged listening to you. I wish you would finish until I indicate to you I'm willing to pass on my remarks.

Mr. Chairman, what we've been dealing with in the past few days is basically, in my conclusion of my remarks to you at this time and I might come in at another time — but what I am indicating to you that over the past few days we have been dealing with several motions and have put the agenda back, back, back. And those motions have not come from the government side of the House, they've come from the opposition side of the House and of this committee. And the role, that's exactly what I'm getting at. The member asked, what is the role of the opposition.

This committee is a committee that is supposedly supposed to be a non-partisan committee and it's supposed to be looking at the workings of those expenditures in the departments. And therefore if various committee members of this committee want to keep it on the nature of partisan views and bring the politics into this committee on a continuous basis, then it has to be clarified as to what the role of this committee is. We sat here from this side of the House listening to you, Mr.

Chairman, in carrying forward the motions of the members opposite. We've duly discussed them, voted on them. We've duly backed up the agenda so that we could deal with these motions and now you are telling me, Mr. Chairman, that you are not ruling in favour of dealing with this motion because it's come from this side of the committee.

I'm asking you, Mr. Chairman, not to bring this partisan view into this committee through the chair. I am asking you to deal with this motion. If this motion goes through, then you know you have what the wish of the committee is. If the motion fails and fails through being out of order or whatever, well then we will carry on with the agenda. But there has to be clarification, and I'll pass it on to other members to make their comment.

Mr. Chairman: — Let me make some comments at this point and preface it. There's an old saying that if you're talking, it's hard to be listening. Just listen if you would for a minute, Mr. Hopfner.

I am simply saying that this committee has come to an agreement — I think it was yesterday and it has proceeded along pursuant to that agreement as to what we would be doing — that is to review departments. That is the agenda that's before us.

We were in the midst of considering items pertaining to the Provincial Secretary department. We were at the point of calling the officials in to deal further with that particular department. If it is the wish of the committee now to set aside the agenda that we agreed to, then the committee can do that and we will move on to whatever area the committee wants to deal with that is appropriate. But I need first some instruction from the committee that we set aside the agenda before us to undertake other matters. That's all I'm asking for.

Mr. Neudorf: — Mr. Chairman, I don't make any pretence to be a parliamentarian . . .

Mr. Chairman: — If you're going to do that, then I'll give you the floor. Otherwise, I've got other people on the list.

Mr. Neudorf: — If I'm going to do what?

Mr. Chairman: — Move a motion that we set aside the agenda.

Mr. Neudorf: — What I'm questioning you, sir, on is the fact that I made a motion and you have not ruled on that motion, but you have asked me to make another motion. Like I say, I'm not a parliamentarian, but it seems to me that there is only one motion allowed on the floor at one time. So I feel I can't make any further motions at this point.

Mr. Chairman: — Well, what I'm saying is that I haven't accepted any motion because the motion doesn't deal with the agenda that's before us. And if there's a motion to set aside the agenda, then we might do that.

Mr. Hopfner: — Point of order, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: — What is your point of order?

Mr. Hopfner: — I would like you to indicate to me where the chairman has the power or not the power that when it has been open to the floor to a member of this committee, that upon his completion of speaking and moving a motion that you have the right to accept or deny the fact of the motion to be carried through. I'd like clarification on that ruling.

Mr. Chairman: — Well, let me put it this way . . .

Mr. Hopfner: — I think you better get the clarification.

Mr. Chairman: — I just want to quote here from *Beauchesne's*, 295(3), "Debate arises when a question has been proposed by the Speaker . . ."

And in this case I would assume that debate arises when a motion has been put by the chairman. You have proposed a motion but I have not proposed any motion. I have not put it before you. And if you persist and you want me to rule it out of order, then I'm prepared to rule it out of order because it does not relate to the agenda that we have before us.

Having said that, I would certainly encourage you to put . . . If you feel that it's important for this committee to deviate from the agenda that it set, if it's important to deviate from the agenda that it set, to put before the committee a motion that we set aside the agenda for consideration of other items. Then we can certainly deal with a motion of this nature. I would simply ask that.

Mr. Hopfner: — Mr. Chairman, in light of your ruling and in the light of you allowing members opposite to move motions on Monday and Tuesday of this week to back up the agenda and no longer now consider the Department of Energy and Mines, Department of Education, and Department of Advanced Education, Department of Highways, Department of Economic Development and Trade, now the department of trade and investment, Department of Tourism and Small Business, now the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, Department of Supply and Services, Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, and you've allowed this committee and some committee members to back up the agenda, in light of the partisan view of . . . that I place . . . that you as chairman of this committee are putting me . . . are having me to believe that you are taking . . . I am challenging your ruling.

Mr. Chairman: — Well, you can challenge a ruling any time.

Mr. Hopfner: — And I . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Will the Chair be sustained?

Mr. Hopfner: — I put a . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Mr. Hopfner, you've challenged a ruling of the Chair. I'm going to ask that the ruling of the Chair be sustained.

All those in favour? Opposed?

The committee has ruled that the motion that . . . I ruled that the motion put by Mr. Neudorf was out of order. That ruling has been challenged. My ruling was not sustained. I would therefore interpret that we . . . that Mr. Neudorf can appropriately put this motion before us, according to the majority decision of this committee. And I have the motion and the motion is before us, and there can be debate. And to refresh your memories, I will read the motion. It's moved by Mr. Neudorf. It says:

Moved that this committee immediately proceed to hearings on the mandate of the Public Accounts Committee; and further, that during the next session of the Legislative Assembly, recommendations on the mandate and operation of the Public Accounts Committee be presented to the Assembly.

So we are proposing then to set aside the business that we had previously agreed to, to deal with immediate hearings, hearings on the mandate of the Public Accounts Committee, and that is the motion before us. Any discussion on the motion?

Mr. Anguish: — First, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask Mr. Neudorf if it's his intention in the motion to immediately draw up a list of witnesses to give testimony in regard to the mandate of the committee; or as opposed to that, are we going to do this in isolation and you put forward motions which you could of course carry with your majority and therefore that becomes the mandate of the committee. So are we looking at calling in some witnesses that are experts or have expertise in the field of public accounts, or are you going to be dictating to us what the role of the committee is?

Mr. Neudorf: — May I respond?

Mr. Chairman: — By all means. He's asked you a question.

Mr. Neudorf: — I certainly appreciate the opportunity that you give me, Mr. Anguish, to answer that. I gave that some careful thought, and I am convinced sincerely that what we have to do is do a good job. We have to do a good job of rearranging this committee's mandate so that it will become what it was intended for instead of being a public forum for expression and for exhibitionism as we witnessed yesterday. And I might add that I'm not referring only to the chairman; I will include myself quite readily into that category.

Because this is my contention. My contention is that we are extremely . . . We're opening ourselves up to an atmosphere of extreme frustration. I'm sure that you would agree with that. And I think to accommodate the smooth functioning of this committee for which it was set up, for which it received its loose mandate from the Legislative Assembly, I think it behoves us to do a very, very thorough investigation, not *in camera*, not dictated to by the government majority, but rather a candid expression of viewpoints from experts — yes, experts.

And I have referred to such people as . . . I would very much welcome the advice and the suggestions that the Provincial Auditor would have. I would also welcome

any advice and expertise that the comptroller might be able to provide for us. I would go so far as to say that we should get some chartered accountants from the private sector to get their viewpoint because they have been a subject of contention in this committee yesterday and the day before in terms of what appears to be a tiered system of accountability and of accounting where we have different standards, perhaps double standards.

I don't know. I don't know the answer to those questions, but that's a concern that I have. And I think if we can publicly air all of these concerns that different members of this committee not only now have, but committee members throughout. And if you do any kind of research or you get your researchers working on some of the problems that this committee has had which are being exacerbated because of the lack of a clear mandate over the last little while, you will find that these problems have existed all the time.

I am very pleased to see that we have a little bit of an audience here, and I refer you back to the previous chairman of our committee, Mr. Tchorzewski. And I'm glad to see him here. He still takes a good clean interest in this committee because he recognizes the importance of this committee. And under his mandate and under his guidance we . . . Check our record. Check our record. We were able to do a very reasonable job in a reasonably short period of time because there was a sense of determination on the members present at that time to remain as non-partisan as possible to allow this committee to perform its function.

But what has happened now, and I blame this on the lack of format within our committee; I blame it on the opportunities taken by members on this committee for blatant exhibitionism, political partisanship, which is specifically not desired to be inside this committee. Why do we have officials coming as witnesses before this committee? That is the function. There is no minister here. The officials are here as a direct result of the minister asking them to come to represent him. They don't speak for the minister; the minister speaks through them.

These members are not responsible to the committee, as I understand it now. Perhaps there are people here who are going to disagree with me. That's fine. That's what I'm proposing to do, to open this whole thing up. Ministerial accountability — do we have a form of republicanism as the Americans have, which seems to be a direction in which this committee has tended to go in oft-times? Or do we have a constitutional monarchy — the way I think that our Legislative Assembly wanted this committee to head?

So in a nutshell, I think that is what I'm looking forward to. Yes, full accountability, full open hearings, and if you have any suggestions, Mr. Anguish, as to who to add to that short list that I presented to you, feel free to do so. And I'm sure that the committee will accommodate you . . . Thanks for the opportunity.

Mr. Anguish: — Thank you for the answer to that question. I would take in summary of your comments that you wish to have a full investigation as to the mandate of the committee and have witnesses come before the committee. I see nothing wrong with the intent of doing

that if it improves the working of the committee.

The thing that concerns me is that we do have an agenda. We've consumed the time of many, many people in preparation for this, and I cannot see, other than political motivation, what the urgency would be of doing this immediately, as opposed to going through with our agenda and some time in the future to be able to examine the mandate of the committee. Maybe the mandate does have to be examined.

Certainly, Mr. Chairman, I don't accept any of the arguments that have been put forward by the member in that we are the ones who are somehow hampering the work of this committee.

A Member: — We didn't say that.

Mr. Anguish: — We've been here since 1:30 on Monday, and as far as I'm concerned, the members opposite have thrown every possible road-block they can to stop us from examining the departments and agencies and Crowns which we wish to call before us to find out whether the money they spent had due regard for economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.

I don't think there's any question that the mandate of the auditor, Mr. Chairman, is to determine whether or not the money that was spent had the legislative authority attached to it. But that is not the mandate of this committee in an isolated instance. The mandate of this committee is much broader than just looking at the legislative authority from which the funds flow out of departments, the taxpayers' funds that flow out of departments.

And here we are today, February 8th, two days after starting the committee, and we've done one department. We're into our third day of public accounts, and one department has come before us. And what are we studying? We're studying the *Public Accounts* for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987. What's the date again today? February 8, 1989 — almost two years after the end of the fiscal year, and the government members are still throwing up road-blocks to stop us from examining the public accounts of the province of Saskatchewan, the taxpayers' dollars.

They seem so pompous on the other side as to make accusations against someone else, whether it's opposition members or the auditor or whoever they wish to attack. Anyone who disagrees with the government or states the facts about the incompetence of the government is chastised, or the information that's required is blocked.

They have no respect for the system, the system that does have a mandate, and the system that's had a tradition for many, many years — not just in Saskatchewan — in the provinces and in the federal parliament. And they just blatantly overlook any tradition that's been there. Not only do they blatantly overlook any tradition that's been there, but they also reinterpret the mandate of the committee. And to me it's just unacceptable that after this much time, sitting here over the last three days, that you're again stopping us from examining the *Public*

Accounts that are at this point almost two years old.

And I don't know where we go from here. Do we start drawing up our list of witnesses? I don't envy your position, Mr. Chairman, because at this rate it'll be another year or more before we get to the *Public Accounts* ending March 31, 1987. Well, Mr. Auditor, is it appropriate, is it timely that we examine expenditures three years after the fact, or four years, or never, as far as you members are concerned on the government side of this committee?

You should be ashamed of yourselves for the violation of tradition, the violation of the mandate of this committee, and you should be ashamed for trying to hide whatever it is you're trying to hide within the departments through expenditures that are reported in *Public Accounts*. I think you should be ashamed of yourselves.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well I'm not opposed to the idea of reviewing the mandate of the committee, and I think it happens from time to time. It's happened a number of times, and I don't think it's anything new or amazing for a committee to have a look at its mandate.

I think in 1982 after the Conservative government won the election, there was a review of this very committee, and the committee spent a number of days calling witnesses and looking at the role of the public accounts. And at that time there were some changes — small, minute changes recommended to the House. This was your government that did the review. Changes were made, small as they were. And so it's totally appropriate, I guess, for the committee to review the workings of the committee. There's nothing startling about that.

And I think in general I don't want to speak for our caucus because when I conclude my remarks I would want to ask for a recess so we can consult with our House Leader, because it was the House leaders that negotiated this meeting time of this week.

I guess the thing that surprises me is that we're looking at rules that were in every way agreed to — the mandate was agreed to by your caucus members, voted on in the House — that we would today find the rules that you had voted in favour of in the House, under your new government, are no longer acceptable. And the Premier voted on it; minister of Finance at that time; Eric Berntson voted in favour of them. Now all of a sudden we have to stop the workings of the committee two and one-half days into a one-week stint that's already two years behind in order for you to have another review.

So I guess the next question is, what is the motive behind it? What is the rationale behind it? You've been in this committee before; you never took the opportunity in the past year when we weren't sitting to write a memo to our House Leader to say, look, it isn't working right; we'd like to have these hearings. Why would a committee member wait until two days into the process, with only a five-day sitting period . . .

Mr. Neudorf: — Are you asking me that question?

Mr. Lingenfelter: — No I'm not asking you that question.

I think we've heard quite enough of you in the past two and one-half days trying to obstruct the workings of this committee.

I think the reason why we're seeing another obstruction by the member from Rosthern — and I point him out particularly because the other members on that side I think have been relatively co-operative. When we had to stop for a meeting yesterday to work out a possible compromise resolution, the member from Morse and the member from Saskatoon, we took time, we worked on it. We didn't come up with a compromise, but things are working.

I think the reason why, Mr. Chairman, we're now in this position of calling off the committee review of government spending is because, if you look at the agenda, this afternoon we had intended to deal with Provincial Secretary. We had indicated to the committee it would take about 15 minutes; the Department of Justice, which we had indicated to the committee publicly would take about a half an hour. We would have by now or shortly from now been into Executive Council and then the Department of Finance. That's why we're not dealing with the workings of this committee.

And I say to you that it's totally inappropriate for the members of the government with their control of the committee to stymie the debate in terms of the review of the spending of this government, particularly the Premier's spending and the Department of Finance where the huge deficit that was built up in an election year and falsely portrayed to the people of this province during the election campaign, that now you're going to walk away from the table and not carry on with public accounts.

I say, if the motion were legitimate you wouldn't have moved a motion yesterday, if this had been sincere, that called on the Clerk of the committee, and I want to read the motion you passed yesterday:

Prepare a chronology of events relating to the evolution and development of Public Accounts Committee with particular emphasis on changes in rules and principles of procedure including a brief explanation of such changes and dates they became effective.

And it goes on for three more points, all of which were passed yesterday.

We're not waiting for the Clerk to bring back a report. You're wanting to do it today. We pointed out and accepted a resolution that would start this process, so we're in agreement with it. If your motion would say that we should hold these hearings next week — and I want to move that amendment to the motion that we put in a date that these hearings begin next Monday; I'm not sure what date that is, but if the Clerk would look that up for us and we would put in that time of 1 o'clock next Monday — we will vote in favour of this motion.

But what we can't do, because we do represent the public, is stop the debate and the review of the spending of the Premier's department, because there's a good deal of travel that is included in here; there's a number of

things that we want to do, to review in that year, even though it's two years old. We want to ask the department, in terms of the Finance department, when it became obvious that we were going to run up a deficit that was over twice as much as what was projected. At what month did that become obvious?

Like, I believe I know why you're trying to stop the committee's work. You will prove that I am wrong by accepting the putting in of a date that will be after our review of the Premier's spending and the Department of Finance. And having said that, I want to move that amendment:

That this motion be dated and that the committee started sitting as of 1 o'clock next Monday, the 13th of February.

Mr. Chairman: — Thank you, Mr. Lingenfelter. We have an amendment, and the motion read that moved that this committee immediately proceed to hearings.

I would then take it that it's been amended that . . . moved that this committee proceed on Monday, January . . . or February the 13th, to hearings on the mandate. Is that . . .

Mr. Lingenfelter: — And we could all agree with it and then get on with our work.

Mr. Chairman: — So the amendment before us is that we take out the word "immediately," and replace it to "commencing hearings next Monday the 13th." Any discussion on the amendment itself, as opposed to the new motion? Let's dispense with the amendment.

And who do I have on . . . I had Mr. Martens on the amendment; I had Mr. Hopfner on the amendment; I had Mr. Martin, Regina Wascana, on the amendment; I had Mr. Prebble on the amendment. Did you have your hand up, Mr. Neudorf?

Mr. Neudorf: — Well I have great fear and trepidation of doing that after what Mr. Lingenfelter said that I had spoken enough and so on. So I'll consider that for a moment.

Mr. Chairman: — Okay. Well at this point I have Mr. Martens, then Mr. Hopfner, then Mr. Martin, Regina Wascana, then Mr. Prebble, on the amendment. And please confine your remarks to the amendment as to basically why we shouldn't support or why we should support the amendment to do it on next Monday as opposed to immediately, so that for the sake of process we can get on with this.

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will try and do that. The concern that I have with that, and it really wouldn't matter to me, I guess, so much when a person starts, but probably the more immediate it is the better. Because there are certain things that we would, as a group of members here, have to sit down and assess: the kinds of witnesses that we would want to call; the kinds of objectives we want to make. And I think we should begin as quickly as we can. And that's the reasoning behind why I would say that we do it today, like start today.

And I have the belief that these things and items as they were presented in the arguments that were laid out by Mr. Lingenfelter, they will be in existence at that time. I mean, it's . . . the instances that they think they're going to uncover or the things that they're going to do are going to be available if they're there at that time. They will be able to probably ask the same questions at that time.

So I don't think that we're dealing with something that is unusual. And I have consistently said that over the last two days, and I have consistently said that at other periods of time — and you can check the *Hansards* of this committee — that I have been generally frustrated by the fact that there's no rules; there's no set of guide-lines that are within the containment where the Chair can rule that this is the mandate of that issue. And I think we should begin today to deal with the functions of the kind of committee and the rules of the committee that we should have. And I believe we should begin today.

I was reading through some of the things in the 1964 report, and some of the things that they continually bring up are the issues dealing with the politicizing of the agenda. And it consistently, no matter which government is in power, becomes the role — no matter which party is in opposition or which party is in government — it becomes the role of either one of them to create havoc within the dimension of giving some credibility to the audit process and the public accounting to the people of Saskatchewan or to the area that they're responsible for.

So I would think that, to begin with, we need to start by outlining in an open discussion some of the things that we think ought to be there. And that's going to take a while. And I would say that even discussing the time line on how we present that ought to be part of the discussion that we have. And I think that we could assume some of those things, that if we get going today it's better earlier than later.

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in speaking to the amendment, I also will add to my colleague from Morse in regarding that we . . . (inaudible) . . . this particular motion is for purposes. And I would like to draw to your attention various different purposes of why we feel it's important to get a proper mandate to help speed up the process of the public accounts.

Mr. Chairman, if you yourself went back in the verbatim, I believe it was yesterday . . .

Mr. Chairman: — This morning.

Mr. Hopfner: — Yesterday. What I'm referring to is that when the member from The Battlefords, for instance, was in a line of questioning and it was brought to your attention of whether the questioning was in order or was out of order, you yourself had indicated, and it's probably in the verbatim that you yourself admitted that, well, he is in order, and yet he's not in order.

I mean the chair is confused. And that confusion is definite amongst committee members.

When we are talking about the point that the member

from Elephantstone was trying to make is that this committee is of a partisan nature . . .

Mr. Chairman: — I might I just stop you. I think the constituency is Regina Elphinstone as opposed to Elephantstone, and you may alienate many people in this city if you continue to refer to the good people of Regina Elphinstone as Regina Elephantstone.

Mr. Hopfner: — I didn't say Elephantstone.

Mr. Chairman: — I distinctly heard you say that.

Mr. Hopfner: — It's Elphinstone. Mr. Chairman, I will not accept your correction because I didn't make that remark.

But when he brings the point of the partisan part of this committee, it is very apparent that there is that partisan nature in this committee because of the various different interpretations. This side of the committee questions the chair, and immediately upon your ruling, we have innuendos and accusations that this side of the committee is trying to hide information from the committee, is trying to protect the government.

We have said on several occasions that it is in the public's interest to have the reports done expediently. We have indicated that we want to know, this committee wants to know that the spending of the various departments are of a legitimate nature, not a fraudulent nature. We've never stopped members from questioning the expenditures of the various departments until there was a question of whether we were going beyond the realm of our mandate.

Mr. Chairman: — Mr. Hopfner, might I encourage to get to the amendment as to why we should deal with it on Monday as opposed to immediately. Thank you.

Mr. Hopfner: — Mr. Chairman, I have never interrupted you as when you were speaking, and I don't believe it's incumbent upon you to interrupt a speaker when he's speaking.

Mr. Chairman: — My apologies, Mr. Hopfner. I just want to, on behalf of the committee, encourage members to speak to the motion that's before us, and that's the amendment. Thank you.

Mr. Hopfner: — I'm speaking to the amendment.

Mr. Chairman: — I thought you might be straying a little bit.

Mr. Hopfner: — No, I'm not. I'm speaking exactly in rebuttal to what the member had stated in his reply prior to making the motion.

He had indicated that we had previously brought forward a motion to have a report brought back to this committee from the Clerk, and he had tried to undermine this motion by suggesting that that previous motion should have been adequate.

Although I commend those members for co-operating and unanimously passing that motion, it had not

alleviated the fact that we are right back to the square one, and that is basically what the member had referred to as a broad or comprehensive-type auditing nature in the questioning that's going on in this room.

Therefore that in order to speed up the working of this committee, I believe that so that there are no violations of the rules of this committee, that we get into some hard fact rules, stick with them, so that the chair himself is not confused. And therefore I will be voting against the amendment and be in favour of getting on with the motion.

Mr. Martin: — Well, Mr. Chairman, there's been a great deal of discussion and disagreement as to the precise role of the committee. The chair has made several rulings in this regard which have already been mentioned, and the chair, I would say, has allowed considerable latitude on this matter.

And so it seems to me that in an atmosphere of highly politicized rhetoric, that we find a method by which we can identify and define the exact role of this committee. And I must say that I find it confusing, and I think that the exact role of this committee is by no means defined or is being operated under what could be a set of rules. It's highly politicized and we simply are not achieving what we should be doing here. And so I would not support the amendment, but I may be in favour of the motion, and get at it as soon as possible.

Mr. Prebble: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: — On the amendment.

Mr. Prebble: — On the amendment. Well, Mr. Chairman, I want to speak in favour of the amendment. I think in an attempt . . . If the government members attempt to block the amendment, which it's clear that they're hoping to do, then what we're going to be witnessing is a direct attack on the democratic process.

It's very clear, Mr. Chairman, that the government members opposite are seeking to prevent an examination of the financial spending of this government. I believe that their only motive can be that they are seeking to hide corruption and patronage in this government. This is another part of their attempt to cover up what has been happening within government when it comes to spending, particularly spending in sensitive departments like the ones that we were about to consider this afternoon.

And, Mr. Chairman, I want to say that this attempt, which is being seen in an attempt to scuttle this amendment, began when the *Public Accounts* for the year that we're considering were tabled 14 months late, in May of 1988. And since then, Mr. Chairman, we have seen consistent delays in the calling of these hearings. We, on the opposition, have made several attempts to call this committee on an intersessional basis. They have all consistently been turned down by government members until it was finally agreed that the hearings would be held for this week. So here we are now finally meeting one year and ten and a half months after the fiscal year end that we're supposed to be considering.

The Provincial Auditor has rightly said that the *Public Accounts* were not being tabled in a timely manner. Not only are they not being tabled in a timely manner, they're not being examined in a timely manner either. And since we've met, Mr. Chairman, since the week began, we have had constant attempts by the members of the government to delay the deliberations of this committee, constant callings of points of order, constant questioning about whether questions that we were asking were appropriate. And, Mr. Chairman, I can only presume now that the attempt to scuttle this amendment and to move this committee away from a consideration of the spending of departments of government and into an examination of the role of the committee itself is nothing more than a blatant attempt to bring a complete halt to the examination of the spending of government departments until at least well into the next session of the legislature. That's the only possible explanation that we can have for the attempt to completely change the agenda for the rest of this week.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I want to give one very specific reason why it makes sense to delay an examination of the role of the committee until next week. As my colleague, the member for Regina Elphinstone has pointed out, we have recently passed a motion, introduced earlier this week by the government members on this committee, to ask the Clerk to report on the role of the committee. And it surely makes sense to wait until we receive the report of the Clerk before we begin the deliberations of the role of the committee.

We have gone to great public expense to keep officials waiting outside here with the intent that we were going to be questioning them this afternoon. We've been keeping them waiting all week. Departments have been on stand-by all week and are waiting to appear before us. We are going to inconvenience all those people, and more importantly we are going to deny the people of Saskatchewan, the public, the right to finally have some questions answered about the spending in 1986-87. That's obviously your objective.

As my colleague said, we're coming to a number of very sensitive government departments on the agenda, and among them are Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, Executive Council, and the Department of Finance. And you all know that there are major, embarrassing questions to be asked to the officials of those departments. And clearly your objective is to ensure that those questions will not be asked at any point in this week or for as long as you can possibly delay it.

I expect that what we're going to see is that for the rest of this week there will be no consideration of the spending of these departments, nor will there be any consideration of them until we're into the next session of the legislature. And I invite any of you to deny that that will be the case because that's clearly your agenda.

I want to conclude, Mr. Chairman, by saying that this is nothing less than a blatant attempt by government members to block the democratic process. I've never seen such an anti-democratic administration running this province in all the years that I have lived here or watched

the development of this province. It's a disgrace. I ask you to withdraw your motion immediately. You should be ashamed of yourselves. It violates every tradition of this legislature what you're doing here this afternoon. Every tradition that this legislature has operated on since its inception is being denied by government members opposite, Mr. Chairman, and I'm infuriated by it.

Mr. Chairman: — Thank you, Mr. Prebble.

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I certainly appreciated that display of righteous indignation by the member opposite.

I want to address a few of the concerns why I think that the immediacy of this problem has to be addressed. It's obvious, I say to all members of this committee, that the system that we have in place right now is simply not working. It's not working. We've had examples in previous times, in previous sessions. I raised the concern at that time; I've been raising this concern on an ongoing basis that I did not feel comfortable with the way that this committee was working, and it's got to come to a head because it is not working.

You say that we are going along smoothly with our agenda now. Take a look. Take a look at where we are in the agenda. What has been accomplished under the working rules as we see them today over this past day and a half or two days? We are very far behind. And what I am most concerned about, I think, is that display of exhibitionism which this Legislative Assembly was exposed to yesterday, when we see amateur machinations to manipulate the committee, to manipulate the auditor, and yes, dare I say, to manipulate the media.

I was so frustrated yesterday after this display on your part that I felt that the time had come to act and to act now so that this committee could properly perform the functions for which it was intended. And you, sir, have the audacity to put on that cloak of righteous indignation and in a hypocritical way you are denouncing the great public expense, if I may use your words, the great public expense.

Where were you yesterday? Where was your concern yesterday when we could have been dealing with these issues. When those ladies and gentlemen outside in the hall who were waiting to be called upon could not be called upon, this entire committee ground to a halt. Why? Because you and your members chose to get the media in here because you felt that you were no longer making the points that you were trying to make and you walked out.

You left me sitting here wondering when you would come back into this committee. That recess was uncalled for. I asked the chairman on his way out, Mr. Chairman, what is going on? How long are we recessing? Nary a word; not a whisper; walked out. We didn't know where we were at. The officials outside didn't know where they were at. There was no show of consideration for anyone else. And those are the reasons we've got to get a hold of this committee. We're floundering. We're directionless. We don't know what we're doing, and I think it's time for us to assess that situation now.

Obviously, I will not be supporting that amendment.

Mr. Muller: — I just want to maybe make some quotes here from verbatim and show where the politics has really crept into this committee, and it is regrettable that this has happened. And speaking to the amendment, I think that it's something that we have to deal with . . .

Mr. Anguish: — Point of order, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: — Point of order.

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Muller mentioned he was going to read from verbatim. Are the transcripts out for the committee?

Mr. Muller: — Oh yes, from May 31, 1988.

Mr. Anguish: — Oh, excuse me, I thought you meant for this committee.

Mr. Muller: — Yes, I will, after my opening remarks, read from the verbatim.

And to reiterate what I'm saying is that I see that the politics has crept into this committee and it's too bad. But anyway, I'll read this from the verbatim, May 31, 1988, minutes, page 19, Mr. Rolfes:

We know that there are many programs that are initiated by all kinds of governments that somebody says no, you didn't get your value for your money; and yes, you, did. I mean, take for example — and I'm just taking one — the production loan program. Gee, I'm sure you can ask people out there — no, you didn't get value; yes, we did get value.

We made the decision to, you know, save the family farm or to help farmers out there. And the politicians make that decision . . . But politicians have to make that decision.

That is what the New Democratic member of this committee had to say on this subject at the last session. What is more, he made the point of saying, as did some of you here, that we should get into this question. We've been saying all along that we had to resolve the question of the mandate of this committee, not just the government members, but you too, so I want us to do so now. And I suspect that one of the reasons that Herman isn't with us any more is the following quote from the same source:

So I wouldn't mind going through that discussion again, but I think that Mr. Anguish and myself would have different views, possibly, on it.

And Mr. Anguish is here and Mr. Rolfes is gone, so we can see that politics again has won out over actually trying to resolve the problem.

So I think that we certainly have to set the parameters of this committee and where it's going and, I mean, this statement itself by one of your own members proves that politics has moved in here. The NDP has removed one

member because they had disagreed between themselves, so they removed that member from the Public Accounts Committee. So that shows how the politics has really moved in to the committee.

So I think we have to resolve the question before this committee can carry on. So I will certainly be voting against the amendment and in favour of the motion.

Mr. Prebble: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I want to make two points. I think I'll respond first to Mr. Muller's comments about why Mr. Rolfes is no longer on the committee. Mr. Muller, there's a very simple reason for that, and that is that Mr. Rolfes was expecting that the work of this committee would take place over the fall and winter months. And he has been, during that time, had a commitment to teach on a full-time basis in Saskatoon, and that's the reason for the change, and no other. So your comments in that regard hold no water.

More specifically, I want to comment on one of the reasons why the work of this committee was significantly delayed yesterday. And that was not only because of the constant points of order being called by members opposite, but also because of the very major attack that government members intentionally launched on the Provincial Auditor, an attack that was unprecedented.

You basically, yesterday, you attempted to make a scapegoat out of the Provincial Auditor. You didn't like what he was telling the people of Saskatchewan, and you set about to use yesterday for your own political purposes to make a scapegoat of the auditor, to attack the auditor, to try to undermine the credibility of the auditor in the hope that the people of Saskatchewan would take less seriously the statements that he was making.

In effect, the Provincial Auditor yesterday was trying to tell the people of Saskatchewan, as he has for the last month, the truth about what's happening to the financial state of affairs in this province, and you set out to attack him. And that's what yesterday's agenda was largely about.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I want to specifically speak to the amendment by saying that one of the reasons why I want to see the amendment adopted is because we've got a number of very important questions to ask over the next two or three days which, if the amendment passes, we won't have a chance to do. I just want to give one example of this.

When it comes to Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, we want to ask some questions, for example, about the security service. How many staff are employed by the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation section? We want to know their names, their salary levels, their resumés. We want to know whether the Saskatchewan Property Management security unit has any contracts or agreements for the transfer of information with other law enforcement agencies such as CSIS (Canadian Security Intelligence Service) or the RCMP. We want to know whether the security unit has access to the Canadian police identification computer. That's just one little example of dozens and dozens of

questions, Mr. Chairman, that we want to ask that we will not be able to ask if this amendment is defeated.

And, Mr. Chairman, I think it's clear that the government members, as I said before, have only one agenda, and that's to make sure that throughout the rest of this week and probably for many months to come, we will have no opportunities to ask any further questions about the financial spending of any department in government at the level of this committee.

Mr. Chairman: — Let me just ask a question, if I might, and I have Mr. Lingenfelter next and then Mr. Neudorf. I want to put this question to Mr. Martens who was the first one to speak on the amendment itself.

Mr. Martens, the motion suggests that we deal immediately; that is, we put aside all other business to hearings on the mandate, and further, that during the next session of the Legislative Assembly that recommendations and so on be presented to the Legislative Assembly.

Would it be your interpretation of that motion that were we to conclude these meetings on our mandate, for example, this week or whenever we conclude them, that we would then put aside all consideration of departments until after the Legislative Assembly had had . . .

Mr. Hopfner: — Point of order.

Mr. Chairman: — What is your point of order?

Mr. Hopfner: — I'm calling a point of order. Do you want to recognize the point of order?

Mr. Chairman: — I said, what is your point of order?

Mr. Hopfner: — The point of order I have is that I would like you to clarify to the committee as to why you're questioning one member in regard to procedure here.

Mr. Chairman: — The only reason I'm asking Mr. Martens, and maybe someone else can answer, is because Mr. Martens was the first to speak on the amendment from the government side. If someone else wants to answer, that's fine. But I just put it to Mr. Martens because he was the first one to speak on it. And someone else can answer. Maybe I'll address it generally to all members then. Would it be your understanding, as a result of the motion, that we would not consider the other items, that is to say the *Public Accounts*, until after the Legislative Assembly had made some determination as to our mandate?

I'm just trying to get it clear here what's meant by the motion and what's involved in terms like immediately and as opposed to dealing with the matter next Monday. Because if we deal with the matter next Monday, I know that we'll hopefully get back to the agenda and we'll deal with departments. If we deal with it immediately, I don't know whether you mean then that we will not deal again with government departments until after the Legislative Assembly has dealt with this matter, or just what your understanding is? May I ask?

Mr. Neudorf: — Okay, I'll . . . If I could answer that question for you, Mr. Chairman.

I thought I had been making myself abundantly clear that the immediacy of the problem is that this committee is not working. And so we must address that major issue, my major concern, and have our hearings and draw our conclusions and make our recommendations to the legislature so that they can adopt that report.

And I'm assuming that after we've gone through this exercise of investigating the mandate of this committee that it will be presented to the Legislative Assembly as a recommendation or a report, if that's the proper term for it, as usual — as you know we usually give a report to the Legislative Assembly — and that will be the new direction in which this committee intends to work on and, having been accepted by the Legislative Assembly, that will then become our mandate.

And if I could just . . . May I continue because I will indirectly be then answering the concern that Mr. Prebble had. I'm on the speaking list anyway so we'll just leave it for now.

Mr. Chairman: — Yes . . . So I understand you to mean then that we will not consider any departments until the Legislative Assembly has further dealt with this matter, that is to say the mandate of the committee. There will be no opportunity for this committee to question departments or witnesses until the Legislative Assembly has had concluded its consideration.

Mr. Neudorf: — Mr. Chairman, I don't propose to speak for our House Leader, or your House Leader for that matter, so I will leave a decision like that as to what kind of alterations you would like to arrange for.

Mr. Chairman: — Well, no, I have to go with what's before me not what Eric's saying in the back room. I have to go with what's before me, and I'm trying to get an understanding of — myself — as to what the motion means as opposed to what the amendment would have us do. And I'm just trying to get that clear.

My interpretation of your motion is that we would not be dealing with any departments until after the Legislative Assembly has considered the matter of our mandate which, I suppose, might significantly alter the mandate and the kinds of questions we might put to departments, but I wanted to get that clear.

Mr. Martens: — Mr. Chairman, I think that some of the ideas have been already expressed, but the conduct of the committee, and the conducting of business of the committee, need to have some parameters set down that will be the official rules.

We have, we have . . . I'll give you an example. We have in the Assembly . . . the ultimate authority is the Speaker. We have the chairman of the committee here who has no authority one way or the other. He's a member, basically, at the pleasure of this committee to deal with rules and when it doesn't work. I'll give you an example here from 1964. Mr. McNaughton says:

In the long run the value of the committee is not on how it conducts its proceedings but in the character of its reports, which should be free of political bias. In such circumstances situations arise where the public is better served by meeting in camera.

And he's talking about those kinds of issues. Another evaluation:

In 1958 the Public Accounts Committee was not effective.

This is a Canadian public accounts. Why?

. . . because it dealt basically from a political bias in all of its ruling.

Because it didn't have an official set of rules to dictate the conduct of the committee, the parameters of it. And we've been witness to a number of things here in the last few days — and I don't think you can point a finger to one side or the other; both of us have been doing it — where we have put in motions which you in the chair have total frustration about because I can easily recognize that that there is no rule to guide you in determining how it should go.

And from that we need to begin as quickly as we can to set that process in motion.

Mr. Chairman: — Anyway, I'm just trying to get an answer to a specific question.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well, I don't want to repeat everything that I said earlier, but I want to elaborate on a couple of issues. This committee, with whatever rules it has — and obviously it has rules — I mean to say that there are no rules or guide-lines for this committee isn't accurate and is totally false.

There's two different sets of rules, obviously. One, the written rule that was accepted by your government in 1982 and put forward by your government. But also there's traditions. I mean, this committee is not a new body. It's been around this place since 1906. In its present form . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well since the province has been here; it started in 1906, was the first mandate it had.

Now for five of you to come in here and suddenly say, in the middle of the deliberations, this no longer works, or we're not going to carry on the duties and mandate that we have, talks a great deal about shutting the door to the opposition and the people of the province.

And I get back to the main point of the discussion and that is whether we start the review of this committee's functioning today or next Monday. Obviously all the logic is, is that we would wait until the report would come from the Clerk, that we've asked to be prepared, which won't be today. It may be next Monday, but it may not.

But all the logic would speak to the fact that we would wait and prepare some information, that we would go on with the workings that we have planned for this week.

The only possible reason why you would use your majority hereto push this through, as you have in so many cases, is to avoid the questioning on certain departments or Crowns.

And I use the example of the Premier's estimates, and I mentioned them before. But under Executive Council there's a great deal of travel expenses. If you would look at page 177, under administration the travel expenses amounts to \$175,000. Now every bit of that may be legitimate, or it may not be. But we wanted to ask those questions this week. Our staff, on a limited budget, has prepared volumes of information for us to use. It was a deal negotiated between the two House leaders. It was a deal then negotiated between your House Leader and all the departments that were to be called.

Had you told us when we were negotiating that you wanted to review the mandate of the committee rather than sit this week, that would have been acceptable. You've been here before. You know how this committee works better than I do. It's worked the same as it always has. It may not work to your benefit; I agree with that. It may not be in the best interest of the Conservative Party's re-election to have this committee functioning and to be asking these questions; I agree with you totally. And it certainly wasn't in the best interest of the New Democratic Party, prior to 1982, to have had the Conservative members probing where the spending priorities of that government were. But that's not what democracy is about.

You may not have liked the member from North Battleford asking questions about a contract of motorized golf carts. I know you don't like it; I don't blame you for not liking it and trying to defend. But that's what democracy is about. Many people in North Battleford who pay for that contract are not happy that a former cabinet minister got the contract. Certainly you must be able to see that. There's logic in that. Taxpayers don't like to think about government members who are defeated getting benefit from their taxes. I think that's perfectly logical.

Extending from that, a member of our government, or our caucus, coming here and asking those questions is not only legitimate but is perfectly acceptable. That's not trying to use the rules of this committee for political ends. That defines what Public Accounts is all about, questioning the spending priorities of government.

And I know why we're not going to deal with it if this motion to amend the amendment is defeated. It's because you don't want to explain the 175,000 in spending in the Premier's department, or you don't want to explain under information services the 37,000 in advertising, or further expenditures in that area of information services of travel for 6,000.

What is it? What did you spend there? Those are the kinds of questions that we asked the Premier in the House. He gives his political view of those answers. Here, this committee since 1906 has given a different explanation. And you five people here are attempting to block that process. That's why it's very depressing and I think very, very important to the people of the province that they

know what you're attempting to do. It's very important; it's fundamental to democracy. Because a continuation of this blockage of information from the opposition, I say, whichever government is in power and whichever party is in opposition, defeats democracy. It can't work.

This is a first step, then there'll be another one. If we get into a ruckus in the House, well we'll change the bloody rules of the House. We're not going to let the opposition get information through question period so we'll abolish question period because it's too noisy. We don't like answering the questions. And I want to tell you that in asking these questions we're not only doing the duty that we're sent here for, we're guarding a process that has been here since this province joined confederation.

I'm not saying we shouldn't review the rules. I'm agreeing with you that from time to time, if you're not happy with the rules that you implemented in 1982, then we should review them. You people were in government when they were accepted in the House.

But why would you stop the process of asking important questions about the spending of the Premier? Another one, contractual services, \$186,000. Who got the contracts?

I say to you, it's because there's cover-up, because there's corruption. That can be the only reason, otherwise you'd let us go on and ask those pointed questions of the property management board, the Premier's office, and the Department of Finance. And if you vote against this amendment, then we'll know that there's much to hide in the spending; that there is a lot of dirt; that there is corruption going on in this government. And we'll make a point to let the public know that — not because we're using your motion; you're the ones that are going to be passing it — but I'll tell you, we'll let the people of the province know, starting today, the cover-up in this spending that was done by this government in the Premier's office and in every other office. It's no threat at all. It's simply a matter of either dealing with this as we had planned, that was agreed to by both caucuses through the House Leader, or we'll know that there's cover-up.

So for my part, I'm going to be voting in favour of the amendment because I agree with the member from Rosthern that we should be reviewing. If he were legitimate, he would vote with me on that because he knows as well, the reason he's doing it is to cover up if he insists that we don't follow the agenda today and start the review process on Monday.

Mr. Chairman: — Are we ready for the question on the amendment itself as opposed to the motion? No? We're still on the amendment.

Mr. Neudorf: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to inform the member from Elphinstone in Regina here that having carefully traced the history of my background and my heredity, I do believe I am legitimate. And having said that, I don't think that anything else and I don't want to be redundant and repeat what I have said, so I also do not think that anything that I could say would probably at this point allay your fears.

But to address specifically what Mr. Prebble was talking about before, the way I perceive this in working is not a cover-up. That's not my intent here. As far as I am concerned, once we've done this review, and so that we'll be able to sit down here in a legitimate fashion, discuss these issues, and we can't start on Monday, Mr. Lingenfelter. It doesn't work.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Why?

Mr. Neudorf: — Because we've had two and a half days right now of frustrated members and we're not getting anywhere. And I think that we, first of all, have to go through this process, and I'm sure that we're going to be able to come up with a much, much better process that we'll all be able to work with more and be more comfortable with. And I'm convinced that even after we have these new parameters under which this committee is going to operate, I have no objection to you dig up these myths that you're talking about, over-expropriation and all these other kinds of things. As far as I'm concerned we can continue on at that point. I have no intention of making this for evermore out that you will not be able to ask these ministers, and so on, the question.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Sure it is.

Mr. Neudorf: — Not in my opinion. No, that's not my intention. And I invite you after we finish with this to continue on in what you were going to be doing. I have no concern about that.

The other question, Mr. Chairman, that I have, or comment, is directed to Mr. Prebble. Mr. Prebble, I don't know exactly why you brought it up, but you were bringing up that the former member, Mr. Rolfes, was not able to perform his function as a full-time member of the legislature in attending these meetings because he had a full-time job teaching. I was just kind of surprised that that would be his position. Thank you.

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I do believe that I can agree with the member from Elphinstone that — he rolls his eyes every time I say it; maybe I won't say it; maybe I'll just say Mr. Lingenfelter then, if that's better with you — that Mr. Lingenfelter brought forward was that we do agree that there are rules. Where the disagreement comes into fact is the interpretation and the broad interpretations of those rules. That's why this committee is not functioning.

We're not trying to stymie or stop any member of this committee on either side to ask questions of any department. And I welcome those questions. But I don't believe, in my mind, and it should be discussed and debated out in this committee in this forum, whether this committee is responsible for holding a comprehensive audit of various departments or all departments, or whether we are to stick strictly with legitimate spending habits of departments, whether they were legitimate or fraudulent.

I think the public is expected to have that information available to them. And I do believe it should be. And I do believe that those questions should be put forward in

such a manner that they're put forward from this committee in a non-partisan view. And for being basically brought forward so the answers and everything can be brought forward to this committee, that we are satisfied that those dollars have been expended properly.

With that being said, Mr. Chairman, it's very unlikely that we could finalize any report of this committee unless we had those interpretations of the rules that we agree that we have.

I would say that I welcome Mr. Lingenfelter and all members of this committee to ask any question to the department at any given time, but until we can have this interpretation of the rules and how far we can expand on those questions to the various departments and whether we're putting the various people that come to this committee in a precarious situation, whether it's legal or illegal, whether it's not up to them to answer but up to the minister to answer, we can't function.

And I think once we clarify this, and basically we could start here today by running through our rules and finding out from each committee member how they interpret those rules and seeing if there's any type of agreement that we could come to as, yes, we're in the realm of this committee within the regulation of this committee set forth by the legislature, and not have us try to interpret otherwise.

I know and I agree with the members opposite that our House leaders had agreed for this committee to sit and the hearings to take place. But as you well noted early this morning, we tried to go through the Department of Parks and Renewable Resources and we could not go through the Department of Parks and Renewable Resources without questioning whether our authority was beyond the direction of this committee. And we were continually questioning that authority. And so there is confusion. There is confusion, as I pointed out earlier, by the chair, when he didn't know whether to rule a person out of order or in order.

And I think we could maybe speed this whole process up if we could tend to agree on various principles of this committee and there's a format we can go by. And any other interpretation that we cannot agree by, then we should pull people in to ... witnesses in to grapple with those various problems that we have, and we could resolve the matter very expediently. I don't want the members opposite to believe for one moment that on this side — that we want to stymie anybody on this side or that side for being able to ask questions.

Therefore, with the consideration of getting on with the motion, Mr. Chairman, I would think that by dealing with it expediently we can get into the workings of the motion and we can get this off our agenda and get back on to our agenda that we started the week with.

Mr. Chairman: — Thank you, Mr. Hopfner. If I might be allowed a few comments from the chair, I might say you have a curious way of wanting to speed the process up, because as I read the motion — and we're dealing with the amendment — but the motion would have us put aside all our work immediately, which would have the

result of us not dealing with the public accounts for the fiscal year '86-87 until after the provincial legislature had dealt with the question of mandate pursuant to consideration on our part, as opposed to dealing with those departments now and taking the point of view that once that's completed next Monday, that we would then move on to the question of mandate at the committee, so that prior to the consideration of the next set of public accounts the mandate might be clear.

And I might say as an aside that any time the Conservatives have some new initiatives to put forward about the public accounts and how we might examine them, I do have some second thoughts and some cause for concern, I think. And I suppose if it was an NDP majority, I might have some concerns too, Mr. Neudorf. Once the government majority has some strong feelings and suggestions about how the process might be changed, then I have very grave concerns.

But it seems to me that without the amendment and the motion as it was first proposed, we could be delaying consideration of the '86-87 public accounts and delay consideration of a number of questions — some that Mr. Lingenfelter has alluded to, some that Mr. Prebble has alluded to. We might delay consideration of those public accounts until after the next provincial election.

Alternatively, we could delay until after the Legislative Assembly — and recognizing that the government has a majority — had so altered the mandate and what it is that this committee can do so as to severely restrict the kinds of questions that might be put in this committee. It didn't escape my attention that this has all come about very quickly after a ruling on my part that the mandate of the committee was the last that I had, in terms of a report of the legislature, and that was in 1982. And that mandate included provisions such as that the committee should in fact investigate the economy of the provision of goods and services, questions such as efficiency — I'd say comprehensive auditing questions, value-for-money type questions, and then that evinces great concern.

And it seems to me that what the government is hoping to do — and there was another comment the previous day — what the government members are hoping to do is to so severely restrict the mandate of the committee that the committee members will be able to ask no more than: was this expenditure according to law? and if there is any challenge to be made of an expenditure that the committee members will have to have a *priori* grounds before asking any questions. And I guess I have a great fear of what might happen if we're to delay consideration of the public accounts and the departments until after this motion is dealt with. I have a very great fear as to just what the purpose is of immediately setting aside, to move with what I would call an unseemly rush to matters other than the public accounts.

Ready for the question on the amendment that we deal with it next Monday as opposed to immediately? All those in favour of the amendment. All those opposed to the amendment.

Negatived

Mr. Chairman: — We're now back to the main motion, which is that:

Moved that this committee immediately proceed to hearings on the mandate of the Public Accounts Committee, and further, that during the next session of the Legislative Assembly recommendations on the mandate and operation of the Public Accounts Committee be presented to the Assembly.

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Chairman, I would like to make another amendment. I would like to move as an amendment that we add the words as follows to the motion:

and further, that this work (i.e. the work of the committee that the members opposite are proposing on the role of the Public Accounts Committee) and further that this work be done from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., starting tonight and continuing each week-night until its work is completed so that the period from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day can be used for an examination of the spending of government departments.

Mr. Chairman: — Thank you, Mr. Prebble. Any discussion on the amendment itself? Mr. Prebble.

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Chairman, this would be the ultimate test of whether the government members simply want to block the democratic process that is supposed to be at work in this committee and allow us to examine the spending of the government departments that we're anxious to get to, or whether their sole intent, as I believe, is to completely stymie the work of this committee, in effect ensure that Public Accounts can't function and cover up the corruption, the patronage, and the misallocation of public funds that we believe has occurred.

I'm convinced at this point, Mr. Chairperson, that their intent is the latter, that they are intent on stymieing the democratic process. But we will see the ultimate test of that, I guess, in terms of whether they're prepared to support this amendment, because this amendment would allow us to immediately turn to the work that they're concerned about. At 5 o'clock today, or at 6 o'clock this evening, we could begin discussing the role of the Public Accounts Committee, but tomorrow morning we could also be getting on with the job of examining government departments.

Now, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Hopfner made the point that he would welcome an examination of whether or not funds have been spent fraudulently. Mr. Chairman, it's not my worry about whether, so much . . . While there may have been fraudulent spending, I'm not making any accusations in that regard. It's not so much my worry that money has been spent fraudulently. It's my worry, Mr. Chairman, that there has been a good deal of patronage going on in government that government members want to hide.

And it's also my worry that one of the departments that members opposite don't want us to get to is an

examination of the spending and the practices of the Department of Finance. And I, Mr. Chairman, am very anxious, tomorrow morning, to begin discussing the spending of the Department of Finance. We want to know what attempts were made by members of government in 1986-87 to monitor the revenues and expenditures of the government. We want to know whether this was done on a monthly basis. We want to know the specifics of each revenue shortfall and each expenditure overrun in 1986-87 that led to a deficit of over \$500 million.

We want to see whether in fact the Government of Saskatchewan misled the people of Saskatchewan about the nature of the deficit during the 1986 election campaign, or whether in fact the government did not know about the deficit until after the provincial election. I suspect we'll determine that in fact they knew there was going to be a large deficit, in advance of and during the election.

We want to ask questions, Mr. Chairman, like whether or not the Department of Finance officials . . . why they decided not to take an additional \$100 million out of the Saskatchewan Liquor Board when this could have easily been done to reduce the deficit.

Those are the kinds of matters, Mr. Chairman, that I want to be discussing tomorrow morning. And if we are prepared to oblige the members of the government and accommodate them by sitting this evening and every other evening as long as it takes, weekdays, for as long as they want to sit to discuss the role of Public Accounts, if that's what they want to do we're prepared to sit every evening to do that.

But during the day from 9 to 5 we want to be able to follow the agenda that was agreed on before we began the session this week, Mr. Chairman, which was that we were going to be able to examine the spending of government departments. And we will see the real motivations of members, ultimately in terms of whether they're prepared to accept this amendment, because if they're not, then their motives are purely political, and this is one of the most blatant cover-ups we've seen yet from the Devine government.

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, Mr. Chairman, again we are listening to innuendoes and accusations by the members opposite in this very partisan committee. And basically this is again why there doesn't seem to be any conclusion to where we are with any kind of clear set of rules in this department. It's like putting the cart before the horse. We would be going right back to doing that and operating in the same manner. I basically think that we ought to get the cart and the horse in the right perspective and get the question clarified, and then get on with the workings of the committee.

And no government-side members ever indicated in this committee that we were not willing to allow questions to be asked. What we are indicating here is that we want to have a clear mandate as to what the realm and the rules are of this committee, whether they're within the jurisdiction of this committee. And until that can happen, I see we can put amendment on amendment on amendment to the motion, and we will be going

nowhere.

And I say to the members opposite, instead of putting amendments and more amendments to the motion, let's deal with the motion and get on with the workings of the motion and get that clarified and get on with the working so that they can ask their questions. I'll pass for now, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well, just to reiterate some of the points that I made earlier, I really can't understand why the members wouldn't agree with the amendment that was defeated, which would have seen a review of the working of the committee starting next Monday. I'll be even more amazed if they defeat this amendment which says that we would start tonight and work through the process of a review for the next number of days, as long as it would take to get it completed, but also serve the needs of the public of Saskatchewan — that is reviewing the spending and the spending priorities of this government.

Obviously if this one's defeated, then we know for absolute certainty that the reason is cover-up; that there is in fact somewhere hidden in the numbers in the Premier's spending that was done in the year under review — patronage, graft, or corruption. Otherwise there is absolutely no reason why we wouldn't continue on with the workings of this committee.

And I just say to you that in my mind a number of us have set time aside. Now my time is not that important because I'm here in Regina anyway, but there's a large number of people who have set their schedule to this week to deal with the spending priorities of this government. And for you few people, a handful of people to come here and thwart that effort simply to cover up, I think, which is now obviously what you're doing, to cover up the spending that was done.

And I say again, if you look at the agenda for today and tomorrow — Finance, Executive Council, and the other departments, the Department of Agriculture — then you realize why we're passing a motion, which you intend to do, that would stop the process.

And there's a great amount of questions, great number of questions that we wanted to ask under the Premier's estimates on contractual services, how many employees are working in the Premier's office, at what salary. I mean, the travel numbers add up well in excess of \$100,000 if you add up the total in his area. The amount of advertising would be tens of thousands of dollars. These are the kinds of questions we wanted to ask. What was the tendering process? Who got the contract?

But every time in the last two and a half days we've got close to asking some pertinent questions, you people have done something to thwart that effort. So I guess I'm saying I won't be surprised if you vote against this amendment and block the working of this committee, because that's what you came here intending to do.

Whether you're doing it with the mandate of the Premier or the Deputy Premier, I don't know. But I can only assume that you've been instructed to come here by Grant Devine to protect his spending that we were going

to deal with this afternoon or tomorrow. The problem with doing that is you're raising the issue to, I think, a level it never would have become.

So we may have found that there was a different story in the House when it came to some of his assistants' spending than what we would find out here. Maybe that's what you're trying to cover up. I don't know. Maybe a trip taken on Air Canada which amounts to thousands of dollars was taken by someone inappropriately, similar to the flying that was done by a former cabinet minister of this government, Jimmy Garner. Maybe that's what you're trying to cover up.

I don't know what you're trying to cover up, but it will be evidently clear if you defeat this amendment that would say that we would carry on with the work of this committee, do our review in the evenings. The only possible reason that we would carry out this kind of a stoppage for the first time since 1906 could be a cover-up. It's the only possible explanation.

It's never been done before. It's never been done that the public accounts would stop mid-stream in an agenda and say we're not working any more because we don't have any rules. It's ludicrous. We have rules. We have rules that were put in place by you people in 1982, that were approved by, say again, Eric Berntson and Grant Devine. They're their rules; they're not mine; they're not the chairman's. They're Grant Devine's rules, and even those are too broad for the Premier to live with.

So I say to you that if you must, if those are your instructions, vote against the amendment and block the working of this committee. But in every sense of the word it's bad news. It's bad for democracy, it's bad for the opposition, and I believe it's bad politically for the government, because there's only one interpretation that the public that will put on it, and that is that you're hiding corruption. And I can't say it any stronger than that.

Mr. Martin: — Mr. Chairman, it's because of the highly politicized comments that we've been hearing from across the floor this last hour and a half why this committee's not working. I mean, we have no set of rules. It's just totally out of control.

And we certainly want to get to the questions. As a matter of fact, most of the questions that they were going to ask have already been asked in estimates. So we've already been asked once. If they want to ask them twice, that's fine. But we're wasting a lot of time, and it's because of the political atmosphere that's going on here that it's not working. There's no sense in going on with the questions because it's not going to work. You're not allowing it to work. And so we might as well get on with the business of trying to figure out what we're doing here and get some clear set of rules. So I will certainly not support the amendment to the motion. There's no sense in going on.

Mr. Chairman: — I for one can't accept your comments, Mr. Martin, to say that we have no rules and the committee has no mandate.

On a number of occasions now there have been points of order raised. Members have had questions. We've

referred to *Beauchesne's*. We've referred to the rules of the House as a means of dealing with these points of order. We've done that.

Members have raised questions about the mandate of the committee, and did so this morning, about what it should be, and I've referred to the latest report from this committee to the Legislative Assembly, and approved by the Legislative Assembly, as to what the mandate of the committee is. And to say that we have no rules is to ignore years and years of tradition. To say that we have no mandate ignores the mandate as laid down by the legislative committee in 1982 while the present Progressive Conservative administration was in office.

And to say that somehow we can't work with these things is simply beyond me. If you want to be honest and say that look, we don't like the rules, we don't like the mandate and we want to change it, then do that. But don't say that there's nothing there for us to deal with because there's plenty for us there to deal with. I just get the impression that you don't like what it is that we have to deal with, that you don't like the rules that were set down in 1982 and you want to change those. Question.

Mr. Neudorf: — I'd like to speak to the proposed amendment as well, Mr. Chairman. I think members opposite are having difficulty getting my point. You're missing my point, Mr. Prebble, in your discussion. And if I might say so, personally I don't feel that we don't have rules. Personally I don't feel that we don't have a mandate. What I am saying to you gentlemen is that it doesn't work. It's not working.

Mr. Chairman: — Order. Order, please. Order, please.

Mr. Neudorf: — I just want to make sure that the members opposite are finished with their interruption. And, like I was saying, I feel that because we have had ample examples over these last few days of how it is not working, that is the point, and for us to suggest that, well, half the day spent on this and half the day spent on that, that's totally contradictory to what I am suggesting here, that first of all we solve the basic problem and then we go on from there.

And I repeat again, there will be that opportunity I am sure, and I am convinced that there will be that opportunity for you to ask the Premier or whoever you want to ask about how much he spent on how many people in his department and so on. I don't think that . . . I will agree to one thing, and I will concede one thing, that it's not going to be as immediate as it is now, but it will come.

A Member: — Right after the next election?

Mr. Neudorf: — I suppose that remains to be seen. I'm not in a position now to comment on that. So what I'm saying is that we're not stopping the process; we're going to improve the process. And I firmly believe that we can do that. And the long term, in the long run, it is going to improve the way this committee operates and so that it can fulfil the mandate which the Legislative Assembly has given us.

And if you people are so concerned about the impression that we're giving to the public, with the media sitting here and taking in every word that we're saying — do you think I'm not aware of that? Do you think I'm not conscious of the fact of what we're doing? But I believe in what I'm doing, and because I believe in what I'm doing, I'm prepared to take that so-called heat that you're mentioning about.

Mr. Chairman: — Order, order.

Mr. Neudorf: — I have some other comments, Mr. Speaker, that I . . . or Mr. Chairman, that you brought up, but I think maybe I will save them for the comments on the . . . because we're being redundant here, I'm sure.

Mr. Chairman: — Can I just ask you, like, you said, I think in response to a comment that came from the floor, that you're delaying until after the next election, you said: "that remains to be seen." Are you serious when you say that, that this motion may actually result or will actually result in a delay of consideration of the *Public Accounts* for the year '86-87 until after the next provincial election?

Mr. Neudorf: — Don't get carried away and put words in my mouth.

Mr. Chairman: — You said: "remains to be seen"?

Mr. Neudorf: — That might remain to be seen, yes, because who am I to indicate what is going to happen in the future.

Mr. Chairman: — I fear, I fear.

Mr. Muller: — I can see where the attempts of the opposition to filibuster the committee are certainly coming to a front now.

For the last three days we've been sitting here trying to get into the agenda that was put before us or sent to us before our coming here, and for two days they moved motions, some of them with four votes necessary to each motion that was moved, to filibuster the committee. And certainly I have to speak against the amendment because the last two and a half or three days has just proven to me that the committee isn't working.

We have to set down some guide-lines and parameters that we can work under without this filibuster coming from the opposition members. And yesterday in frustration even of the rules the chairman called an unnecessary recess and walked out and wouldn't even give us the time that we were going to return. We were told when we left that we would get a phone call when they returned at their leisure to sit on the committee again. So we were left in limbo.

So I can't see how we can vote for this amendment and carry on with questions pertaining to departments while we're in this kind of a confrontational mood. And I think we have to set out the parameters so the chairman can make specific rulings rather than the kinds of rulings he made this morning to call a member out of order but not out of order. And those kinds of vague areas that we've been trying to work with just aren't working.

So I really think that first and foremost we have to deal with the motion. After the amendment we have to deal with the motion, get on with the parameters of how the committee works, and then we can certainly get to Mr. Lingenfelter's questions that he wants to ask. And it certainly will be up to them whether it's after the election or before, because if they still attempt to filibuster the committee and hold it up for a long time, I can understand how they can stretch it out. They've done a very good job of it for three days, and I can see them doing it again and again. And like I said before, some of the motions that come before us have as high as four issues in, put forward by Mr. Prebble, and it does take a long time to debate them. And with that I would say let's get on with voting on the amendment. Let's then vote on the motion. Then let's get into what we're going to do and set for parameters that we work within.

And I think . . . and going back to the comments of the member that disagreed with some of the members on the opposition benches and no longer on the committee because he's got a full-time job teaching now. Seems like a narrow excuse for him to be kicked off the committee, but I can see that's what happened. So they even have some things within their own ranks that they don't agree on, so they just move that person out and put someone else in to take up the political side and political battle. And I think we have to move the politics out of this committee and get on with the job.

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Chairman, I'll be brief because I think we need to bring this amendment to a vote. But I just want to make two points, and ask one question to either Mr. Muller as vice-chair of this committee. or Mr. Neudorf as the person who's proposed the motion.

Mr. Chairman, first of all, the point I want to make is if this amendment fails and the motion carries, in effect we will have no functioning Public Accounts Committee in this province. We will be the only province in Canada without a genuinely functioning Public Accounts Committee.

The second point I'd like to make is that the potential wrongdoings that are likely to be uncovered as a result of the work of this committee must be far more serious than we had ever originally anticipated. That you would be prepared to go to these lengths to prevent us from examining the spending of government departments indicates that there must be a lot more to cover up than we had ever expected.

And the third point I'd like to make, Mr. Chairperson, is simply a question to either Mr. Muller or Mr. Neudorf, whichever one chooses to answer it, and that is: I wonder if both of you gentlemen or either of you, but I'll direct this to you I think, Mr. Muller, as vice-chair of the committee and leader presumably of the government members . . .

Mr. Neudorf: — And a good leader at that.

Mr. Prebble: — Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Are you prepared to give members of the opposition on this committee your ironclad assurance — and I take it that means assurance from the Premier — that this committee

will sit again to hear government departments and have an opportunity to examine all of the government departments' spending for 1986-87 before you call a provincial election? Are you prepared to guarantee us that?

Mr. Muller: — Mr. Prebble, I certainly can't make any ironclad guarantees because I don't have any input into when there's a provincial election called. It could be called tomorrow and then I'd be in breach of my promise. I can't make any ironclad promise when the provincial election be called, as you couldn't when you were in government and your premier called the elections, I'm sure the way they were called on our side of the House, and I don't think you at that time could have made any ironclad promises either.

But if you continue to hold up the committee, then certainly I can't say what you're going to do to hold up the committee from working as you've done in the last three days to . . . You could make my promise void by holding up the committee for two or three years, as you've done the last two or three days.

Mr. Chairman: — Question on the amendment. All those in favour of the amendment? All those in favour of the amendment, please raise your hands now. All those opposed to the amendment? The amendment is lost.

Negatived

Mr. Chairman: — Can I suggest at this point we take about a 10-minute break? The members can come and go; it's hard for the chairman to do it.

The committee recessed briefly.

Mr. Chairman: — Back to order. I was checking my notes and after a number of minutes, I think on the main motion itself we had Mr. Lingenfelter, Mr. Prebble, and I believe then we had Mr. Anguish, then we had Mr. Hopfner. And those are the two speakers I have at this point on the main motion as opposed to amendments.

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Chairman, on the main motion, I don't know how it can be restated that we're a little disappointed after preparing for public accounts, lining up all the public employees to answer questions in public accounts, and given that we do have the clear mandate, that the committee's come to this point that the obstruction is so great from the government members that we cease to function as a committee.

The workings of this committee are supposed to be non-partisan. I don't know how we will ever find a mandate at this point that would be agreeable to government members that the committee will be non-partisan.

It seems to me that what you want to do is either reinterpret the rules or set new rules whereby we cannot gather information that's pertinent to the expenditure of tax dollars in the province of Saskatchewan. Just because you don't like the rules doesn't mean that those rules are still very valid.

The committee has a responsibility that's a very important part of the democratic system. Just because you don't like what someone has to say, you should still, if you have any conscience about the committee, defend the person's right to say that, or in this case, ask those questions.

If I look at some of the arguments that were presented earlier in the day, it would seem to anyone observing the group that you want the function of the committee to be much narrower than it is at present. I grant the acknowledgement that the auditor's role is to make sure that the job he does is not to explore value-for-money auditing but in fact is to determine whether or not the departments and Crowns and agencies have the legislative authority to spend what they've actually spent. And I suppose it's his job to point out where departments or Crowns or agencies have not complied with the legislative authority.

Well that's certainly not the role of this committee. Although it is the role of this committee to examine the auditor's report and we've done that — part of the time that consumed the previous two days was the examination of the auditor's report not to filibuster or to drag out this committee. And the point at which we examine the auditor's report is where we look at the things he says about the legislative authority for departments and Crowns and agencies to spend. But once we moved beyond that report to the next point on our agenda, we have somewhat an expanded role to look at something that's similar to value-for-money auditing.

And it's mentioned in the public accounts report of Tuesday, November 23, 1982, where I think it quite clearly states that we have a responsibility — all committee members; not for government members to defend and opposition to try and prosecute and accuse of corrupt practices, even though right now we can't, even if there were corrupt practices, because we can't ask questions of anyone. We have a role as all committee members to look at the economy, the efficiency, and the effectiveness of how government is spending its money — government departments and Crowns and agencies.

Now I don't know who told you as back-benchers to come here and obstruct tradition, obstruct the rules. Was it Premier Devine that told you this? Was it Deputy Premier Berntson that told you to do this? I don't think any of you as back-benchers would come here and do it on your own. I don't think this could happen in any other province in Canada where you have government members that come to a committee that's supposed to be non-partisan, to come here and absolutely obstruct the Public Accounts Committee in their role and their work.

I don't imagine that we will have an opportunity to defeat the motion that you've put forward which actually alters the agenda from what we had agreed to because you say it doesn't work, you say the Public Accounts Committee cannot work. The Public Accounts Committee isn't here to work for you; it's here to work for the public in Saskatchewan.

We started off on Monday by one of your members bringing in a motion to rescind something else that you had agreed to earlier and that's the standing questions to

the government departments that were going to be coming before this committee. And now what you're really doing is rescinding again an agreement that you made as per the agenda to examine departments and Crowns and agencies. And the effect of your motion, if it passes, goes even further, to suspend the Public Accounts Committee.

You've expressed your desire to look at the operations of this committee and how it functions and the rules of the committee, which are all honourable but untimely, because the timely topic right now is to get on with the public accounts of the province of Saskatchewan. And it's in no way timely to overrule the agreement that you'd already made to look at the functioning of this committee. And it doesn't only stop the committee for this week, in terms of examining the *Public Accounts* for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987, but it stops it for future weeks because what you want to do is make a report to the legislature, have the legislature deal with that report, and then I suppose we can get back on with the workings of the Public Accounts Committee.

That causes two problems, and the first problem is that the information that comes out to the public through this committee is even less timely than what it is now two years after the fiscal year ending in 1987. And the second problem is that I don't know how we can ever work together in this committee again when you betray the confidence and the faith within the committee. I don't know how you can seriously expect us to ever have a good working relationship in this committee again.

We've made agreements with you. You've lost honour, in my opinion. You've lost credibility, because once you make an agreement, the next thing you know you're making another motion to break the agreement. And even if we could come up with a set of rules that was pleasing to you, I don't see how they could be very pleasing to us, because the way you're going right now you want to strip this committee of any ability it has to look at the expenditure of taxpayers' dollars.

I would think that as government members you might also want to look at the possibility you'll be in opposition some day. It might not be the next election, it might not even be the one after, but some day you'll be in opposition. And what will you be saying? You'll be saying that the process is anti-democratic, that the government's hiding information from you. It could be the liberals that are in government; it could be New Democrats in government. And you, for your own short-term purposes, stripped this committee of all its power. I think it's disgraceful of you to do that.

As I mentioned before, I served on the Public Accounts Committee in the House of Commons. In the House of Commons this would never be allowed to happen. I don't even think in any of the other provinces it would be allowed to happen. The process is there that would not allow it to happen, and the media would not allow it to happen because you would be crucified for what you're doing in obstructing the Public Accounts Committee.

And I would ask you to seriously think of either withdrawing the motion or changing the motion to allow

this committee to function in its real role and not put up the smoke-screen of redoing the mandate of this committee. I think that that's a noble effort and we should do it.

So I would ask you to reconsider your motion so that this committee can function and at the same time examine the role of the committee and how it operates.

I don't think at this point, Mr. Chairman, I have anything further to say.

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, Mr. Chairman, I, too, am disappointed that basically there has been a breakdown within the committee and an agreement to be able to carry on due to a lack of interpretation of rules regulating this committee.

When the member from Battlefords had brought up the fact of the partisan nature of the committee and how the partisanism had started in this room at the beginning of our week here, I want to remind the member from The Battlefords that it was not this side of the committee, the government side of the committee, that brought that partisan into this room, but it was the member himself.

And I relate to when he brought up the auditor's comments that appeared in the Edmonton paper and subsequently appeared in the *Leader-Post* and I don't know what other papers. And it brought the partisanism into the debate that had been carried on throughout the last couple of few days.

When we talk about the legislative authority to go through the auditor's report and question the various departments of the spending habits of their departments and whether they've been in full right of those expenditures, I, too, as a member, am very cognizant of the fact that those dollars should be spent properly and that the answers to the questions that are put to the department are the questions relating directly to what and within the boundaries of where the department officials can answer those questions.

Again, I reiterate what I have said earlier in my comments is that you yourself, Mr. Chairman, have been slightly confused in making rulings from the chair, and it was not due to the fact that it was rulings on this side of the committee, the government side of the committee, but a ruling on your side of the committee, on the member from The Battlefords in his questioning.

I think probably it cannot be put any better but to find some unanimity of the particular mandate in which we are supposedly supposed to be working under and get the proper interpretations of that mandate put in such a focus on where you yourself, if any member of this committee strays from that particular mandate, then can be brought to order and/or where you yourself can indicate that it's not the format of this committee to be putting forth various innuendos or accusations or off on some sort of a tangent that this committee doesn't have any real responsibility for, but that it could appear in a different format.

I think that when you talk about the fact that the

accusation has been made that we are not willing to co-operate, this is showing a willingness to co-operate. It's showing a willingness to allow you, as a chairman, to be able to act as a chairman and make your rulings as a chairman.

It's going to allow us a freedom, once we can establish the rules clearly — establish the interpretation of the rules, I should say, clearly — that there won't be a continued interjection on the members' part then from either side of the committee of whether the questions were properly asked and whether we're within our mandate to ask those questions without intimidating possibly the bureaucrats or any other witnesses that come before this committee where they themselves may feel uncomfortable to want to answer those questions because it's not the format in which those questions should be asked.

I believe that there was good intent by the rules that were placed in this committee for us to carry on with the report of the auditor and question the departments, but again I can understand some people or some members can get very carried away with their line of questions and partisanship with the fact of bringing out the innuendoes and accusations prior to any questioning or statement. They can get very carried away and, through this, intimidate a lot of people. And I think without that interference and the ruling that could be properly put by the chair could keep the member in line and allow no violation of any of this to carry on.

I'm not one to, at any stage, begin to stop members from questioning expenditures of a department, but when witnesses are being intimidated or when there is a potential for intimidation and carrying away . . . getting carried away with the realm of this committee's responsibility, then I do believe we must put the cart before the horse again, so to speak.

A Member: — The cart before the horse?

Mr. Hopfner: — Pardon me, the horse before the cart.

A Member: — Why would you do that?

Mr. Hopfner: — The cart was . . . as I had indicated earlier, the cart was before the horse in the way that the questioning had apparently been going, and the interruptions of the questioner back and forth for clarification and everything else, and getting clarification from the chair was always brought forth. And there was a good example with Parks and Renewable Resources.

So with that, Mr. Chairman, I want to just leave with you the fact that I, as a private member, recognize that there is a great deal of authority within the Public Accounts Committee. We are allowed to question the legitimacy of departments and we have that individual power as a member to gain a lot more knowledge of a department through the questioning of a department, and I think that's only right for us to have that information and put it in a very professional manner and . . . the questions in a very professional manner, without trying to politicize every question that comes from a member's mouth.

So with that, Mr. Chairman, I'm going to support the

motion.

Mr. Chairman: — Can I just ask, Mr. Hopfner, you made a number of references to rulings that I've made this morning. If my rulings were not appropriate, why would you not challenge the ruling of the chair if my ruling was not appropriate? Why would you not challenge the ruling of the chair? You have that right. You did it earlier this afternoon. When you didn't like a ruling I made, you challenged it. Fair enough. I mean, the committee can do that at any time. I'm here as the committee's servant.

Why would, if you thought that my rulings this morning were so inappropriate, why would you not have challenged the chair on that as opposed to now saying that we're trying to politicize the process and that by my allowing these questions and rulings we're inferring that we're politicizing the process, intimidating witnesses and so on. If that was the case, Mr. Hopfner, why would you not have challenged the ruling of the chair in the case of any rulings that I've made. Can I ask you that?

Mr. Hopfner: — Yes. I thank you for the question. If you go back in the verbatim you'd know that I didn't say that. What I said was that you yourself were troubled in making the ruling because of either a point of order brought to yourself or even the question, if you go back when you questioned the Deputy Minister this morning in regards to whether he felt we were in our rights to ask him for this information or that information. So I mean, it was words from your mouth, not from mine, and I know from those questions that you yourself were confused. And so this is basically . . .

Mr. Chairman: — So if my ruling — I want to ask you again — if my ruling was confused, and I don't think in the final analysis they were confused — there may have been a great deal of confusion in your own mind, but there was none in my mind when those rulings were made — if you were of the opinion then that my rulings were confused, then why didn't you challenge the ruling?

You have that option; you have that right. In fact I say, as a member of this committee, if you see that the chairman is not acting in the best interests of this committee, you should challenge the ruling of the Chair to make sure the chairman is doing the correct job. Why didn't you do that?

Mr. Hopfner: — Well, Mr. Chairman . . .

Mr. Chairman: — What prevented you?

Mr. Hopfner: — Mr. Chairman, that's not the point at all.

Mr. Chairman: — Yes. It is the point. I want to know. You can't continue to make aspersions about rulings that I make and sit back after the fact and say, well, I didn't like the rulings. Why, why wouldn't you challenge the ruling at that time? What prevents you from doing that?

Mr. Martin: — I think, Mr. Chairman, you said you were either out of order or it wasn't out of order . . .

Mr. Hopfner: — I brought point of orders to you on a couple of different occasions, if you go back to on the

verbatim.

Mr. Chairman: — But every member, if they don't like the ruling of the Chair — and I stand to be corrected on this — but every member has the right to say that, I question the ruling of the Chair. And the Chairman must ask, shall the ruling be upheld or sustained or not?

Mr. Hopfner: — Did I not do that this afternoon?

Mr. Chairman: — Not once did you do that, Mr. Hopfner.

Mr. Hopfner: — Did I not do that this afternoon?

Mr. Chairman: — You did it this afternoon on one matter when you wanted to get to down to this business . . .

Mr. Hopfner: — All right, so . . .

Mr. Chairman: — But why wouldn't you do that this morning? You haven't referred to any rulings this afternoon. You referred to rulings this morning that I've made and you said we're politicizing the process. Why would you not challenge the ruling of the Chair at that time?

Mr. Hopfner: — Because, I'll agree with you, your confusion had added to my confusion. As to just exactly what I had stated in my remarks earlier is that you yourself, as chairman, do not have any idea of the bounds . . . the boundaries we're to operate in yourself, as we ourselves are very confused. That's why we're trying to discuss what we are doing here through this motion.

So when it comes to a fact of whether I disagree with your ruling or not, I will certainly let you know, Mr. Chairman, when I don't agree with your ruling. And if you go back, as I had indicated, in the verbatim, I have brought a point of order to this committee on a couple of different occasions, and I also did this afternoon challenge your ruling.

So I mean, I haven't got any particular . . . I don't get any particular satisfaction of having to do that, but I do want to know that whether we're operating within the realms of our committee, and I want things clarified.

Mr. Chairman: — What do you mean by that, the realms of the committee? What does that mean?

Mr. Hopfner: — I want to have . . . I want to know that the rules and regulations that we're guided by are being upheld and we're not straying off from that particular area.

Mr. Chairman: — Well if we're straying from the rules and if . . .

Mr. Hopfner: — You're asking the questions.

Mr. Chairman: — If we're straying from the rules, and if I made rulings this morning that suggested we were straying from the rules, then why, why would you not have challenged a ruling of the Chair? You did it this afternoon on another matter. Why wouldn't you have done it this morning?

Mr. Hopfner: — Well I think, Mr. Chairman, you and I are both are out of order because we're not really speaking to the motion, and there's a motion before us and . . . (inaudible) . . .

Mr. Chairman: — No, Mr. Hopfner, you can't continue to bush-whack from the sidelines — bush-whack — and not expect me to ask some questions about what it is that you're saying, and trying to get it clear just what it is that you're saying. You infer a lot, but you're less than clear.

Mr. Hopfner: — Well, I answered you.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well, I just want to speak against the motion, not in principle but in timing. And I think our earlier motions or amendments to your motion where we spoke in favour of a review of the rules, I think a review of the rules and mandate of a committee are in order if they're seen to be necessary. What we're saying is that they shouldn't take place at this time.

After the work of this committee is completed, we see no problem with looking at the rules, but not looking at the rules and suspending the committee. To make this the only province and only jurisdiction in Canada that has no Public Accounts (Committee) — and here for the first time since 1906 — seems to be totally inappropriate because, as the members say, they're confused about the mandate of the committee.

I'm not confused about the mandate of the committee. It's to look at the spending of the government, simple and clear. I don't think the public is confused about the mandate of the committee. I have not had one letter or one person come to me and say that the mandate of the Public Accounts Committee isn't clear, and we don't know what the job of the public accounts is. It's to look and to scrutinize the spending of the government.

In fact, quite the opposite. I have had lobbies from constituents who say: why is not the legislature and committees of the legislature sitting? I have had that kind of lobbying from my constituents and from the taxpayers. Not once have I had a letter or a complaint about this committee sitting or not doing its job properly. I haven't heard it and I haven't . . . I would challenge any of you to say that you have constituents who are complaining about the mandate of this committee.

Confusion in your minds there may be. That will not be solved by reviewing the mandate of this committee. It may be solved by the Premier choosing different people to be on the committee who understand the historical operation of the committee, understand the mandate of the committee. It's been here a long, long time.

If you're saying you're trying to set up a committee that isn't going to have controversy, you'll believe in the Easter bunny. I mean, we're going to have controversy on this committee. You're not going to do away with it unless you do away with the committee. I think that's what you intend to do.

A Member: — Can we have order here?

Mr. Chairman: — Mr. Martin. Mr. Martin, please. Are you on the order?

Mr. Lingenfelter: — I want to say that we are talking about a committee that has functioned well at times. I suppose you may say not well at other times, depending on your perspective, whether you're in government or in opposition. I think the more important issue: is it working for the people of the province?

Now I've seen this government in the last few months try to muzzle and attack the Provincial Auditor because he's saying things that you don't like. The people of the province have not attacked the Provincial Auditor. I haven't seen anyone, any citizen who's not tied to the Tory party, attacking the auditor. They think what he's doing is totally appropriate and what he's getting a salary for.

I agree what the auditor has said about the Conservative government in Saskatchewan isn't flattering to the government and why you don't like it. But you don't get rid of the auditor because he doesn't say flattering things about you. You've tried to muzzle this committee by first of all changing the rules of the committee without even consulting with the committee.

And in the report of the auditor, on page 5, 2.09, he goes into the cancellation of the supplemental information that used to be attached to this report. A motion passed by the committee in 1975 that called on this kind of a report to be tabled was ended in 1984 without any consultation with anyone — not the committee, not the public, not with the Provincial Auditor. In fact, he says in his report: why isn't it there?

You've changed the rules again yesterday when an agreement, a motion that was passed previous, on asking questions in advance to the committee was jammed down the throats of this committee. Now you want to change the rules further, simply by disbanding the committee, which hasn't dealt yet with the year in which the last provincial election took place. And you're saying here today, when we disband today if we pass this motion, it may not meet before the next election. So you're talking about Public Accounts (Committee) not dealing with the spending of this government for a whole term. That's unacceptable.

I think what's unacceptable is your action. The rules of this committee may not be perfect. Obviously they never will be. And if you think you can do a review that will make these rules perfect, you're not being fair to the political process. What we're saying: do the review and allow the committee to function — fair and simple.

I think it's fair to say, as well, that we know now why we're not going to be meeting to deal with the Department of Finance and Devine's spending in the year of the election, because there were massive misrepresentations in that year — massive misrepresentations. For example, in the 1986-87 budget of this government the deficit was estimated to be \$389 million. We now know that it turned out to be 1.2 billion. We've got questions to ask about that, important questions. Why did it happen? Was there something in

the review of the spending of the government that took place that allowed that to happen. When was it first noticed by the Minister of Finance? Month one? Month two? When did he find out that the deficit was going to be \$1.2 billion? The revenue side, estimated at 3.3 billion, turned out to be 2.8. When did the revenue change?

Well we know, and we think the public deserve to know, that it was an election ploy to paint a rosy picture of the economic future of the province; or a better picture, certainly not rosy if you're looking at \$380 million in deficit, but a much rosier picture than the truth, which was 1.2. You were lying to the people. That's what this committee will point out when we go through the finances of the province and ask the department people.

Obviously the Minister of Finance lied to us in the House. We know that. We want to know when the staff in the department were instructed by the minister to carry it out. That's our job. We don't need rules, new rules to find out that information. All we need is the department sitting there, and that's what you're trying to hide, is the corruption and mismanagement of the government. That's what you're doing.

Mr. Chairman: — Point of order, Mr. Martin.

Mr. Martin: — Will you please get a grip on yourself as the chairman and stop this blustering that's coming from across the floor and just another example of the filibustering that's been going on. Now you're the chairman; get back on track on this thing. That's the problem here. You haven't got control of it.

Mr. Chairman: — Well, Mr. Martin . . .

Mr. Martin: — So make a ruling. Stop the filibuster and let's get on with the business.

Mr. Chairman: — Mr. Martin, I'll let Mr. Hopfner proceed. I think we can get other members proceed and arrange . . .

Mr. Neudorf: — He's not talking to that point of order, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: — What's your point of order?

Mr. Neudorf: — I was going to let you rule the way you should have ruled with Mr. Martens, but obviously you're not going to make an issue of the point. My understanding is that this committee is an extension of the legislature and the rules of parliamentary conduct apply to this committee as it does to that in the Legislature. Am I correct in that?

Mr. Chairman: — Yes.

Mr. Neudorf: — Then why . . . I guess you are waiting for me to make this point of order and I so do now. And I ask you to call upon Mr. Lingenfelter to make a complete retraction of his comments about calling the Minister of Finance a liar and make an apology to this committee and to, in fact, all of the members of the legislature.

Mr. Chairman: — Well that's a good point of order, Mr.

Neudorf, and I'll give my ruling here in a minute on this, okay? Thank you.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — I'll accept the point of order of the member from Rosthern and I would withdraw the word "lied." I should have used "misled." I want to . . .

Mr. Chairman: — You should not have called the Minister of Finance a liar, Mr. Lingenfelter, and I didn't hear whether you unreservedly apologized.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Yes, I did.

Mr. Chairman: — You did? Is that acceptable then?

Mr. Lingenfelter: — And I want to then go on and talk about other reasons why the government doesn't want to deal with the expending of the government.

Executive Council. There's a number of areas, as I said earlier, that we want to find out about. Dome Advertising. Dome Advertising spent in excess of \$100,000 in that year. The taxpayers would like to know whether any of that was tied to the election; whether it was Tory advertising.

We wanted to ask for the tendering process that took place, copies of the brochures, to know whether or not for example the member from Rosthern benefitted politically from the expenditure. Those are fair questions.

British Telecom, \$11,000. What did that have to do with? Privatization? What was the spending for? Those are legitimate questions.

McLean and Associates, \$37,000. Who is that? Is that Nancy McLean, the woman who tells Devine how to dress?

MFB Associates. Is that not also Nancy Mclean's operation out of Toronto — \$63,000.

We want to ask whether the taxpayers of this province spent in excess of \$100,000 colour coding the Premier for the election campaign. Those are fair and relevant points.

We know what the mandate of this committee is. The chairman knows what the mandate is. The auditor knows what his job is. The press know what their job is. Everybody in this room knows what their role is except you people who want to hide the facts.

The only people who complain are the government. Doesn't that tell you something? Doesn't that tell you something? Doesn't that speak volumes for the instructions you got from your Premier to come down here and thwart the efforts of this committee to do what it has done since 1906, that's to review the spending of the government. Nothing more, nothing less. That's what we intend to do, and we'll continue to do it because that's what we're elected to do as members of the opposition. That's what your members did when they were in opposition. Did a good job.

But there was never an attempt by the government to say, look, because you're asking pointed questions about our

spending we're going to get rid of the committee or change the rules because it's too embarrassing for us. That, Mr. Neudorf, is an insult to the democratic process of this province — never been done before what you did here today, to hide behind your mandate as a member and your majority, to hide from these kinds of questions. That's what you're doing, totally and clearly.

Our amendments to the motion clearly indicated we were in favour of doing the review after this process was completed, and it's a process that has gone on in every province dealing with the House of Commons, in this province in one form or another since 1906. You're saying you're above it.

And I don't blame you because I don't believe you're here on your own. I think what happened is the Premier spoke to you this morning, personally. I think he did. I think he helped draft the motion to protect himself from the questions that were going to be asked about the spending in his department.

I believe that through the Premier to Eric Berntson to you people on this committee, this is where the motion is coming from. He's saying, I don't want the heat. We don't want the heat. We'll take the heat from the press who are going to say that Public Accounts (Committee) should be meeting. That heat's not going to be bad, but it's much better than the heat we would get if the opposition gets into my department and the spending that was done in the year of the election.

Mr. Chairman: — Mr. Lingenfelter, it's 5 o'clock and I wonder if we can continue this tomorrow morning.

The committee adjourned at 5:05 p.m.