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Official Report of
DEBATES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
(Hansard)

THURSDAY, MARCH 28, 1974

Morning Sitting

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The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers.

Introduction of bills.

Oral questions.

ICBC LIABILITY FOR BODY SHOP SURCHARGES

MR. D.E. SMITH (North Peace River): My question is to the Hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications.

A recent article in a newspaper indicates that one of the lawyers of ICBC has suggested it is possible ICBC will be legally liable for the costs of any repairs done to automobiles insured by ICBC and be responsible for the surcharges presently being charged by certain body shops who have not accepted the \$14 per hour rate.

My question to the Hon. Minister is this: if it requires a court case and an action to prove whether ICBC is legally liable or not, will ICBC pick up the costs of any such court action?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I think that question is hypothetical and therefore would be banned under the rules set out in *Beauchesne*. Also, it asks a solution of a legal proposition and, of course, as the Hon. Member knows, the statutes set out very clearly the obligations of any corporation in British Columbia. It would not really be a proper question as I see it. That's the rule.

MR. SMITH: Well, Mr. Speaker, we've pursued the matter of a legal contract between ICBC and the individual people insured before. I don't want to prolong that debate but I do think it's time the Minister gave some direction and indication to the people who are now insured by ICBC as to what position they're in with regard to liability for extra costs of repairing cars. Will ICBC pay the costs or not?

HON. R.M. STRACHAN (Minister of Transport and Communications): I've waited for the Member to ask that question, Mr. Speaker. A good question.

I'm not responsible for what appears in the newspapers; that's the first thing I want to say, Mr. Member.

I want to make it very clear that the ARA came to ICBC and said they were representing all the body shops. On the basis of that we reached agreement. The individuals who are now rejecting the ARA settlement admit to me that they authorized ARA to negotiate for them but, because in some cases they did not like the agreement, they are repudiating that particular agreement.

I want to tell this House that there is no problem about a surcharge. In almost every community where there has been a surcharge we've had discussion with them and they have backed off the surcharge. They are preparing to submit to ICBC accounts which they claim will indicate the requirement for a higher....

MR. D.M. PHILLIPS (South Peace River): Big stick.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: No, no. As I say, they've backed off the surcharge in practically every community where there were doing it. I'm asking people in any community where there's a surcharge to shop around. There are

shops that will not charge the surcharge.

Secondly, I'm promising the people of those areas where there is a surcharge that they will be the first areas where ICBC will go in and build their own shops.

MR. SMITH: A supplemental question to the Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! One at a time.

MR. SMITH: Will ICBC consider using adjusters to obtain competitive bids when a car is damaged?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: I indicated to the House the very first time the question was raised that one of the ways we could go is back to the old system of asking for three bids — and we may do that.

MR. PHILLIPS: Would the Minister consider this a threat to the body shops in the province that they're going to build their own body shops if they can't beat those into submission?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: No, no, not at all. I just want to be sure that the rates in those areas are justified.

But as I say, it's not a problem in almost all of the areas. The body shops have talked to us, we've sat down with them, and they've backed off the surcharge.

FULL MONTHLY CHARGE FOR ICBC COVERAGE

MR. P.L. McGEER (Vancouver–Point Grey): Mr. Chairman....

MR. SPEAKER: I'm the Speaker, not the Chairman.

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MR. McGEER: Sorry, Mr. Speaker.

I wonder if we could just get a yes or no answer from the Minister.

Question is: does ICBC charge a full month's insurance for a new driver becoming insured if he takes that insurance out in the last day or the last two days of the month?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: According to Jack Wasserman, yes.

MR. McGEER: I didn't ask according to Jack Wasserman; I asked according to the Minister of Transport and Communications who has the responsibility. Yes or no.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: The whole thing is prorated as it always has been.

MR. McGEER: He hasn't answered yes or no to my question.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The Hon. Member for Vancouver–Point Grey should know that if it is already published in either statute, regulation or a public document, you don't ask it in question period.

NON-INTERVENTION OF B.C. IN FOREIGN-OWNERSHIP-OF-LAND APPEAL

MR. G.F. GIBSON (North Vancouver–Capilano): I have a question for the Attorney-General. One of the most important constitutional cases in some time on the right of provinces to forbid the foreign ownership of land

within their boundaries will be coming up this fall in the Supreme Court of Canada on appeal from the Supreme Court of Prince Edward Island. A leave to appeal was granted last December. Could the Attorney-General say why British Columbia is the only province which has not joined in intervening in this case on behalf of the various provinces and the Crown federal? And will he take such action?

HON. A.B. MACDONALD (Attorney-General): I think the case will be very thoroughly argued. It's going to the Supreme Court of Canada. Other provinces, I think, have intervened....

MR. GIBSON: Every other one.

HON. MR. MACDONALD: I'm sure the case will be thoroughly argued. I can't remember the discussions completely, but we have discussed intervention at one point. At the moment, the decision is that it wouldn't be warranted because the case will be fully argued. We will have the reasons for judgment shortly.

MR. GIBSON: On a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the Attorney-General undertake to re-examine the case in view of the fact that every other province has found this useful?

HON. MR. MACDONALD: I don't deny the constitutionality and the importance to British Columbia. In view of the Hon. Member having raised it, I will have another discussion about that case.

NATURE OF ICBC AGREEMENT WITH BODY SHOPS

MR. N.R. MORRISON (Victoria): Some time ago the Minister of Transportation and Communications took with notice a question. I wonder if he could answer it for us today. Does ICBC have a contract with those body shops which have agreed to the \$14 an hour or is it just a gentleman's agreement? Is it a valid and binding contract?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: As far as I know, it's just an agreement. They have agreed to accept it without any signed contract. As far as I know, that's the situation.

Should I answer a question which I think you asked some time ago. Yes, the First Member for Victoria (Mr. Morrison). You asked what fraction of the automobile section has been reinsured.

The cost of reinsurance of the automobile plan is 0.63 per cent of total Autoplan premiums. A little more than half-a-cent for every premium dollar is used in reinsurance.

MR. MORRISON: That's not the question, Mr. Speaker. The question I asked was of the liability portion only.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: Well, that's not the way I have the question written down. I'll check the question again. That's the way I have it written down.

GOVERNMENT STAND ON BCTF EXPULSION POLICY

MR. D.A. ANDERSON (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Education. May I ask the Minister what stand the department has taken to oppose BCTF policy of expulsion of teachers from the BCTF if they, and I quote, "fail to cooperate with his or her professional organization"? Now that it's a requirement that to teach in the province you must be a member, I wonder what the stand is of the Department of Education, vis-à-vis the BCTF taking to itself the right to expel people from membership, and also to expel them from their opportunity of earning their living.

HON. E.E. DAILLY (Minister of Education): I haven't had time to consider that, as it is so recent.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: May I ask another question, then, along the same lines? May I ask the Minister whether she would also, when she's looking into that, look into the question of whether or not the BCTF in some areas is attempting to collect back dues from teachers who were not members of the federation during the period when it was not a legal requirement to be a member? And now that it is a legal requirement, they are asking them to contribute back dues. I realize this is a question she would also have to take on notice.

FERRY SERVICES SURVEY

MR. H.A. CURTIS (Saanich and the Islands): To the Minister of Transport and Communications: we have discussed this in the past but my question is specifically concerned with the present time, and concerns any survey which is underway on any major British Columbia ferry vessel to determine passenger preferences with respect to various services which are offered, such as food. Is such a survey underway, or is any attempt being made by the authority to determine passenger wishes or preferences in this respect?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: Yes. The new manager, in answer to letters which he's receiving from people who have been erroneously informed that we are going to discontinue the dining room, is asking those people to express to him their opinion on the quality of service in the dining rooms and whether or not they would be prepared to pay a higher rate in order to maintain the dining room.

MR. CURTIS: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I understand the Minister to indicate that that is with respect to those who write or contact him. But is there any survey being conducted on board the vessels to determine preferences?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: Not at this time.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: To the Minister, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask, when he looks into this matter, to check whether or not his own campaign manager at the last election and the president of the provincial NDP have signed these forms requesting that the restaurant service be maintained.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: My own campaign manager?

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: In the last provincial election.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: You don't even know the name of my campaign manager in the last election. And besides, he was a she! (Laughter.)

ANTICIPATED DATE FOR SIGNING DREE AGREEMENTS

MR. PHILLIPS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the Hon. Minister of Industrial Development, Trade and Commerce. I understand that he recently signed a general agreement with the federal authorities in Ottawa with regard to DREE. I would like to ask him when he anticipates the detailed agreements to be signed with regard to specific areas of the province.

HON. G.V. LAUK (Minister of Industrial Development, Trade and Commerce): Well, Mr. Speaker, I expect that the subsidiary agreements, as they're called, will be negotiated over the next several months. I think it would be unfairly raising expectations, or lowering them, to speculate as to when they will be completed.

With respect to the Hon. Member who asked the question, his area, the Peace River–Liard region will be a priority area and we hope we will be completing our surveys and studies and plans in that area and get down to negotiating a subsidiary with DREE, and involve other provincial mechanisms for economic development in your area soon.

MR. PHILLIPS: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Will Hydro development on site 1 on the Peace River be held up waiting for these agreements to be signed?

HON. MR. LAUK: Well, I don't expect so, but I suggest that you ask the Hon. Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources (Hon. R.A. Williams) that question.

MR. PHILLIPS: One more supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is there a separate agreement for road and railway development in the northeastern portion of the province to be signed?

HON. MR. LAUK: The Minister of Highways (Hon. Mr. Lea) has had negotiations with respect to highways. There's the rail agreement for the northwest that has been negotiated, and there are continuing matters. But DREE is really separate from highways and the rail agreements that have been announced in the past.

ADVERTISING AGENCY FOR ICBC ACCOUNT

MR. McGEER: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Transport and Communications: with respect to the

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current media campaign being conducted by ICBC, is this advertising being handled entirely by the same firm which did the advertising for the NDP election campaign?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: There's a question on the order paper, Mr. Speaker, regarding the advertising for ICBC. I think there's a rule in the House that governs that.

Orders of the day.

The House in Committee of Supply; Mr. Dent in the chair.

ESTIMATES: DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS (continued)

On vote 98: Minister's office, \$110,176.

MR. J.R. CHABOT (Columbia River): It seems I'm always on my feet. I was on my feet last night at 11 o'clock.

AN HON. MEMBER: You were on your ear!

MR. CHABOT: Today I'm attempting to ask a few questions of the Minister relative to the management of the affairs of his department. I'd thought he'd rise early this morning and answer some of those questions I put to him, but maybe he's forgotten. After having had a sleep last night, he's forgotten some of the questions I've put to him.

I therefore want to pose to him again that very important question, Mr. Chairman, that has to do with the joyride experienced by the Minister shortly after he came to office. He went across the north from the east to the west...

AN HON. MEMBER: How?

MR. CHABOT: How? Oh, I'll get to that.

...trying to impress the people of the north by hiring one of the largest helicopters available, and bringing his friends along with him — his executive assistant, Dan Miller. I don't know who Dan Miller is, but I'd like to ask at

this time.... You have two executive assistants, Mr. Minister, in your office, and I'd really like to know what their responsibilities are, because they cost money. Do they do anything more than play cribbage in your office?

Now you also had on this joy-trip of yours across the north for eight days one B.C. Government Employees' Union representative. Could you tell me, Mr. Minister, what the objective of having him on this joyride with you was all about?

Now I don't know what size helicopter you used, Mr. Minister, but there are two helicopters that I know of that you might have used. They are both Sikorskys. One's an S518, handles 16 passengers, and it rents at \$700 an hour, plus fuel.

Interjection.

MR. CHABOT: Well, I'm asking you.

Interjections.

MR. CHABOT: There's another one, an S62; it handles 10 passengers....

AN HON. MEMBER: Now you're hot!

MR. CHABOT:...and it rents at \$420 per hour, plus fuel. Now if you rented the largest helicopter, the S518, it would cost the taxpayers of British Columbia \$16,800 a day for your trip.

AN HON. MEMBER: That's a lot of cash.

MR. CHABOT: Now if you rented the smaller helicopter, it would cost the taxpayers of British Columbia \$10,080 per day for your joy-trip across the north. Now for an eight-day period with the smaller helicopter — with the 10-passenger helicopter — the total bill would have been in the vicinity of \$80,640. For the larger helicopter it would cost in the vicinity of \$134,400 for the Minister to fly across the north to impress those people up there that he's able to hire a helicopter.

MR. McGEER: Did they play cribbage in that helicopter?

MR. CHABOT: Well, I wasn't there. I couldn't say whether they played cribbage on the helicopter, but I did question the Minister as to whether...

HON. G.R. LEA (Minister of Highways): They came up to my room.

MR. CHABOT: ...his executive assistants play cribbage in the office or what their role is in the office.

Interjection.

MR. CHABOT: Now, these are serious questions and I hope you will dispel my fears. It appears on the surface that you've wasted taxpayers' dollars by your joy trip across the north. Why couldn't you have used an automobile during those eight days to travel from Fort St. John across to Prince Rupert?

AN HON. MEMBER: Because of the roads. (Laughter.)

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MR. CHABOT: How do you expect, as Minister of Highways, to examine the conditions of highways by flying over the top of them? We want to know, Mr. Minister, what this trip cost, what type of plane you have. We want to know why you hired this extravagant, costly helicopter instead of driving across the north and seeing the highway first-hand, on the surface, instead of up in the clouds.

HON. MR. LEA: Mr. Chairman, as to the cost of hiring that helicopter, the Member knows that's in public accounts and that's the proper place to get that information.

AN HON. MEMBER: He's trying to bury it.

HON. MR. LEA: Since this government has come to office we've even arranged it so that a Member of that party is the chairman of the Public Accounts Committee.

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, that's a big deal. Big deal!

HON. MR. LEA: Now, Mr. Chairman, there have been questions also as to whether or not my executive assistant and my administrative assistant played cribbage all day, so I think it's only fair that I read out the job requirements and the job specs of assistants to Ministers. I'll just go through them so the House can be fully aware:

"Writing a weekly column concerned with government activities for newspapers in the Minister's constituency — information is obtained from government publications and other newspapers and speeches. Preparing a 15-minute live weekly radio programme."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

HON. MR. LEA: "Writing some speeches to be made by the Minister and editing those written by others. Preparing material for television and other radio broadcasts. Preparing draft replies to letters received by the Minister, covering many subjects. Preparing and screening press releases."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

HON. MR. LEA: "Acting as a member of the departmental publicity committee. Supervising the department's exhibit at national exhibitions like the PNE and that sort of thing. Receiving visitors and referring them to the property authority."

AN HON. MEMBER: Does he ever build any roads?

HON. MR. LEA: "Arranging social gatherings."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: How can he build any roads. (Laughter.)

HON. MR. LEA: "Reviewing final drafts by departments. Preparing all departmental press releases and dealing with reporters over the telephone, and providing them with information. Drafting replies to letters received by the Minister, the great majority of which deal with Highways matters."

MR. D.M. PHILLIPS (South Peace River): Does he build any roads?

HON. MR. LEA: "This involves contacting senior departmental officials and officers, and obtaining information. Editing...."

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: You asked, Mr. Member, so you should have the courtesy to listen.

"Editing the Department of Highways quarterly newsletter, and that's called *The Road Runner*, which is a service."

AN HON. MEMBER: Wow, right on!

HON. MR. LEA: "Providing material for Minister's speeches," but he doesn't write those.

"Editing reports and speeches for senior departmental officers." In other words, writing speeches for senior officers within the department.

MR. PHILLIPS: Does he build any roads?

HON. MR. LEA: "Compiling the annual report of the department. Preparing the Minister's speech for the budget debate."

MR. McGEER: That's a smear on your executive assistant. (Laughter.)

HON. MR. LEA: Now, you asked what the members of my staff do, the executive assistant and the administrative assistant. I'd like to tell you right now that they work very hard in that department trying to be liaison officers between the public and myself, and making sure the public get what they want.

But the job requirements and the duties that I read out are not from this government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

HON. MR. LEA: These are from the personnel file of an executive assistant to the former Minister of

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Highways, P.A. Gaglardi.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

HON. MR. LEA: And they were written by someone who is still with this government and is respected throughout the government, whose name is A.G. Richardson. At that time he was the Chief Personnel Officer; he was with both governments. He is now Chairman of the Public Service Commission. So I just thought, Mr. Member, you'd like to know what executive assistants do.

HON. P.F. YOUNG (Minister of Consumer Services): Hoisted with your own petard! (Laughter.)

MR. CHABOT: There is no useful role for that Minister of Highways in government because all his responsibilities are taken over by the executive assistant, and he has two. Why do you need to be the Minister of Highways?

Anything you're delivering appears, from the guidelines that you've read in the House, is strictly canned stuff prepared by executive assistants.

HON. R.A. WILLIAMS (Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources): Those are your own words.

MR. CHABOT: They are the orders of today, and you know it too, Mr. Woody Woodpecker.

I don't think that's good enough, Mr. Minister, for you to stand here and say that you can find it in the public accounts, you now have a chairman of public accounts — as if that makes a great deal of difference whether the chairman is from this side of the House or that side of the House.

The question is: the Minister of Highways has expended, wasted, a tremendous amount of taxpayers' dollars to impress the people in the north by using one of the largest helicopters available in this province, and going on a joy trip for eight days. I asked you, Mr. Minister: what was the reason for taking the representative of the B.C. Government Employees' Union on that trip? And you failed to answer that question. I think you have a responsibility to answer it.

Now we're talking of a figure between \$80,000 and \$134,000 of taxpayers' dollars: did you waste it in eight days trying to impress the people in the north? Why didn't you drive on the highways where you rightfully belong?

Are you suggesting now that we look in the public accounts to find these things? Do we try to ferret it out of public accounts?

You know full well that you're trying to hide this until 1975, because those vouchers won't be available to Members of this House until 1975.

We want to make sure that these costs are right now, so that there are no further abuses such as we've seen from your joy trip across the north.

You have a man, adjacent to you there, Mr. Minister, you could ask him; I'm sure he can tell you what kind of costs were involved. I ask you also: what size helicopter was it, a 10-passenger helicopter or a 16-passenger? Why don't you ask the man behind you who has the answer, and inform this House of what kind of money you wasted on this joy trip in the north?

I think the people are entitled to find out what kind of waste and extravagance they are experiencing under this government. You came to office by saying that you are an open government. Why don't you be open now? What have they got to hide?

HON. MR. LEA: Mr. Chairman, we didn't say we'd be open only with the Member for Columbia River. We said we'd be open with the people of British Columbia. Part of that openness was going to the north by helicopter with members of my staff, senior staff...

AN HON. MEMBER: How many?

HON. MR. LEA: I can't recall. I can get that information for you.

Interjections.

HON. MR. LEA: Did I take a representative of the B.C. Government Employees Union with me? You're darn tootin' I did.

MR. CHABOT: I know you did, but why?

HON. MR. LEA: You're darn tootin' I did, because we are not against unions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

HON. MR. LEA: And I'll tell you another thing: those men on the job are not against unions, and they were very glad to have him along. I don't think the taxpayers in this province mind a representative of the union going along to deal with problems, to be a liaison person between me, my senior staff and those workers. I'll tell you, it worked out well, for both the union, the workers and my senior people. It gave us a chance to get to know one another.

Once again the Member raised the point.... He didn't seem satisfied with my answer, he seems to feel that my executive assistant and my administrative assistant are running the department and there is no need for a Minister. Well, I'll tell you one thing, executive assistants and administrative assistants within this party, or within this government, are appointed openly.

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MR. CHABOT: They're political hacks.

HON. MR. LEA: That's right. And as political hacks they will act that way, and the people in this province know exactly what we're about.

Now I'd like to read you another letter, Mr. Member. It's from an ex-Minister. His name's here on the desk

somewhere — Gaglardi — and he's writing to the chairman of the Civil Service Commission, March 2, 1960.

AN HON. MEMBER: 1950?

HON. MR. LEA: 1960.

"Dear Mr. Morrison:

I would like to request that you arrange a regarding on my administrative assistant from grade 1 to grade 2. I have attached an outline of his duties and responsibilities, as prepared by my Assistant Deputy Minister. I believe that at least two of the administrative assistants of Ministers are classified as grade 2."

Now, I want you to listen to this next line carefully because if there's one thing we do, we don't mix up our political hacks with our civil service. He says:

"While I appreciate that some of the government employees in this classification" — administrative assistants to Ministers — "are branch heads within the departments, I don't think there is any doubt that both the degree of responsibility and volume of work in this position are greater than those of many of the other branch heads."

In other words, Mr. Chairman, that previous administration didn't bring in administrative assistants and executive assistants appointed by order-in-council — and these were — to help out a politician by another person who is philosophically disposed to that government; they brought those people in and put them in as branch heads within government. Now, we don't do that sort of thing.

MR. CHABOT: How about Harthorn?

HON. MR. LEA: Mr. Chairman, right now I don't think that Member wishes he had raised this topic at all.

MR. CHABOT: Harthorn came in as a political hack and he's the head of the department now.

MR. P.L. McGEER (Vancouver–Point Grey): Mr. Chairman, I can't decide from what the Minister of Highways says whether his executive assistants are playing cribbage or following the rules of the former Minister of Highways (Mr. Gaglardi). But I do say that the Member for Columbia River (Mr. Chabot) has laid some pretty serious charges against the Minister. Those charges are of abuse of public funds in a department that has a notorious reputation of being abused by Ministers of the Crown. I'm beginning to think that what the Department of Highways needs is a public trustee, because we had a continuous record of abuse under the former administration, and I see where the present Minister of Highways has evidently prepared a small book on that. But we don't want a two-volume edition to be compiled when he leaves office.

It isn't good enough, Mr. Chairman, for that Minister to say: "Look for it in public accounts." This is the kind of thing we used to get from the former Minister about the cost of running his jet aircraft. You simply could not find what particular vote he tied the cost of that aircraft into. I had to bring in bills in this House suggesting that there be a public log of that Minister's aircraft before the former, administration began to introduce a system by which there was some watch-dogging of those people who'd been handed enormous amounts of money to administer.

It has become standard practice without a piece of legislation, but it's the sort of thing that doesn't emerge from public accounts. It's the sort of thing that emerges from debates in this assembly.

I don't think under the former administration we ever had a single instance of anything as expensive as a helicopter being used to investigate roads. The former Minister used to test the curves with the RCMP right behind him. (Laughter.)

MR. H.A. CURTIS (Saanich and the Islands): But not very close.

MR. McGEER: They got pretty close towards the end, I'll tell you, Mr. Chairman.

If we're going to inspect the roads, inspect the roads. But he isn't the Minister of airways. We don't want a fleet of helicopters, either purchased or chartered. What we want is some pretty sound administrative practices from that Minister, not a bunch of political fluff about how worthwhile it is to have political executive assistants.

There's a tremendous amount of money being administered on a contract basis by that department. It demands scrupulous methodology and absolutely non-partisan administration. The most unfortunate thing possible, I think, in this province is to have someone who's more interested in politics than administration managing a department like that and justifying in a rather feeble way enormous expenditures of public funds for uses that are obviously much more political than administrative.

I think the Minister should stand up now and give us a full and complete accounting of what the Member for Columbia River has described as a joy

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ride through the north.

MR. N.R. MORRISON (Victoria): Mr. Chairman, in reading the White Paper which the Minister passed out yesterday, I couldn't help but feel that I had read it before. Much of what is in this particular paper is almost identical with the paper that he presented a year ago.

One of the items which is new is on page 47. They're referring here to a new, high frequency, single side-band system which was installed near Victoria as part of an air-medical dispatch system to be used in conjunction with the government's newly acquired aircraft. It says the aircraft can be reached anywhere in the province from Victoria for emergency purposes. I'd like the Minister to tell us first of all where exactly that is installed, how much it cost, if a log was maintained of the use of it, and how much it has actually been used for emergency purposes.

I'd like to go on and ask the Minister if he could tell the House which aircraft do now come under the Highways department estimates. Where do we find them in the estimates? Where are the expenses for the Highways hangars in Victoria? I assume there's still one in Kamloops, and there may be others around the province, but where are those expenses? Where do we find those in the estimates? What vote number do we look under for them?

I'd like also to know from the Minister who looks after the dispatch of the aircraft which come under his department. Who has the say in the priorities of their use?

My next point then is that I understand that there's a very extensive air photo programme to be continued this year. I wonder if he can tell the House whether they're going to be able to meet their air photo projections with the existing equipment. While I'm on that subject of existing equipment, it surprises me how often from the other side of the House we get a comment about aircraft being returned to Wichita. Now, obviously that comment is referring to a former aircraft, a Lear jet....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

MR. MORRISON: I'm going to make a new point on it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would draw to the attention of the Hon. Member that vote 245 under the Minister of Transport and Communications (Hon. Mr. Strachan) pertains to aircraft maintenance and operations.

MR. MORRISON: Not Highways aircraft, it doesn't. Highways aircraft come under a separate vote.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the Hon. Member continue, then?

MR. MORRISON: I'd like to know about the Highways aircraft. I'd also like to mention to the House that it must be obvious to these people that the new aircraft which have been ordered, the two \$1 million Beechcraft and the two Cessna Citations must of necessity return to Wichita for service. There's nobody in Canada that has the facility to service them, as there was no one in Canada to service the Lear. If they think they had a problem with the

Lear, wait until they start returning their new aircraft to Wichita for service.

One other item now I'd like to talk about. In this same White Paper, page 49, it talks about insurance and claims. In the fourth line down he talks about the total number of government vehicles. The figure is given: 7,185 vehicles. In that same White Paper, on page 37, the total government fleet a year ago — these are not just Highways cars but total government fleet — is given as 6,899. Yet in this House just a few days ago, the Minister of Transport and Communications told us that the entire government fleet was well in excess of 9,000 units. So I wonder if we could get those two figures sorted out. Somewhere along the line, it would appear that we purchased about 2,000 vehicles since November 1973, unless those figures are correct.

I would also like at this moment to ask the Minister if he could tell us what the current situation is concerning extra-wide loads on the highways. I understand that there is a manufacturer of boats on the North Shore in Vancouver who produces a very satisfactory fiberglass boat and it is an extra-wide load. He has in the past had difficulty moving these boats to a market in United States, even though he is prepared to meet every regulation, that is cars in front, cars behind, and wide-load indicators, and take them on the highway after midnight, or any hour that he is given permission.

I understand that permission is now denied. I hope I am not correct. As a result this particular manufacturer finds it almost impossible to stay in business because the market in Canada is not big enough and he can no longer supply boats to the United States unless he puts them both in the water and either tows them down or sails them down. I would like to get some kind of an answer on that one. I'll have a few other questions which I'll ask later.

HON. MR. LEA: Air Photo was asked about — and that's in Lands. Hangars were asked about — that's in Public Works. Aircraft are in Transport and Communications — there are no aircraft in Highways. So I think that that deals with that.

MR. MORRISON: None of your aircraft?

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HON. MR. LEA: No.

MR. MORRISON: Could the Minister tell where...?

HON. MR. LEA: Now, also he mentioned — and I can understand this being confusing. But the number of vehicles mentioned in that report aren't the number of vehicles that are necessarily insured. Those are motorized vehicles where the 9,000-some odd figure given by the Minister of Transport and Communications includes trailers and other vehicles. That does bring it up; they are insured also. But those are just motorized vehicles.

Now, it seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that the opposition — I'm not talking only of the official opposition, I'm not talking about the Conservative Party either. But the Liberals, Mr. Chairman, and the Social Credit seem to want to grasp at any straw that they think they can grasp at to get a political discussion going and that's fair. I don't think it's wrong for them to be politicians because obviously they are. You know, they should be proud of being politicians, Mr. Chairman, as we are.

Now, Mr. Chairman, if the official opposition and the Liberal Party doesn't know how to do public accounts, dig out and find out what this government is spending, as an opposition is supposed to do, then I'll answer the question about the helicopter and save them a few worries, a bit of work. Maybe it is the work, Mr. Chairman, that bothers them.

The helicopter, the money spent on that helicopter, a total of \$18,000, is a far cry from the figures which were put forward in a political manner by the Member for Columbia River (Mr. Chabot). It was a 12-passenger machine.

AN HON. MEMBER: What make?

HON. MR. LEA: I can't remember. Phone me up, I can tell you the make. It doesn't matter.

AN HON. MEMBER: Don't know, eh?

HON. MR. LEA: It doesn't matter, and you know it. You wouldn't know what make it was if I told you and neither would I. Don't be silly. You know, let's talk about highways. Not once have we mentioned highways; let's get down to our estimates.

MR. MORRISON: Mr. Chairman, I understand the Minister to say that none of these aircraft come under his estimates; how come then, some of the pilots are listed under his staff? Does the Minister not want to answer?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I assume he's getting the answer.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, the Minister has said, you know, that his helicopter trip cost him \$18,000. What's \$18,000 here and there? I'll tell you, Mr. Chairman, when I start phoning the engineer in my constituency and want a \$2,000 culvert or a load of gravel here or a load of gravel there, I'm told that there is not sufficient money to look after the problem this year, \$18,000 seems like an awful lot of money to me — particularly when it is wasted, particularly when it's extravagance on the part of the Minister of Highways. It is absolutely unnecessary.

You know, Mr. Chairman, I could see this if it were some other department using a helicopter to go visit a constituency on an urgent matter. But here is the Minister of Highways who should be on the ground, driving on the very highways which he has to administer. but what does he do, he takes a helicopter! Now the Minister stated that his deliberations worked out very well. All right, the Minister went into my constituency

HON. G.V. LAUK (Minister of Industrial Development, Trade and Commerce): Where were you?

MR. PHILLIPS: I happened to be in New Brunswick, Mr. Minister of Industrial Development and Trade and Commerce, on a family reunion planned long before you even came to power.

AN HON. MEMBER: Where's the Premier?

MR. PHILLIPS: And where's the Premier? I certainly wasn't in New Brunswick politicking on the people's money, I'll tell you that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order! Let the Member speak.

MR. PHILLIPS: No, I didn't go down there on the public purse. I paid my own way. And I wasn't there while the House was sitting, either, Mr. Chairman. I was there on vacation, on my own time.

So this helicopter trip worked out well. I'm certainly glad that he had the union leader of the British Columbia Employees Union with him because there must have been some urgent matter up there that the Minister needed such a big helicopter that he had to take all these people with him.

He could have hired a Canadian Coachways bus, then they would have had time to discuss it along the way. However, the Member went into the riding and he took the helicopter as I understand down to the Monkman Pass area; all right, your deliberations went well.

Tell me what conclusions you came to about the road into the Monkman area. Tell me, Mr. Chairman, through you to the Minister, what conclusions you came to with regard to upgrading the Alaska

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Highway. Tell me, Mr. Chairman, what conclusions the Minister came to with regard to replacement of the bridge over Kiskatinaw River on the Alaska Highway. Tell me, Mr. Chairman, what conclusions the Minister came to with regard to the construction of the highway from Fort Simpson to Fort Nelson.

Tell me, Mr. Chairman, what conclusions the Minister came to with regard to three-lane passing on both sides of the East Pine River on the Hart Highway west of Dawson Creek. Tell me, Mr. Chairman, what conclusions the Minister came to with regard to a three-lane passing lane on the Wabbie Hill on the east side of Chetwynd on the Hart Highway.

Tell me, Mr. Chairman, what conclusions the Minister of Highways came to with regard to Highway 29 between Chetwynd and Hudson Hope. This highway is in a deteriorating condition and should be resurfaced. If the Minister thought it so urgent to look into these matters in these constituencies, tell me what conclusions the Minister came to.

What conclusions did the Minister come to with regard to a new bridge over the Moberly River on that same Highway 29?

I'd like to know, Mr. Chairman, because he said all went well. He certainly had his senior personnel with him. He must have felt it very urgent to use \$18,000 of the taxpayers' money to make this urgent trip to just set down in certain areas. I'd like to know just what conclusions the Minister of Highways came to, because as I said, Mr. Chairman, it must have been a very urgent matter for the Minister to hire a helicopter and to not take time to drive over the very highways which he has to administer. So I would like some answers on the conclusions derived from this helicopter jaunt on those particular sections of road that I have mentioned.

HON. MR. LEA: Mr. Chairman, obviously, the Member for South Peace River doesn't feel that it is urgent and that it is necessary to take senior staff along with myself to go out and meet the on-the-job people, the people who are on the line, the foreman, the district highways managers — talk with the men, talk to the grader operators, talk with all those — the office staff, find out how they're feeling.

Now, I have been over those highways many times, Mr. Member. It's not the first time I've been around this province. But I thought that that was the best way, in the shortest possible time, to deal with the problem. And I tell you, I still believe it was the best way, and I will be doing it again in other regions of the province.

Now, some of the specific areas that you asked about. I can tell you that a lot of the items that you mentioned are currently being negotiated with the federal government, a lot of those. There is going to be more activity on the northern road system in the next year, in the next few years, than there has ever been there before. I seriously know that that is going to make you very happy because you are genuinely concerned about the roads within your area.

I can assure you, through you, Mr. Chairman, that there is going to be a great deal of activity. One of the problems I have in your riding is pronouncing some of the names — what is the name of that bridge again?

MR. PHILLIPS: Kiskatinaw.

HON. MR. LEA: That's right. That's in the estimates for this year. What we did do also, we went over a lot of virgin territory, where there were no roads, where you had mentioned to me prior that you would like to see road activity, down below Chetwynd and Dawson Creek.

I think it is a good thing for me to get out into the province and see first hand those areas where my staff are going to be coming to me later on saying, "We'd like to build a road," or "Here's what's there". You know, I think it's good to have that first-hand knowledge, and I think in 1973 or in 1974 that helicopters aren't out of place. I realize that the former Premier used to travel on the PGE and by car, but you know, I heard he was afraid of flying.

Now getting back to some questions asked by the First Member for Victoria (Mr. Morrison), I can't understand what's going on over there. First of all, he asks me about air photos and lands, hangars and public works aircraft, and transportation and communication, pilots which were transferred over to Transportation and Communications May 18, 1973. He asked me about wide loads which comes under commercial transport which now comes under Transport and Communications. So I think, Mr. Chairman, those questions would be better directed to the departments that are involved.

MR. MORRISON: What about the single side-band radio, then? Where does it belong?

HON. MR. LEA: My staff don't know your terminology, Mr. Member.

MR. MORRISON: Well, they wrote the report. I quoted the page number, page 47.

HON. MR. LEA: I'll try and get that for you, Mr. Member.

MR. MORRISON: May I comment then on his report which he filed with the House yesterday, page 41? He talked about aerial photography of 6,000 miles of roads being done. Where do the accounts for that photography turn up in your department? Obviously if someone else does them, you pay for them. That's the point I'm trying to get at.

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I realize that you've reshuffled all these departments and that they've taken anything worthwhile away from you. On page 42 you also refer to air photographs and existing topographical mapping. Obviously it's still in your department.

Interjection.

MR. MORRISON: He filed it yesterday. Made a big issue about it. Wanted to get it so that we could talk about it in his estimates. Exactly the same as your report filed a year before except they changed a few letters.

HON. MR. LEA: I guess the confusion came in because again this Member is incorrect. The system planning section updated the photographic inventory with over 6,000 miles of road film during the summer. The reason that I was a bit confused was because he kept referring to the aircraft. That was done from the road, from a vehicle on the road.

MR. MORRISON: But I still want to know where the account goes for the aerial photography your department had done.

HON. MR. LEA: This is not a public accounts meeting, this is estimates. All that information can be found in public accounts. I think that we better deal with things as they're supposed to be dealt with.

AN HON. MEMBER: You're saying you don't know.

HON. R.M. STRACHAN (Minister of Transport and Communications): You can get that from public accounts.

MR. MORRISON: It's all very well to find it in public accounts. He's trying to say he doesn't even have it. I want to know where in public accounts...?

HON. MR. LEA: Mr. Chairman, you'll find them under public accounts. Again he's wrong. It's under Lands.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, Mr. Minister, I think it's very necessary that you get out around and meet with foremen and talk with road grader drivers, but I'd like to ask you how many road grader drivers you talked to on that trip with your helicopter? Now getting down to specifics, I appreciate again you giving me the information that the Kiskatinaw Bridge on the Alaska Highway is in the estimates for this year. I appreciate that very much. But I want to tell you, Mr. Minister, the reason that I'm questioning this helicopter trip is that my constituents phoned me up and they say, "I need a load of gravel", or "I need a culvert", or "I need my road graded", or "I need some little thing that's going to cost maybe \$200." When I tell them that there's no money, they say "Well, the Minister of Highways was up here in a helicopter and it's costing him \$200 an hour." Now I have to be able to justify that. So I'm glad that the Minister tried to justify that.

Now, Mr. Minister — I'll have to get over here so I can see you — would you mind telling me if three-lane passing on the Hart Highway is in the estimates this year? This is a very important matter. If this Sukunka Coal deal

goes ahead, the traffic between Dawson Creek and Chetwynd is going to increase by 300 or 400 per cent. These are very long hills. The third passing lane has been surveyed for quite some number of years. It's a very important matter. If we're not building any new highways this year, and the Minister's talking about maintaining and up-grading the highways we have, I'd like to know if that's in the estimates this year.

HON. MR. LEA: No, it isn't.

MR. PHILLIPS: Would the Minister give consideration to putting it in the estimates because the Minister of Finance and Premier has indicated to me that there will probably be an agreement signed on this Sukunka Coal deal by the end of July. As soon as that happens, the traffic is going to start because Dawson Creek is the main supply point for Chetwynd which will be supplying the area 80 miles south. It will also be necessary to build a road into that area. Are his considerations in the estimates for these items?

HON. MR. LEA: Mr. Chairman, I said they weren't in for this year. They aren't in for this year.

MR. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chairman, would the Minister of Highways mind indicating to me what is in the estimates for up-grading the Hart Highway between Chetwynd and Prince George?

MR. D.E. LEWIS (Shuswap): I'd like to take the opportunity to enter into this debate. It's not very often that I agree with the Member for Similkameen-Boundary (Mr. Richter) when he says he feels that the highways budget was under-sold. I don't know what's happening in my riding this year, but I know for a fact it was under-sold in my riding last year.

The Member that represented that riding for 12 years felt that he could get some work done in that riding through the use of diplomacy and working with the Minister concerned. I've attempted this for a year and a half. I know that the present Minister has only been in there for a part of a year and he wasn't

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responsible for last year's allocating of the funds. But I do feel that from now on, diplomacy is over as far as I'm concerned.

I want to tell the facts, and the facts are in regard to what's happening in the riding, in the riding of Shuswap we have over 1,000 miles of road, 88 miles of Trans-Canada Highway, and a budget of \$1,810,000.

We have roads such as the Eagle Bay road where settlers have been in there since the turn of the century, and the road's still in the same condition. People have continually through the past government and through this government made protests and asked for something to be done to up-grade that road.

Very little has been done on that road, and I'll tell you why it wasn't done under the past government. They had a policy throughout this province. In known areas where the supporters were from another party, those roads were neglected. The past premier even stood up in Revelstoke and told people there if they wished roads up-graded, think about changing their vote in the next election. The same thing happened in my riding.

Now the unfortunate thing is, the party was changed; the people on that road are still getting the same treatment. Now I don't know if it's because they're afraid that if the Department of Highways spends some money then they'll be accused of favouring people who support our government. But I say they have the right to fair treatment in this province, the same as anybody else.

There's a petition in the Minister's office at the present time from the people in the area. Another petition is in on the same road, saying that they're going to hold their children out of school unless something is done to upgrade the road. Now the Minister's indicated that something will be done on that road. But I do hope that it's not going to be just a very small amount, something to appease the people. I think after about 70 years, they're entitled to a proper road.

There are several other areas in the riding that need upgrading' substantially. I'm not going to delve into them at this time. But I would like to just make a few moments in regard to the Minister's views in regards to planning along highways.

He asked for the comments last night and I'm going to give them to him. I'm in favour of the Department of Highways controlling accesses to their roads. But if they're going to attempt to take in the planning function for any large distance from that highway, I'm totally opposed to it. I say municipal councils and regional councils are structured throughout the areas to have some input into what happens in regard to their communities. In my view, Trans-Canada Highway is not God in my community. The Trans-Canada Highway is an essential road network to get people across this country.

To exclude the people in the area from development, in my mind, is a very unfair thing. At the present time the *Land Commission Act* has frozen a very large proportion of my riding for a year and a half and I'm not prepared to go through the same thing with the Highways department for another year and a half.

Also, in regard to the Minister's statement regarding tourism, at this time I want it on record that I disassociate myself from that type of feeling on my behalf.

My riding is heavily oriented toward tourism. The people who operate the tourist resorts are working people the same as the rest of us. Many of them have worked for 50 years, 40 years, saving enough money to retire in a resort that they could handle in their retirement years. I certainly support tourists coming to our province. I think they contribute a lot.

I agree with the Minister that we must do something to see that they move throughout our province in an orderly fashion, but I'm deadly opposed to any thoughts of curtailing them coming to this province. I enjoy going to the State of Washington. I enjoy going to other parts of the country and at no time do I feel that any part of the United States should come out with a policy of saying, "We don't want tourists."

I was disturbed by the Minister's statement last night in regard to unorganized areas. He stood up in the House last night and he said that he felt people who lived in unorganized areas were there because they wanted a free ride, or to live off the people who were in municipalities. That was the innuendo that I got.

I live in an unorganized area and I feel I have contributed a great deal towards this province. Approximately 50 per cent of the people in my riding live in rural areas. I think it's very unfair to enter into this type of a debate to try to work the outlying areas against the organized areas. I think that it's hard enough to keep some sort of harmony within a riding, with the two different factions there, as it is, without having something that is going to stir it up.

I certainly feel that people in unorganized areas are contributing toward British Columbia. Possibly in the past their tax base was too low, but this has been corrected. In some areas it has gone the other way; it is too high for the services that they are receiving. I know the Highways department is forever saying that we don't want more people living in this area because they're going to have to build roads. Well, what have we got a Highways department for?

Interjections.

MR. LEWIS: They're here to service the people of B.C. The people of B.C. pay for it and they should have this benefit coming to them.

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MR. A.V. FRASER (Cariboo): Put your running shoes on, Don, and come over here.

MR. LEWIS: Get lost! (Laughter.)

I think, Mr. Chairman, I've made my views known quite clearly. I think if you take time to go over the list in

regard to the money that was spent throughout this province last year, and then take a look at Shuswap in regard to the expenditures — and take a look throughout the last 15 or 20 years — you'll see what's happened in Shuswap.

Thank you.

[Mr. Dent in the chair.]

HON. MR. LEA: Mr. Chairman, in answer to the Member for South Peace River (Mr. Phillips), the question he asked about the Hart Highway: there are two major jobs going to be carried on this year. One is a \$5 million contract for 13 miles in the Pine Pass area and the other is a day-labour job of five miles near the Parsnip River — that's between the Parsnip River and Honeymoon Creek — day labour amounting to about \$400,000.

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: Yes.

Now dealing with some of the comments made by the Member for Shuswap (Mr. Lewis): I don't know what the former Premier said when he was talking in Revelstoke, but if that was the attitude of the former government — I wasn't in this House — then I don't think it's the kind of attitude or the kind of direction that we should be going in as government.

First of all, even if we wanted to go that way these days and use highways as a political tool, I think people in this province in 1974 are too sophisticated to be bought off by highways politically, as I think was shown in 1972. There were massive amounts of money put into highway programmes — or at least promised — in 1972 and they even expended money from the previous Minister's budget which left him almost penniless in the year of 1973. I don't think that's the direction that the Member is asking us to go.

AN HON. MEMBER: You should see some of the memos that were written at the time.

HON. MR. LEA: You ask about Eagle Bay Road, Mr. Member. As you know, there was \$60,000 destined to be put into that road. Since you've shown your concern, and people on that road have shown their concern, we have doubled that amount and put it up to \$120,000, because we feel you were correct in your plea.

That's necessary; it has to be done — and more.

But at the same time, some of the complaints were not asking for improvements, but were asking that it be better maintained, that it be graded more often — that it be kept up.

This year in your riding and all the other ridings we're putting more money into maintenance. We're getting new equipment; we're going to be hiring more people to run that equipment. As I mentioned earlier when I opened up the estimates, the thrust is going to be in maintaining the roads that we already have, such as the Eagle Bay Road that you have brought up.

That doesn't mean we're not going to build new roads to new communities, or new roads where they are needed. But at the same time we're going to change the emphasis slightly. I feel that people who are living on a road that isn't maintained are not happy people. They feel they are not getting anything back for their taxes. I agree, and they should be getting roads back.

It's easy to build new roads and try to extend the Highways Minister's ego but I'm not in here for that. I'd like to see happy people on well-maintained roads.

Mr. Member, I think I may have confused you or maybe I didn't make myself clear when I was talking about people going outside of organized communities to get away from their responsibility within the community. I wasn't talking about the kind of situation that you live in, or a great many other people in this province live in, in rural areas. I'm talking about those bedroom communities that spring up around large municipalities.

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: Well, I can think of the communities that surrounded Kamloops before the amalgamation. It's all over the province. Mr. Member, you know that it does happen. People do move outside of municipal boundaries. They don't live in a manner that we think of rural people living; they live in modern subdivisions outside of the main community, outside of those boundaries. They use all the facilities that the community within the boundaries offers, such as the arenas, thy curling clubs, the theatres, the streets, and they don't pay towards that.

I'm not saying they don't pay taxes. They pay them to the province and they deserve some service back. But I'm saying that it's probably the wrong way to go to keep allowing these subdivisions to spring up outside of the boundaries. I know that the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Hon. Mr. Lorimer) has also said in this House that he feels we have to ensure that people who live and take advantage of community facilities help pay for them. I'm sure that you agree.

MR. FRASER: Where are they going to live? On a

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rock bluff?

HON. MR. LEA: Well, the Member can live where he chooses.

I think that we are heading in the right direction with the roads, going towards maintenance and the gradual upgrading of what we have, rather than forging on into...when I was on that northern trip, Mr. Member, the district superintendents, the foremen, told me that their job was almost impossible.

They are the people out there dealing with the public. The public hit them if they have a complaint before it gets to my senior staff or to me. They're the ones who are taking the brunt of all the complaints. They told me that if we continue to go the way we were, of going to the outskirts of their district and building a mile or two of road without looking after their own backyard and maintaining the roads that are already there, the complaints are not going to quit.

If there are complaints — it's their money. The people in that district are paying for those roads. If they say they want to have those roads maintained that are already built, before we go on building other new ones, then I think it's up to them. They are the people who are paying for it. All I've tried to do is make the department go in a direction that I feel has been asked of me by the people who live in those highway districts, the constituents of this province. I think that I have interpreted this correctly. I hope so. If I haven't, I'll soon know.

MR. CURTIS: The question of subdivision approval in electoral areas or, if you wish to use the term, unorganized areas I think should be canvassed very briefly this morning.

Perhaps the Minister is aware of complaints which are fairly broadly based. Certainly, I believe other Members of this House will have received complaints from developers. I realize that with certain Members, Mr. Chairman, developers is a bad word. But one doesn't have to be a massive real estate development complex to meet the term "developer."

I am thinking of very small subdivisions which are attempted from time to time. There is unbelievable red tape in gaining the necessary approvals in unorganized electoral areas. Hopefully the Minister has identified this problem and is working on it. The department appears to me to be badly understaffed in this area. An individual who is attempting a small subdivision in an electoral district is pushed from one place to another, from one individual to another, and finally would have cause to lose all patience in attempting to subdivide three or four or five lots.

This comment is not related to my constituency alone; I have had complaints from a number of areas of the province.

Has the Minister identified the problem? Is the Minister attempting to ensure that there is closer coordination between his department and others who become involved in subdivision of a parcel of land, in order to make it easier for the individual or the company to gain the necessary approvals within a reasonable length of time? I submit, Mr. Chairman, that it's a very perplexing and distressing problem.

HON. MR. LEA: I agree that it has been a problem. The approval system has to be streamlined; there's no doubt about it.

I should point out that the Highways department is only in many cases the collecting agency for these requests. Before the highways senior approval officer approves it, it goes to the Department of Health, goes to the regional district. I should point out, too that the Highways department can become, under these circumstances, the whipping boy.

For instance, we'll have regional districts and municipalities — and I'm not going to mention which ones; I don't think that would be fair — which have said yes to the people when they've applied for something and then have phoned us and said, "Say no." That's politics! I'm not saying it happens all the time, but it does happen.

Interjection.

HON. MR. LEA: No, I'm not going to name names because many of those areas which have done it have since that time become very responsible. I don't think it would be fair to name names.

Interjection.

MRS. P.J. JORDAN (North Okanagan): It's a figment of your imagination.

HON. MR. LEA: No, no, Madam Member it is not a figment of my imagination.

We need more people in approving, there's just no doubt that we're understaffed. I think the job that Mr. Elston, the senior approving officer, has done on his own in headquarters is magnificent. I don't know how he's done it.

MR. CURTIS: Under the circumstances.

HON. MR. LEA: Yes, under the circumstances. We have to get him more staff. For those unorganized territories with that subdivision or with that development which isn't going to have some adverse effect on the highway, I'd like to review that and see whether it should even be within my department. But it was there when we took it and we're constantly reviewing that.

Those subdivisions or those developments,

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whether they be residential or commercial developments, shopping centres, et cetera, which are immediately adjacent to the highway and do have an adverse effect or will have some effect on the highway, should remain within the Highways department. Maybe we should get, as I mentioned, further staff.

As I mentioned earlier, in this province we do not have the luxury — and that's what it is — of allowing that kind of development along highways. Sooner or later, and it will probably be sooner because it's happening now — one of the worst areas in the province in terms of development along the highways causing congestion is in the Okanagan Valley — if we allow that to happen and keep on happening, it won't be that long before the drive from Dawson Creek to Vancouver will take you two weeks. You'll have to go at 20 miles an hour all along that mileage you have to travel. I don't think any Member of this House wants those inter-regional transportation carrier routes congested so they can't act in the manner for which they were designed.

If those developments and those commercial ventures along highways don't interfere in our opinion with the

function of the highway system, then we approve it. But if in our opinion within the department it will have an adverse effect, then we don't approve it. I suggest that those municipal councils sometimes don't have the same feeling towards the inter-regional carriers that we do within the department. They do consider them city streets in many areas.

MR. CURTIS: In municipalities you have that control.

HON. MR. LEA: No, we don't. We have control of access to the highway itself. If there's a request for zoning, we can hold it up. But if it's already zoned commercial, and the developer wants to go in and not put his access directly on to that highway system, then we have no choice. So what happens? He goes on to a side street and you have all that traffic from that side street coming along to that inter-regional carrier. So really, it's not acceptable. Once you've plugged that highway you have a bottleneck.

I suggest that if those developers want to go along highways, it's only for their benefit that they're thinking. If those developers would like to go in and serve that community, I'm sure the community itself doesn't care whether that development is on the highway a mile off the highway because people aren't always driving down the highway to get to it. I think developers should go in with shopping centres to serve the community in which they situate, and that isn't necessarily along one of the arterial highways. But I can understand why the developer wants to go there.

I don't think as a society we can allow this, especially in this valley community of British Columbia. I cannot stress too strongly the pickle we're getting ourselves in in this province.

The second time you build a road, it's not in the most desirable place. Usually you pick out the most desirable routing in the first place. The second less-desirable is usually more expensive.

But that is not the only consideration. In B.C. we cannot move over; we're stuck in most cases with having a one-routing transportation corridor for highways throughout this province. Ask yourself, once those corridors are congested and cannot be used efficiently as inter-regional carriers, what do we do then? I believe the Members in this House should be going along with me and saying, "Yes, keep those inter-regional carriers free-flowing for inter-regional traffic." Whether it's one passenger in a huge car or a bus or whatever, we're going to need those routings as inter-regional carriers of transportation no matter what that mode of transport may be.

I think the attitude I'm taking is a responsible one and I would ask the Members of this House to consider what I am saying and go along.

The Member for Cariboo (Mr. Fraser) who was on a council for years and years and years in Quesnel knows what I'm saying. It happens, and we can't allow it to happen any longer. We have to take a responsible stand, a stand that I suggest the ex-Attorney-General, Robert Bonner, put to this House in 1953.

MR. CURTIS: The Minister strayed somewhat from the point I made first, although I realize the question of restricting development along highways is of concern to him. Perhaps he would comment when he is next on his feet: has this moratorium been extended equally over the entire province? I think that's an important point for the committee to know. Are there any exceptions to the moratorium?

If the Minister disagrees, fair enough. But I submit that many of the problems to which he is addressing himself, many of the developments which have caused concern to the Minister and his department, do involve rezoning and therefore the needed approval of the Department of Highways in municipalities within organized areas before the development can proceed.

I think the emphasis the Minister placed on these developments going ahead in municipalities might not intentionally but accidentally have misled the committee this morning. He knows that before the bylaw can be given final reading by a municipality, it has to come to his department. It must come to his department and his department can say, "Aye, nay, or maybe," — or anything in between really. Let's not leave that mistaken impression at large on that particular point.

Getting back to the subdivision approvals, yes, the Department of Highways may well have been the whipping boy in this particular respect. I can agree with the Minister that departments in various levels of government sometimes don't like to carry the can; they don't want to be identified as the level or agency which says, "No, we don't like the idea; we're going to turn it down for these reasons." So the buck is passed from one to another.

I can accept the Minister's observation that occasionally another agency might well say to Highways: "Hey, don't let this one get through. We don't like it, but we can't say so." Or, "We're reluctant to say so."

We need a little more direct comment from agencies and from departments on a particular proposal, a subdivision — whatever it may be — which is not deemed desirable or in the best interests of that particular area or that community. But that takes courage on the part of the department or the agency concerned.

Mr. Chairman, subdivision approval may not therefore be properly placed in the Department of Highways. The Minister alluded to that and I can accept that observation. Perhaps it does belong in some other department.

But here's a great opportunity for the Minister. He identifies and recognizes the red tape. He admits that it exists. He admits that individuals can run into a lot of snags in trying to get a small parcel subdivided. It's not affected by the land freeze, by agricultural land reserve. It has no other problems; it can be subdivided. And the person least equipped, the person most poorly equipped to get the necessary approval is in most instances, I suggest, the individual — the lady, the couple, the retired couple or the non-professional in real estate development.

The big companies can certainly afford to assign a lawyer or a technician, a professional, to the job. But the individual is the one who is likely to run into the most difficulty in trying to find his or her way through this maze of government to simply get some very basic approvals.

Mr. Chairman, in looking at the department in the coming year the Minister could perhaps take a lead and could find the most appropriate department for this kind of approval and make his recommendation to his cabinet colleagues to clearly assign it to one department so that people don't have to spend hours, days, weeks, months in some instances, trying to get a simple little subdivision approved. Instead of a whipping boy, let him be an expediter. I think it's a great opportunity for the Minister in the next few months.

MR. PHILLIPS: I was just interested in listening to the Member for North Okanagan (Mrs. Jordan) a few moments ago when she said that it was a figment of the Minister's imagination. Well, I hope the Minister has an imagination — he hasn't used very many imaginative policies in his estimates this year. Here is a government who has said that they are not going to build any new roads in the year 1974-75.

AN HON. MEMBER: Four years.

MR. PHILLIPS: Did he say four years? That's worse still. But here that same government has a broad imaginative policy of developing the northwestern part of the province, and, indeed, changing the economy of the northeastern part of the province.

Now, I always thought that it was fairly elementary that if you're going to develop any area economically, highways are one of the basic ingredients. Yet, here is a department which has no expansionary policy whatsoever.

The Minister fails to realize...and I understand this because, as I say, he certainly hasn't shown any imagination this year. Here is a Minister who thinks that you go out and in one year clear the brush, do the surveying, build the basic road and pave it. The Minister should realize that if you were to start to build a highway this year, it's sometimes two and three years before the highway is even ready to be used by the public, particularly in the north country because of the short seasons.

Here is a Minister who says that we're not going to build any highways. Has he had any highways surveyed for the future? Does he have in his plans, for instance, any thoughts of building a highway or upgrading the highway

from Williams Lake to Bella Coola? Does he have in his plans, or any thoughts for the future, of opening up a second corridor from the lower mainland to the Interior? Or is this too big for his imagination?

Certainly, with the problems we're having both on the Hope-Princeton Highway and the Fraser Canyon Highway it is recognized that we are going to need a third corridor from the lower mainland particularly with the development in the north. I'm suggesting that corridor will probably have to be somewhere from Squamish, in that area, up through to Williams Lake, following, roughly, the grade of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway. But if there's no planning, if the policy is a stop-and-hold policy, it is going to do a great deal of damage to this province and its future development.

I guess if the government policy is one of sort of holding the line — if you don't develop the roads, if you don't open up new areas — I guess nobody will come here to live and they'll have it all to themselves.

I'd would just like to talk for just a few moments, Mr. Chairman, on subdivisions. I'd like to get it straight. Is the Minister talking about housing subdivisions, or is he talking about commercial

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enterprises along the highways? Certainly there will have to be subdivisions. If this government and the Department of Finance would loosen up with the purse strings so that municipalities would have sufficient capital to upgrade their own highways within their municipalities, then subdivisions could take place other than along the arterial highways.

I feel that if the Minister is going to retard.... I'm not saying I either agree with or disagree with it, I'd like to do some more study on it. I've seen areas in the States, when you're driving from here to California, where the complete core of the original town is dead and those businesses in that core have to pay for the taxes and the policing and so forth. What has happened out on the highway? That's where all the business has gone, and they're not really paying it back. Now I can see what has happened in many instances there.

However, people have to live somewhere. If you want further development within the core of the municipality, you are going to have to loosen up with the purse strings to give those municipalities sufficient funds to upgrade their downtown areas, to get rid of slum areas so that you can go in there and build highrise apartments.

People are going to have to live somewhere. Let's not just take the attitude, Mr. Chairman, that this is the policy: we're going to hold the line and ask everybody to agree with it until we come up with an alternative, not necessarily one alternative, but two or three alternatives. This has been going on.

Maybe some of it's right, maybe some of it's wrong in particular areas. I think you're going to have to look at every individual area. Certainly, in the north area we're not tied into many corridors; there's lots of room for expansion, so I think you're going to have to take a look at each particular area.

I was also very disappointed to have the Minister say that people were bought off politically with highways. This is backward, negative thinking so far as I'm concerned. Highways are built to serve the people of this province.

I'd like the Minister to outline to me some instances of where highways were built in this province to buy people off politically. Tell me, Mr. Chairman, where there was one single highway built in this province that wasn't needed and wasn't used. Give me an instance of one single highway that wasn't built in the proper place.

But you see, Mr. Chairman, he says we don't want to go off and build new highways right now without giving it any thought. So what does he do? He says this year we're not going to build any highways whatsoever — because he's not going to give any thought to it. Is that the answer? What is in your planning for the future? If you're going to develop the north, you should be planning now where those highways are going to be, where the development is going to be. These things just don't happen overnight, as much as you may think they do, Mr. Minister.

What plans have you got for a third corridor to the Interior and to the north? What plans have you got for a

second trans-provincial highway?

While we're on trans-provincial highways, Mr. Chairman, the Minister outlined that he was going to spend \$5 million on the Hart Highway, to upgrade it in the Pine Pass.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. If the Hon. Member is choosing to discuss specific highway projects, I would suggest he bring it up under vote 100 or 101.

MR. PHILLIPS: I am talking about general administration. If you want me to relate it back to this helicopter trip...after making this helicopter trip, Mr. Chairman, the Minister went back and said, "Well, we need, across the northern part of the province, to have the highway from the Peace River area to Prince George brought up to the same standards as the Trans-Canada Highway." I want to say that I agree with the Minister.

How much money is going to be spent on that northern trans-provincial highway between Prince George and Prince Rupert? Is \$5 million the only rerouting that's going to be done in that particular area? Is there more going to be done the following year?

Now, Mr. Chairman, I just want to approach one more subject, and that is the subject of tourism. I can't understand, if the Minister of Highways does not want people to travel on our highways from out-of-province, why the Department of Travel Industry spends thousands and thousands of dollars advertising in various magazines and periodicals inviting people to come to the province. I think that this is a waste of money.

Here's an ad right here and it's a two-page ad tied in with other provinces — no, it's a three-page ad — by the Department of Travel Industry. This three-page ad is out of the Readers Digest, and you don't advertise in the Reader Digest for any small amount of money. So here's the Department of Travel Industry on one hand inviting people to come to our province, see our province, and I don't know how they're going to get around in the Peace River area and all of the areas that they're suggesting in this brochure unless you have an automobile.

I think that in 1974 we have to accept certain things. I don't think the attitude of the Minister of Highways is going to stop people from buying campers and trailers. It has become a way of life. It's a convenient way to travel. It's a method of travel that allows a young family to take their children with them on vacation and to see areas of the province which they would not otherwise see. It's a new mode

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of travel and here the Minister wants to stop it in midstream. He wants to deprive thousands and thousands and thousands of young families of the privilege of seeing this beautiful British Columbia of ours while his cohort right next to him in the Department of Recreation and Conservation (Hon. Mr. Radford) is setting thousands and thousands of acres of land aside for parks so that the people of British Columbia and the people of the rest of Canada can indeed go in and see our scenic splendour. But here the Minister of Highways wants to keep these vehicles off the roads.

How many young families who are bringing up three and four children can afford today to stay in motels? That is why this industry has gone ahead — that's one reason. The other reason is that they can stop anywhere at any time and be self-sufficient. The Minister may say as much as he desires that these people do not leave any money.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I would point out to the Hon. Member that this subject was quite thoroughly canvassed last night and would ask him to keep his remarks brief and to raise only new points rather than repeating arguments that were presented last night.

MR. PHILLIPS: I would defy you, Mr. Chairman, with all due respect to your ruling, to find where there was anything about young families travelling with campers discussed in *Hansard* last night. I defy you to find it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! it's the same subject matter. However, I'm not ruling you out of order.

MR. PHILLIPS: I'm bringing up new points, Mr. Chairman. I didn't lay awake all night making notes on this subject to rehash what has already been brought up.

I want to tell you that every year we have travelling over the Alaska Highway caravan after caravan of trailers. These are retired people, mostly. They have groups and organizations and they travel all over North America. Every summer four or five or as high as 10 of these caravans travel up the Alaska Highway. They usually stop in central points each night. I know that when these caravans stop in Dawson Creek, tens of thousands of dollars are poured into the economy of that area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! The whole point of the money that may be brought in by these people travelling through the province has been discussed several times. I would ask the Hon. Member to raise a new point rather than repeating.

MR. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chairman, if you're not interested in the tourist industry in your area, I'll have to go in there and tell the people in your constituency that you're not interested in the tourist industry, that you don't want it discussed here on the floor of this Legislature.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! The Chair is merely ruling that this point has been mentioned and discussed at length already. I would just ask the Hon. Member to keep his remarks brief and to the point.

MR. PHILLIPS: Were caravans discussed last night? You talk about getting behind a few campers on the road. You want to get behind one of these caravans with 40 and 50 trailers, when they're travelling up the Alaska Highway!

I'm just afraid, Mr. Chairman, that the next thing the Minister of Highways is going to do is come out and ban them. That's what I'm frightened about, because of his attitude. If he's afraid of meeting 10 or 12 campers on the highway, my gracious saints, the next thing these caravans of trailers that travel all around the province will be banned. That's a new point, Mr. Chairman, that's never been discussed here before. It's a completely new point. Then if they ban them here, he might try to talk to one of the other socialist provinces like Saskatchewan or Manitoba to ban them.

AN HON. MEMBER: No way.

MR. PHILLIPS: And then pretty soon the tourist industry in Canada will fold up....

HON. MR. LEA: Oregon.

MR. PHILLIPS: Oregon?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! I would point out also that any move that the Member is discussing is a matter of legislation. If he's interested in banning caravans he should introduce a bill.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, he could discourage it. He could discourage it, Mr. Chairman.

I've just one other area that I'd like to discuss. The Minister stated that he was in the Peace River area on that famous helicopter trip, and that the engineer told him that they were having difficulty maintaining the roads, and that if they built any further roads they would not have sufficient money to keep the roads in good repair.

I realize that this is a problem. I was successful when I was in this Legislature before, in getting a programme of millions of dollars every year to maintain the rural roads – re-gravelling them, upgrading and starting a system of paving so many

miles every year around the central area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! I would point out to the Hon. Member for South Peace River that we're not discussing your estimates. We're discussing the estimates of the Minister of Highways.

MR. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chairman, it's too bad you weren't down there fighting for your constituency, because I'm going to go into your constituency and I'm going to tell them that you never opened your yap when it came to the Department of Highways.

HON. MR. LAUK: We're going to tell them stories about you, too, Don.

MR. PHILLIPS: You come right up, my friend, and we'll talk about it any day in my constituency. You come right up.

Mr. Chairman, I want to point out something very basic. It's very basic indeed. In the Department of Agriculture we have an Act called the *Agricultural Land Development Act*. It is the policy of the Department of Agriculture to open up more agricultural land in the Province so that we can grow more food and so that the agriculture can be self-sustaining in the Province of British Columbia. That's what we need.

Now, if we're going to open up more land, we're going to have to build more roads because in the north And south Peace River are literally hundreds of millions of acres of good agricultural land which has not even been brought into cultivation yet — well, maybe not hundreds of millions, but there's a million acres alone in the Fort Nelson area by federal government survey done in 1941 of land which could be developed and brought under cultivation.

Now, Mr. Chairman, my point is this. How in heaven's name are we going to bring land under cultivation, open it up so that people can go into there and pioneer...? Heaven knows that the people are becoming less interested in this every year, because they want the good life, but there are still good hearty souls who come from other provinces who are willing to go into those backwoods areas, do without the amenities of life to open up the area for the benefit of agriculture in British Columbia, and indeed in all of Canada.

All they require is to have a road, but the Minister of Highways says: "No, we're not building any new roads. We're not going to open up new areas."

The Minister of Highways is against agriculture. He has a hold-the-line policy. "Don't open up any new areas. Don't build any new roads, Don't bring any more land under cultivation. Don't help agriculture in British Columbia. Don't help the cattle industry in the Peace River area. Hold back grain production. Don't build any more roads." Why have land at all?

Why have the Act? The Act is to bring new land under cultivation. How do you expect these people to get in there? They can't afford a helicopter.

There's lots of land in the Member for Omineca's (Mr. Kelly's) riding too, lots of land that could be developed for cattle grazing and for various mixed farming operations. But it's going to require the Department of Highways to build some roads.

This disturbs me very, very much when I hear this Minister stand in this Legislature with the type of negative thinking he has displayed since we started discussing his estimates. It is negative thinking; it's awkward thinking and it is unimaginative.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! I think the most appropriate place for the Hon. Member to bring up his particular point is under vote 101, which is "Roads, Bridges, and Ferries — Capital Construction."

MR. PHILLIPS: I'll tell you, Mr. Chairman, there is one area that the Minister is not unimaginative: vote 98, his office. He's had an expansionary programme in — his office. He has used vision, energy and imagination in his office because it has expanded. The whole hierarchy of his office has expanded greater than any department in any of the other departments in his portfolio.

I wish he would take that same imagination, that same courage he had to go out and hire executive assistants, to portray that imagination, portray that courage, portray that vision of expansion into the rest of his department. We'd be a lot further on and a lot better off than we're going to be under his backward policies.

I just have one other item I would like to bring up. We were discussing highways in detail, and the Minister did not tell me if he is going to resurface Highway 29 between....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! This would be more appropriately done in vote 101.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, it's more appropriate, but you've allowed latitude in the past talking about specific highways. I just have this last question.

Is Highway 29, before it deteriorates completely, going to be paved and upgraded this year?

HON. MR. LEA: Yes, it is.

MR. G.F. GIBSON (North Vancouver–Capilano): We've covered a good number of systems of transportation in this debate. We've talked about helicopters, airplanes, cars, boats on trailers, and caravans. I want to talk to the Minister about another kind in this general section of my remarks and that's to commend to him the idea of putting alongside his

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highways places for bicycles to roll along.

Bicycles are very good for you. I hope I'll get some endorsement from the Minister of Human Resources (Hon. Mr. Levi); I hope there is a friend inside cabinet on the subject of bicycle paths. Myself, I've covered a couple of thousand miles of the Minister's highway on my bicycle: sections of the Trans-Canada, up the Hope-Princeton, and up and down the eastern side of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast, and so on. It is marvellous country to cover on a bicycle.

Along those highways we need paths on the side for cyclists which can be done at a reasonably low cost. I have here a publication done by a member of the Parks Branch, and there are some good figures in here I would like to quote.

He says there are 100,000 bikes in the greater Victoria area alone. I was astonished to read that figure. I don't have a British Columbia figure, but if that's true for the greater Victoria area then there must be 300,000 bicycles in British Columbia. They may not all be ridden actively, but it seems to me that's the kind of a constituency we should be interested in.

The same article compares what's going on in other countries and notes that Japan has 2,000 miles of bike paths and plans to add 16,000 more. That's a small country, Japan. A lot of people, of course, but small in area. West Germany: 9,300 miles; Holland: 18,600. Some of the states down in the United States — Wisconsin: 320 miles; Georgia: 70 miles; Colorado developing 124 miles. Even some of the cities have created their own networks of cycle paths. This publication states that the Canadian record, to use its words, "has been less than brilliant. Ottawa has 35 miles of cycle paths; Vancouver allows cycling around Stanley Park."

There's some precedent, I think, that I would commend to the Minister's attention, and I'm certain he knows about it because it's a famous example: the State of Oregon. I think it's by way of the state constitution. In any event, certainly by a matter of practice it allots 1 per cent of their highways budget to the construction of bicycle paths in association with the highways — not always right next to the highways but in association with it — under the terms of that budgeting.

The Minister may well have cost figures for the average mile of bicycle path. I've heard the figure of \$10,000 a mile, possibly, but that may be a very rough estimate. I would be interested to hear if the Minister does have any

detailed numbers on that.

Assuming it was \$10,000 a mile that would produce an acceptable bicycle path alongside of highways if we took 1 per cent of the budget, that would give us about \$2 million. That would lead to the construction of some 200 miles per year of bicycle paths out on the highroad. The cities, of course, have a responsibility separate from the Department of Highways on this.

I would say to the Minister, based on my own experience of highway riding on a bicycle, it is a very dangerous thing. One of the most dangerous routes in the whole province in that context is the Hope-Princeton, because the highway, of course, is narrow and there's a good deal of traffic on it. One of the interesting things is that some motorists don't like bicycle riders. You often have the experience of riding along as close as you can do to the shoulder of the road, which can be dangerous, because you don't have much room for maneuverability. If you go onto that gravel, the bike will skid and fall over, particularly if it is loaded with a pack. But you are riding along as close to the side of the road as you can, there's no other traffic, and a car or a truck will come along and pass about six inches away from you. That doesn't happen a lot, but it happens often enough to make some of the rides pretty scary things.

So I make the plea to the Minister that he might consider allotting a percentage of the budget to this very worthy purpose. It would not only be popular for British Columbians but good for their physical and mental health as well.

Another subject that has been raised in this debate relates to the earmarking of funds for highway purposes. I agree with the Minister; it is generally bad practice to earmark specific sources of revenue to specific uses.

I wonder, however, if it might not be a very interesting addition to the government accounts to show what is collected in gasoline tax in each of the electoral districts. The Minister's report, of course, notes how much is expended by his department in each of the electoral districts, which is an excellent thing and very convenient for Members and for the people they represent to understand what the Highways department is doing.

Just as a matter of information, it would be a wonderful thing if the Minister could prevail on the Minister of Finance to break down the collection of gasoline taxes by electoral districts in this province. One of course wouldn't want a one-to-one relationship between the collection of gasoline tax and the expenditure in each area, because we appreciate that many of these areas of the province have needs beyond their revenue ability to bear. Of course, in judging this, one in the larger municipalities would look at the money the province was spending on transit in that particular area as well. But it would give us some useful benchmarks, I think.

Under the Minister's responsibility, I would like to refer briefly to a couple of matters of longstanding in my own riding which have been studied, I believe, to a considerable extent by the Minister's staff. I think there is good cooperation going on between the local municipalities, the City and District of North Vancouver, and the Minister's department, so I want

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to add my endorsement to these thoughts.

The first is the idea of an additional arterial carrier through North Vancouver. This is the so-called "lower level" road. The Upper Levels, of course is a first-class highway, part of the Trans-Canada Highway. At the lower level there's a place for not a commuter road but an industrial road. This would be mostly through an industrial area; the route is pretty well laid out. It would be an industrial road with an inter-regional purpose which would be, as I suggest, of an arterial purpose.

With appropriate financial assistance by the provincial government and the Department of Highways the total cost of this project, I am advised, (although there hasn't been a final budget struck on it yet) would probably be something like \$600,000 in each of the city and the district to a total of perhaps \$1.2 million. There might be a variance of a couple of hundred thousand one way or another, but that's the order of magnitude.

I'm suggesting to the Minister that that's an important project, that would be very well received in the two ridings. I don't want to speak for the Hon. Member for North Vancouver–Seymour (Mr. Gabelmann) but I certainly will speak for North Vancouver–Capilano.

The other major highway in my riding I've already mentioned, and that's the Upper Levels Highway. I think the two intersections on that highway, the intersection at Westview and the intersection at Lonsdale, are perhaps two of the busiest on the Trans-Canada, anywhere between St. John's, Newfoundland, and Victoria. They are level crossings. The Department of Highways does own land, acquired some time ago, suitable for the erection of interchanges, of grade separations, at those two crossings.

I would ask the Minister whether, at least in the near term, we might have an improvement of the ability of the level crossings to handle the very badly backed up traffic at those two intersections, which I think would mean a considerable widening and an addition of lanes at those two intersections. I think that could be done reasonably cheaply. Then in the longer run, I'm sure, we're going to need those interchanges there. I would hope that there might be something in the estimates for the coming year having to do at least with the improvement of the level interchanges.

Now one final subject before I sit down, Mr. Chairman, is the responsibility of the Minister in terms of long-range planning of traffic flow. I asked the Minister if he could provide some figures with respect to traffic flows on an inter-regional basis through the North Shore up to the Interior, up the Sunshine Coast and across to Nanaimo, and also up into the Interior through Hope. He very kindly supplied these quickly and in good detail and I appreciate that very much.

The thought behind that request was to wonder how much of the strain on the crossings of Burrard Inlet comes about by what I would call highway traffic, as distinct from commuter traffic. The figures that the Minister has supplied here are very interesting in that context. With the permission of the chairman I'll just read a couple of them out.

The sum total of 1972, July to August, average daily traffic in and out of greater Vancouver via the Nanaimo ferries, Sunshine Coast ferries and Highway 97 is about 10,200 vehicles. This, of course, includes the traffic around by way of Hope there. That's highway traffic of 10,200, and there's a total average daily traffic on the Burrard Inlet crossing during that same period of 118,000 vehicles, with the First Narrows bridge carrying about 61,000 daily and the Second Narrows about 57,000 vehicles daily.

So roughly about 110,000, let's say, is commuter traffic and 10,000 is regional traffic. Regional traffic adds almost 10 per cent to those heavily crowded bridges even now. As the Minister is aware, the worse jam-ups now are on the weekend. It's on the weekend in particular that one finds the peak inter-regional traffic, particularly the recreational traffic.

I would ask the Minister if he would perhaps not only keep a careful watch on the situation but ask for forecasts about how each of these components will go, each of these inter-regional components. As another Hon. Member suggested, this third route into the Interior via Pemberton is going to be improved. Hopefully it will be hard-surfaced all the way, brought up to highway standard, and at that time the vehicles which are travelling between the lower mainland and points north of Clinton — I think that's about 2,000 vehicles per day — many, many of those will be diverted to this shorter route which will be something in the order of 75 miles closer to the greater Vancouver centre and a time saving of perhaps an hour and a half. So obviously a lot of those 2,000 vehicles are going to be diverted.

As the Interior grows, as tourism grows more and more, as all of us with more leisure time — and in spite of the energy crisis — with our good fortune in Canada continue to use our vehicles to travel more and more into the Interior of this beautiful province, I'm suggesting to the Minister that this inter-regional aspect of the strain on the crossings across Burrard Inlet will grow very quickly, much more quickly than the commuter traffic.

Looking just at peak hours on the commuter traffic now, there's something like 14,000 persons at a peak hour going over the two bridges, about 4,500 by automobile over the First Narrows — which is a fantastic flow and only

comes about by good administration of that bridge — and about 3,000 by bus traffic, and about 6,500 persons over the Second Narrows. That's with a population of 140,000 on the

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North Shore. There's about 10 per cent interaction there. In other words in peak hours there are 14,000 persons crossing out of 140,000 population.

Now we're getting up to another kind of interaction between the total greater Vancouver area — half a million plus on that side of the Inlet: the Whistler Valley recreation area, the Cypress Bowl recreation area, the Sunshine Coast. Of course, there couldn't be anything as high as a 10 per cent interaction there, but an interaction even at the 2 per cent level couldn't be handled by our existing crossings.

Given the fact that virtually all of the recreational potential for the greater Vancouver area seems to be being built up on the other side of those bridges, I'm asking the Minister to keep a very close eye on that growth and bring the message to his cabinet colleagues that there are reasons for getting across that inlet quite independent of commuter traffic.

In that connection as well I would ask the Minister if he would, either through one of his colleagues or directly, contact the City of Vancouver and ask them, for goodness' sake, not to dispense with the reservation they have on the Thurlow tunnel alignment. It seems to me they're being very premature in this. By doing that they would eliminate one of the best possibilities for a third crossing of Burrard Inlet. They would also be doing something, in my view, injurious to the City of Vancouver because that Thurlow tunnel would have even greater benefits to the City of Vancouver than to persons using that third crossing from the North Shore.

So I would most earnestly ask the Minister if he would use his good offices to try and get the City of Vancouver to alter their intended course of action and ask them to maintain that reservation on the Thurlow tunnel, and thereby maintain the possibility of a third crossing along the alignment that to date is the best one that has been found. There are, of course, other potential alignments, but I think as long as this remains the favourite, it should be preserved.

MR. A.A. NUNWEILER (Fort George): Mr. Chairman, I'd like to touch on the problems that have erupted from time to time in various parts of the province — in my region, I know. That is with safety. That is all related I think to highway planning in the concept of what we have roads for, how we build them and where we're going in the way of providing transportation routes for the people of the province. I'll deal specifically with my region.

We do have cases, as we heard mentioned earlier, where the philosophy in the future may be taking a different direction, where you have more controlled development on either side of the highway. But I'd like to go and look a little bit at what has happened up until now and what we are going to do about it. I can take, for example, in my area, from Prince George north, from the Nechako River about six miles north, where over the years there has developed a pattern of subdivisions on both sides. They multiply and they re-multiply, and today we've got a population virtually of 12,000 people and a multitude of schools on either side. You do have the industrial traffic, the logging trucks, the local traffic, and school children all mixed together that use as a local route one road which is the highway.

There needs to be some solution on this. Whether it is a bypass or whether it is a widening of the route, there's got to be some planning done. I'd like to ask the Minister to give some answer as to what kind of plans he would have in this particular area and similar other cases throughout the province.

A similar situation exists on Highway 16 east from Prince George to the Tabor Lake area where you do have large school complexes in the same industrial-logging-local traffic situation all mixed together. Also Highway 16 east from McBride to Tête Jaune: there are very difficult road conditions in that area. I'd like to know what is going to be planned there and when we're going to get pavement and complete the highway that was started a number of years ago.

We've also got problems with railway overpasses. I can remember railway overpasses that were started a couple of years ago and they're still sitting there. There's one in the McBride area and there's another one, I believe, in the Fraser Lake area. What were they built for if they're not going to be completed? Perhaps they can give us some idea as to whether they are going to be finished, and possibly an idea as to when that will be.

In the Giscome and Fort Fraser area, there are very severe road conditions. There are communities there and we need to have some programme to give people better transportation services on the roads that are in their area, so we can really and truly call them roads to serve the communities.

Highway 97 needs upgrading, south of Prince George. I'd like to hear some comment on that because I look at it from the point of safety. Where we have dense population, a local traffic situation, regional and inter-regional traffic and industrial traffic I think safety is the big thing to look at when we deal with roads and provide the traffic routes for the general public.

Speaking of safety, we do have many cases where school children have to cross the highway in a lot of this traffic. I would think that these areas should have more walkways adjacent to the highway so that there is a more safe situation. In other instances there should be either overhead passes — walkway overheads, or walkway underpasses for school children. I think there should be a policy developed on this so that we can know what type of situation we can recommend when we run into these types of

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problems and complaints.

I'd like to mention that Prince George is a crossroads situation. When we have subdivisions that have been springing up over the year on both sides of the two highways, thus the crossroads situation, safety does become a big factor. I would therefore like to ask the Minister to give some elaboration on that.

Specifically, also Highway 16 east from Prince George to Tabor Lake, and Highway 16 north from Prince George to about six miles north, what is the planning there?

MR. H.S. SCHROEDER (Chilliwack): Mr. Chairman, I'd like to speak for just a few minutes about deaths on the highway. I read the report which the Minister of Highways had distributed in the House yesterday, and recognized the figure of 29 per cent. This 29 per cent is the increase of highway deaths in the Province of British Columbia. This represents only that increase as it pertains to the provincial highways themselves, the primary and secondary highways.

The greatest percentage of highway deaths occur in the age group 16 to 25; as a matter of fact, nearly half of all highway deaths are people between the ages of 16 and 25. I looked at the total figures and there was a total of 522 accidents in the province. As a result of those accidents, 635 lives were lost. This is not the all-highway total; this is just the provincial highway total.

I transposed that information in terms of how it affected my constituency. But as far as the strict designation of controlled access goes, that designation ends at Abbotsford. The freeway continues another 19 miles beyond that. During all of those 19 miles, controlled access really has not been of major concern to the department. There has been progress over the years and the access has been in the process of being controlled. We now have several overpasses: one located at Lickman Road; one located at the Sardis Highway overpass; another one at the Chilliwack River Road, and another one at Prest Road.

However, let me just refer to the three-mile stretch of 401. It has on it the highest incidence of death in the entire constituency. The fact is that in a three-mile stretch of freeway, there are four level crossings. On these four level crossings occurs the highest percentage of death in the entire constituency. Taking in all side roads, all city streets, the highest incidence happens to be on these four level crossings. Added to that is the section of the highway where 401 ends and the four-lane divided highway joins together and becomes a two-lane highway to continue the rest of the way to Hope.

I would like to hear what the Minister has to say as regards his intention to provide either limited access to the 401, or to provide service roads so that these level crossings can be phased out. The 401, although it is not designated as limited access, during those last 19 miles has all of the physical attributes of a freeway. The speed limit is 70-miles per hour. If you are driving from Vancouver to Hope, you don't know when you're on a limited access highway or when you're on unlimited access.

The traffic count may diminish slightly when you go past Abbotsford. Nonetheless, all of the traffic coming from the Interior, the Hope-Princeton Highway and the Fraser Canyon, all of the southern route comes down that particular stretch of road. The 401 runs smack dab up the middle of the valley leaving half of the population on one side and the industrial and commercial half on the other side of the highway. There is a great deal of traffic that must cross that highway.

I would like to suggest to the Hon. Minister that he considers at least one more overpass, and let that overpass be located on Upper Prairie Road, and to provide service roads from the two roads on either side of that overpass. That way we would have totally controlled access over this treacherous piece of 401.

This piece of road happens to be straight. There is no traffic that slows down to below 70 miles per hour. The highest incident of accident occurs at sunup and sundown. I think for the protection of the people that live in that area, it would be worthwhile investing in the cost of one more overpass to provide the service roads to that overpass to give protection to those people who live there.

The reason why I think we should begin thinking in terms of this now, Mr. Minister, through you, Mr. Chairman, is that it takes two, three and four years after planning to begin to get into the physical aspect of providing this highway access. I know that this is true because it has taken me two years, even after all of the surveying was completed, even after the funds had been designated, to begin work on the Kilgard-Straiton Road, a stretch of road that has been designated as provincial arterial highway. The need for which has been very apparent. It is to replace a short stretch of road that has been condemned.

I have spoken about this before, Mr. Chairman, and I draw it to the Minister's attention again. The school bus has not been able to pick up the children on the top of Sumas Mountain because of the access being condemned. They've had to find their way through a treacherous stretch of gravel road on the northern approach to Sumas Mountain. They have had difficulty getting their supplies up to this community.

It has taken two years of buck-passing — first to the former Minister of Highways, and then when the portfolio switched to the responsibility of another gentleman, it has taken another year for the second Minister to grab the bull by the horns and do a little

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work in this area.

Then I find that because there was some dispute over some piddly little \$5,000 per year for the maintenance of an access road on the 401 which has nothing to do with the Kilgard-Straiton Road, this department has held up the location and construction of this access which these people had been guaranteed as long ago as two years. I'd like to suggest that if it takes that long to get some action out of this department, I move we begin to work now on the overpass for the Upper Prairie Road.

I'd like to hear what the Minister has to say in regard to these requests because the people on the floodplains are concerned.

Motion approved.

The House resumed; Mr. Speaker in the chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Speaker, the committee reports progress and asks leave to sit again.

Leave granted.

Hon. Mrs. Dailly moves adjournment of the House.

Motion approved.

Hon. Mr. Levi files the report of the Alcohol and Drug Commission.

The House adjourned at 12:31 p.m.

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