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**Official Report of
DEBATES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
(Hansard)**

FRIDAY, MAY 31, 1974

Morning Sitting

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The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers.

HON. D.D. STUPICH (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to make an announcement about the British Columbia agricultural credit programme.

Leave granted.

HON. MR. STUPICH: I'm announcing today, issuing a press release.... With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that this be distributed so the Members would have copies of it.

The objective of the programme is help to make it possible for economically feasible operations to make the fullest use of land that has been designated as agricultural land under Bill 42. The main feature of the programme will be an interest reimbursement so that no farmer borrowing from an established lending agency, bank or a credit union will have to pay any more than 8 per cent for his credit.

If he requires a government guarantee to borrow from those sources — and this would apply particularly to young farmers — then the maximum interest would be reduced to no more than 8.5 per cent. It will apply only to borrowing from banks, credit unions or the IDB Farm Credit Corporation.

The reimbursement will be calculated so that it will be in the borrower's best interest to get the cheapest rate that he can initially, which of course would push people to the Farm Credit Corporation. At least, that would have been the case when they were at 7 per cent. At 8.5 it may not be for long.

Interjection.

HON. MR. STUPICH: Pardon me? Eight and a quarter? I said the reimbursement feature will be calculated so that his lowest net interest will still be obtainable by borrowing from the best source.

Although we've reached agreement with the banks and the credit unions on this programme, to allow time for them to properly inform their branches and to allow time for printing and distribution of the forms that have also been agreed upon with the lending agencies — application forms — we're asking people to wait until June 15 to actually seek the application forms.

The reimbursement feature will be available for farm interest on these approved loans paid from July 1 onward.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON (Victoria): I'd just like to welcome the Minister's announcement. The complicated formula he must have to insist upon farmers borrowing at the lowest rate of interest I'll be intrigued to see. I find it difficult to understand just from the simple statement from the Minister.

But we appreciate the fact that it will be necessary to provide some sort of farm credit for farmers — in particular as the Minister was honest enough to indicate that this had some reference to the workings of Bill 42. Until we get the details, of course, I'm unable to comment more fully. But I do appreciate the fact that you made the statement in the House.

MR. G.S. WALLACE (Oak Bay): Mr. Speaker, I also, on behalf of our party, welcome the Minister's announcement. Indeed, I personally appreciate that Minister's efforts always to get the information out either by announcement in the House or by press release. I, like the Liberal leader, however, having just got a note from my banker that the rate's now 12.5 per cent on my private loan, I wonder what mechanism.... That's the first part of my disclosure, Mr. Speaker.

One is certainly eager to find out how the 8 per cent will be arranged and so on. But I certainly appreciate the Minister's efforts because part of the heated debate on Bill 42 was a two-pronged debate in the sense that while land was involved, the main aim of the Legislature and all the farming legislation was to give the farmer a better deal. I assume this is another step in that direction. But we'll look forward to reading the details.

Introduction of bills.

Orders of the day.

HON. E.E. DAILLY (Minister of Education): Public bills and orders, Mr. Speaker. Committee on Bill 61.

BRITISH COLUMBIA DAY ACT

The House in committee on Bill 61; Mr. Liden in the chair.

Sections 1 to 3 inclusive approved.

Title approved.

HON. E. HALL (Provincial Secretary): Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise and report the bill complete without amendment.

Motion approved.

The House resumed; Deputy Speaker in the chair.

Bill 61, *British Columbia Day Act*, reported

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complete without amendment, read a third time and passed.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Committee on Bill 62.

BRITISH COLUMBIA TARTAN ACT

The House in committee on Bill 62; Mr. Liden in the chair.

Sections 1 to 4 inclusive approved.

Title approved.

HON. MR. HALL: Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise and report the bill complete without amendment.

Motion approved.

The House resumed; Deputy Speaker in the chair.

Bill 62, *British Columbia Tartan Act*, reported complete without amendment, read a third time and passed.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Committee on Bill 72.

BLIND PERSONS' RIGHTS ACT

The House in committee on Bill 72; Mr. Liden in the chair.

Interjections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are on Bill 72. Order! Order! I understand there's a message been sent down to quiet down the noise that you are concerned about.

On section 1.

HON. P.F. YOUNG (Minister of Consumer Services): Mr. Chairman, I move the amendment standing in my name on the order paper on page 17. (See appendix.)

Amendment approved.

Section 1 as amended approved.

Sections 2 to 9 inclusive approved.

Title approved.

HON. MS. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise and report the bill complete with amendments.

Motion approved.

The House resumed; Deputy Speaker in the chair.

Bill 72, *Blind Persons' Rights Act*, reported complete with amendments to be considered at the next sitting of the House after today.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Committee on Bill 77.

DEBTOR ASSISTANCE ACT

The House in committee on Bill 77; Mr. Liden in the chair.

On section 1.

HON. MS. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, I move the amendment standing in my name on the order paper. (See appendix.)

Amendment approved.

Section 1 as amended approved.

On section 2.

HON. MS. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, I move the amendment standing in my name on the order paper. (See appendix.)

Amendment approved.

Section 2 as amended approved.

On section 3.

HON. MS. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, I move the amendment standing in my name on the order paper on page 18. (See appendix.)

Amendment approved.

Section 3 as amended approved.

Section 4 approved.

On section 5.

HON. MS. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, I move the amendments standing in my name on the order paper. (See appendix.)

Amendments approved.

Section 5 as amended approved.

Sections 6 and 7 approved.

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On section 8.

HON. MS. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, I move the amendments standing in my name on the order paper. (See appendix.)

Amendments approved.

Section 8 as amended approved.

On section 9.

HON. MS. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, I move the amendment standing in my name on the order paper. (See appendix.)

Amendment approved.

Section 9 as amended approved.

Section 10 approved.

On section 11.

HON. MS. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, I move the amendments standing in my name on the order paper. (See appendix.)

Amendments approved.

Section 11 as amended approved.

Sections 12 and 13 approved.

Title approved.

HON. MS. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman I move the committee rise and report the bill complete with amendments.

Motion approved.

The House resumed; Deputy Speaker in the chair.

Bill 77, *Debtor Assistance Act*, reported complete with amendments to be considered at the next sitting of the House after today.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Committee on Bill 80.

METRIC CONVERSION ACT

The House in committee on Bill 80; Mr. Liden in the chair.

On section 1.

HON. MR. HALL: I would like to move the amendment standing in my name on the order paper of today's date, page 18, which was suggested by an Hon. Member with legal experience who pointed out that in the definition section "Canadian measure" appears nowhere in the Act. Therefore it is superfluous. (See appendix.)

Amendment approved.

Section 1 as amended approved.

Section 2 approved.

On section 3.

MR. H.A. CURTIS (Saanich and the Islands): Section 3 appears to be the only appropriate point in this short bill where I can remind the Hon. Provincial Secretary that I looked for a ballpark figure of costs that are likely to be incurred by the provincial government after the 1974-75 fiscal year. My notes indicate that he felt that he would have that information at a later time. Perhaps he has some comment now.

HON. MR. HALL: No, I have no further comment to make. The committee, federal-provincial, is still establishing ballpark figures, although I did see a politician make a ballpark figure not too long ago.

Section 3 approved.

Title approved.

HON. MR. HALL: Mr. Chairman, I move the committee rise and report the bill complete with amendment.

Motion approved.

The House resumed; Deputy Speaker in the chair.

Bill 80, *Metric Conversion Act*, reported complete with amendment to be considered at the next sitting of the House after today.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Committee on Bill 89.

The House in committee on Bill 89; Mr. Liden in the chair.

Sections 1 to 3 inclusive approved.

On section 4.

Sound): Before passing section 4, I would like to have some explanation from the Minister of Education (Hon. Mrs. Dailly) as to precisely the direction in which the government is going in this regard. Section 4, as this amendment provides an amendment to section 55, will make it possible for any person on the electoral district of any municipality in the province to stand for election to the school board in any school district.

Are we now moving to the situation where people may be candidates for school trustee in the same way as candidates for this assembly regardless of place of residence?

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Yes, I think you can assume that is so.

MR. L.A. WILLIAMS: Well, then, Mr. Chairman, since I've read the amendment correctly, could the Minister indicate the rationale behind this? It was always my understanding that the people who were urged to seek the office of school trustee were those people who had a direct and immediate connection with the particular school district in which they resided, more often because they had children or children of children or friends with children — a real deep and abiding relationship with the school district. They were, therefore, expected to give their fullest attention to the responsibilities of a school trustee and to the conduct of the affairs of the board of school trustees and, indeed, the improvement of the standards of education in that school district.

Now we seem to be moving to a situation where we're creating another elective office available for anybody regardless of whether they have any close connections with the school district or not. I wonder if the Minister would indicate the rationale behind this rather significant change.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: If I recall, Mr. Chairman, we went through this same debate last year on it. I'm just repeating what the Minister of Municipal Affairs and I basically said. We do feel a person should have the same right running for school trustee as we do as Members of the Legislature.

Secondly, we do also believe that the public will make the final decision. If someone is residing in an area where they feel they have no understanding or communication with particular problems of that district, surely the public can make that decision.

MR. G.S. WALLACE (Oak Bay): I'd like to express the same concern that the Member for West Vancouver–Howe Sound (Mr. L.A. Williams) has stated. In reply to the Minister's comment, with respect, I would say that the degree of public participation in school affairs and the percentage of people who turn out to vote at municipal elections are no guarantees in my view that the public will decide as to whether a person residing in one area should, in fact, hold school trustee office in another school district.

I find this particular trend additionally disturbing in view of other trends; in educational financing for example. A person can only vote in the area where he resides while he may well own property in another municipality. Therefore, on the one hand we have taxation without representation. Here, on the other hand, we're giving absolutely unlimited scope for a person to seek office on a school board in a district where, indeed, he or she may be less well-informed about the local situation. It seems to me this piece of legislation and the more recent amendment to the *Public Schools Act* are instances of the fact that people are now being taxed although they have no vote. Yet this bill goes in the opposite direction of giving individuals no restriction whatever in their capacity to seek office in a school district where they may neither live nor own property nor, in fact, make any financial contribution whatever to the school district on which they're serving as a trustee.

Maybe it is just a debate of a year ago all over again but that doesn't change some of the basic points we're trying to make. Might I just leave this comment, then? If it is felt we should be as wide open and as flexible in this regard about school trustees being able to run for office, would the government not reconsider repealing this other amendment which came in recently which, in my view, contravenes a very basic principle of our system in bringing in taxation without representation?

Sections 4 to 7 inclusive approved.

On section 8.

MR. G.F. GIBSON (North Vancouver-Capilano): If I understand it rightly, section 8 here repeals section 122 which has to do with:

"Every pupil shall attend school regularly; be clean and tidy in person; present himself punctually at each session of school, clothed appropriately in keeping with the custom of the school as sanctioned by the board."

Then there's a second provision that the board may make a bylaw to specify the appropriate type of clothing.

I can understand that there may be some disposition to relax this provision, but is the Minister proposing that pupils should be entirely exempted from the need to attend school regularly, be clean and tidy in person and punctual at each session?

HON. MRS. DAILLY: No, not at all. We just felt the specific restrictions in the Act were frankly somewhat archaic. Those actual clauses had been

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drawn up when the Act originally came out over 50 years ago. We thought that today, in what I hope is an enlightened period in 1974, the school boards were quite capable of setting those particular codes regarding dress and so on.

As far as attending school, there is another section of the Act which sets out the requirements for attendance at school. So there should be no concern there, Mr. Member, that that would be affected.

We're mainly talking about codes of conduct in that section.

MR. GIBSON: I appreciate the Minister saying that the board may prescribe appropriate dress and so on, but that's exactly what section 122 (2) says. I'm wondering under what authority they will continue to be able to do that or to continue to require the general clean and tidy appearance, which I personally believe is something which is very important to maintain — just as we try and do in this chamber.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Well, we are certainly saying that we are not prescribing it. If a school board wished to have meetings with their parents, and parents put on a certain demand, the majority of the parents request a certain dress style be imposed, then it's up to the school board, I suppose, to listen to them.

MR. GIBSON: But under what authority is this section...?

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Well, we're silent on it. If we believe in local autonomy and they can come to an agreement with the parents on it, we don't consider, Mr. Member, it's necessary for us to give the authority in the Act regarding code of dress.

MR. P.L. McGEER (Vancouver-Point Grey): I'm really very, very disturbed at what the Minister has to say. Is the Minister prepared to give any leadership or advice at all as to the deportment in school and the manner of dress?

HON. MRS. DAILLY: No.

MR. McGEER: Is she telling us that the provincial government abrogates its responsibility entirely in this regard?

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Mr. Member, I'm trying to suggest, as I said before, that it's 1974 and I don't think any Minister of Education should have to sit here and prescribe a code of dress for the students of the district.

Interjections.

MR. McGEER: Mr. Chairman, I would like to say that perhaps the reason for asking the question is because it is 1974...

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. McGEER:...and never in the history of our province has there been a greater problem of attendance at school than there is today. I get nothing but complaints from teachers whose morale is almost broken by the poor attendance at school and the lack of support these teachers get in trying to do their job from the administrators of the school and from the school boards of the province, but particularly and explicitly from the provincial government and the Minister of Education. It is a major problem in our schools today and the difficulty has started at the top.

Perhaps neatness is less of a problem than attendance, but I submit that the two go hand-in-hand. I would hope for not just some leadership from the Minister of Education but definitive leadership, not because it's unnecessary in 1974 but because it's extremely necessary for us to begin to reassert some sense of responsibility, some work ethic, some seriousness with regard to achievement in school and in life. I say never before have we had a government which has been as lax in this regard as the present one.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Mr. Chairman, the Member over there who has just spoken obviously hasn't been in the schools of the province himself lately. Frankly, I get very tired of listening to these broad, generalized statements...

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh!

HON. MRS. DAILLY: ...that since this government came in everything out there has deteriorated in the system. You are suggesting we are responsible as a government for the many social changes which have taken place not only in British Columbia but across the country.

Every jurisdiction in Canada and in the United States and elsewhere is concerned with the problems of attendance in school. We accept it. But I refuse to accept the blame, because the New Democratic Party government has come in, for all the social ills in the environment which exist today.

What we are attempting to do, Mr. Member, is to create an atmosphere out there in our schools where we can bring together the students, the parents and the teachers in consultation in helping to solve their problems. Leadership will come from this department in the areas of basic core curriculum as I stated when I introduced the bills. We accept our leadership there, but we do not accept the fact...and I don't think students and parents of this province want to see a Minister dictating to them what their children are to

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wear to school.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WALLACE: Let me make it plain that I am not blaming this government for all the social ills of society. But I think that when we talk about leadership it is often the function of elected leaders to try and counteract some of the drifts that are going on in society. Just because we have, for example, drug abuse in the schools like you wouldn't believe, I am not blaming the NDP, but it is one more symptom of the permissiveness of our society. It is the function of educational leaders not just to pretend that because the situation is deteriorating we can't do something about it.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: I never said that.

MR. WALLACE: She did say that. She said: "We can't be blamed for the social ills."

AN HON. MEMBER: Listen!

MR. WALLACE: I'm not listening. We'll get the words. She said that we are not....

Interjections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. The Member for Oak Bay has the floor.

MR. WALLACE: I am trying to take part in this debate to put our party clearly on record....

Interjections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order! The Member for Oak Bay has the floor and we are dealing with section 8. I hope you are dealing with section 8.

MR. WALLACE: Yes, I'm dealing with section 8.

I am saying. Mr. Chairman, and I will say it again, I am not blaming this government or any government for some of the social ills which we are all concerned about. I hope the Provincial Secretary is listening to that statement. I am not blaming this or any other government for some of the undesirable trends in our society.

But many of these trends in education and elsewhere will not be improved by a hands-off, permissive I-can't-do-anything-about-it attitude. That is where leadership comes in. When a person is elected to a position of leadership and authority in society I consider that a responsibility to speak out and express opinions which you hear in many parts of your travels in your riding, in the city and in the province. The reason I am speaking the way I am, and I don't know what you hear on your side of the House, is because I have been in the schools and elsewhere in my riding. I'm not speaking for the Member for Vancouver–Point Grey or the Minister who said that he hadn't been in schools recently.

Interjections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. Order! The Member for Oak Bay has the floor.

MR. WALLACE: I am making these comments, Mr. Chairman, because everywhere I go I am frequently told, contrary to what the Minister says, by principals, by teachers and by parents that they are most concerned with the apparent lack of leadership. I'm not asking the Minister to dictate how people live, but if there is one theme among the parents of this province right now it is the deep concern that the educational system is allowing the child — and we are talking about children, we are not even talking about young adults or adults, we are talking about children.... This concept that children should be allowed to decide everything for themselves, as to whether they go to school and how they dress and how they behave in school, is wrong.

It is the feeling of many people in this province, and I'm sure across Canada, that there has to be a certain degree of imposition of ideas, discipline, attendance, et cetera, on children, because it is children we are talking about. Many people ask me how we can have an orderly adult society when we are inculcating the idea in our children's minds that they can do exactly as they please.

While I agree with the Minister in the abolition of corporal punishment, for example, on the other hand, that is another general example of the lack of replacement with some other form of discipline. Not only are the teachers telling us that law and order in the classroom are breaking down, but now we have the Minister bringing forth an amendment which says that they don't even have to attend school regularly. I'm talking about section 8.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: That is not section 8.

MR. WALLACE: We are repealing section 122. The first six words of that section say: "Every pupil shall attend school regularly...." I take it from the Minister's comments that all children are not, in fact, attending school regularly. She admitted that and I think we all know it; the teachers and the principals will tell you that. They will

also tell you they don't know how to control it or what to do about it because they have a lack of authority to impose discipline. So because that is the unhappy situation, the Minister says, "Oh well, if that is the situation we may as well take it out of the Act, I guess."

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That's the point we are trying to make from our party. We are not trying to blame the Minister for the problems in education. We know they are there. I am certainly not claiming that we have any miraculous answers. But it does nothing to help the situation to make it even easier for the pupils to thumb their noses at authority. That is the point we are trying to make.

I am not personally particularly concerned with this dress; I think it is desirable to encourage neatness and tidiness. I agree entirely with the Minister that we can't tell people and children what to wear.

But that first part of this section is most important because if they grow up feeling that it is not really important to attend school regularly, then get a job in the work force and wake up some morning with a hangover, they may think it is not very important to attend work regularly either, or church or meetings or any other social responsibility that they take on after they leave school.

This drift, this permissiveness, this attitude of do-what-you-like and if you don't feel like doing it or you don't feel like going to school, in the view of this government that isn't all that important, never mind — that is the central point — the very central point.

While the Minister may feel that this is dictation to insist that they attend regularly, I have to repeat the point that parents, citizens and employers, and many, many segments and cross-sections of our society feel that it is disastrous, that our education system is carrying less and less impact in its discipline and in its basic philosophy that all of us, as we go through life, have to meet certain responsibilities, obey certain rules and obey the law in order to have an orderly society. If you start out in the school by giving them the idea that when they don't feel like going to school they don't have to go, that is, I think, just one more very dangerous and disastrous step in this whole direction toward a society where the individual decides exactly what suits him or herself with very little concern for others.

MR. G.B. GARDOM (Vancouver–Point Grey): Mr. Chairman, just to make it abundantly clear to all of the Members of this House and also to all of the members of the general public, section 122, which this Minister is asking to repeal in its totality, should be read into the record. I intend to do that. It says:

"Every pupil shall attend school regularly, be clean and tidy in person, and present himself punctually at each session of school, clothed appropriately in keeping with the custom of the school as sanctioned by the board."

Subsection (2) reads:

"The board of any school district may, by bylaw, prescribe either generally or specifically an appropriate type of clothing to be worn by pupils of any school or all schools within its jurisdiction."

That is the section. But by repealing the whole of the section, this Minister has succeeded in taking away completely the discretion, authority and autonomy, which she is always so delighted to talk about, of the school board in determining dress. Over and above that, in actual effect, she has repealed the whole school Act insofar as school attendance is concerned. She says we will leave it up to the parents, the teachers and the pupils to work it out as to whether or not little Johnny or Mary will go to school regularly or be there on time.

I suppose the Minister's suggestion will mean that there will a plebiscite of every pupil, teacher and parent in every classroom throughout the whole of the province as to whether or not a child will have to attend school or whether a child will have to be in school punctually.

It's just straight milksop stuff as far as I'm concerned. There is no authority at the present time save and except expulsion of a child from school if there is continuous misbehavior. This is just catering to that, just absolutely catering to it. You're just asking for it; you're just sticking your chin out as far as you possibly can.

You're not setting any guidelines; you're not providing any leadership at all. It's a straight abdication of responsibility. For practical purposes, if you pass this repeal of section 122, you've thrown out the school Act in the Province of B.C.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. McGEER: I submit that the repeal of this section.... Certainly we're going to vote against the section and I hope the Members of the House will have the common sense to do the same.

I believe the repeal of this section would do a tremendous disservice to the parents of British Columbia and, indirectly, to the children because they would not understand the harm they would do themselves by indulging in the opportunities granted to them by the Minister of Education and by the provincial government were this Legislature foolish enough to accede to the suggestion in this bill.

I would like to ask bluntly how a parent of British Columbia can deal with the situation where their youngster either refuses to go to school or says they're going to go to school and refuses to turn up.

In the past there has always been a degree of mutual understanding between the schools and the parents which helped to encourage children, who would otherwise go down the wrong path, to stay in school and make an effort. But what happens now? What can the parent do — that's what I'm asking the Minister — if their youngster either refuses to go to school or says they're going and doesn't turn up? The school can do nothing. Indeed, Mr. Chairman, the

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school does nothing.

In many home situations in British Columbia, both parents work. They depend on the children going to school, but they aren't going to school. In large numbers they aren't going to school. I don't think my colleague from Vancouver–Point Grey (Mr. Gardom) quite understands the fact that the schools aren't disciplining or expelling youngsters who don't show up at school. They drift, and the school drifts. Absenteeism runs at an alarming percentage in some of our high schools today.

I flatly deny what the Minister says about my not having been near schools. I have, and I can tell you this: the one thing that teachers, administrators and parents remark about in school today, is the erosion of discipline and effort to the extent of non-attendance at 10, 20, 30 per cent.

I agree with what the Member for Oak Bay (Mr. Wallace) says: the NDP cannot be blamed for something that certainly extends beyond the boundaries of British Columbia. The NDP can be blamed, however, with drifting along behind the fashion of the day in the mistaken belief that this is the way to gain popularity.

Sometimes for the good of a society, you have to assert authority because it's your responsibility to do so. It is clearly the responsibility of the Minister of Education, the Department of Education and the Government of British Columbia to assert that authority today, however unpopular they think it may be. In the long run, it is not only desirable, Mr. Chairman, it is essential.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

HON. MRS. DAILY: I had no idea this debate was going to go on and on, on the premise from the Members who have just spoken — a completely wrong premise. If they would only read section 121 of the Act, you will see where every child in the Province of British Columbia is required to attend school.

You are purposely throwing out to the public that our government abrogates this whole principle of children attending school because you have not bothered to read the school Act, section 12 1. You are spreading across the province that this government is leading the way to permissiveness in the schools without even bothering to read

your school Act. You have accused me as Minister under this section 8, which we're dealing with now, of stating that no child has to attend school. We removed section 8 because it's redundant and archaic. If you read section 121, every child in British Columbia has to attend school.

Interjection.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: It's right in front of you. I'm sick and tired, particularly from the Member for Vancouver–Point Grey, to listen to these high-flung speeches with no basic information. Frankly, I'm really disappointed with the Member for Oak Bay, who is usually most reasonable but has fallen right into this by not reading the school Act of British Columbia.

I do hope, for the sake of the parents and the pupils out there, that this is reported by the press. You are going to send across this province the misinformation, when this Act passes, that no child has to attend school regularly in B.C., which is absolutely wrong. You should be completely ashamed of yourself from your ignorance in not reading the Act and also for attempting to discredit this government by false information.

MR. CURTIS: I'm afraid that from this corner of the House I have to file a minority report.

The marginal note in the *Public Schools Act* for this section that is going to be deleted is "cleanliness of pupils." That is obviously its main thrust. I have to agree with the Minister of Education in this regard; there are other sections untouched which deal with the behaviour patterns of students. I look at section 123 which is untouched: "Every pupil shall conform to the rules of the school, be obedient to his instructors and diligent in his studies." Also, section 125 gives some distinct and definite authority to local school boards.

Perhaps we started out on the wrong foot this morning. The first few words of section 122 perhaps should be repeated somewhere else with respect to "Every pupil shall attend school regularly." But as far as dress conforming to certain rules and regulations respecting length of hair and so on, I hope those days have gone forever from British Columbia.

I went through the school system when we had rigid restrictions imposed from above with respect to what we might wear. As a matter of fact, to point out how ludicrous it was at one point, I was dismissed from school for wearing a T-shirt. That was in the British Columbia school system not that many years ago. Dismissed for the day, I might add.

AN HON. MEMBER: You came back.

MR. CURTIS: I came back. But I'm afraid that some of the debate has strayed from section 122's principal intent. Perhaps the fault lies with the original drafting of the section, which combined punctuality, cleanliness, tidiness where they might well have been separated.

MR. GIBSON: It seems to me that by everything this Legislature does it exercises some kind of leadership in this province. By repealing section 122, it is saying a few things. "Every pupil shall attend school regularly," I agree is said in section 121 in

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different words. But then it goes on to say, "be clean and tidy in person."

Interjection.

MR. GIBSON: It's not in section 123, Mr. Minister, and you know it. Read your Act. If we repeal 122, we're saying that's no longer necessary.

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, come on!

MR. GIBSON: "And present himself punctually at each session of school clothed appropriately." If we

repeal section 122, we are saying that, according to the Legislature, we'll take that out of the law too. And finally, "in keeping with the custom of the school as sanctioned by the board." That's exactly the local option the Minister has been talking about.

It seems to me that the kind of leadership this Legislature is giving, if it repeals this section, is to say to the students of this province that these things are not as important as has been thought in the past. To me, Mr. Chairman, that's not good enough.

HON. MR. HALL: I want to just join in this debate for one second because I've never heard such a stream of senseless, dictatorial thought expressed on the floor of this chamber in years. I only wish this debate was taking place at about 2:30 on a regular afternoon when these galleries are full of responsible pupils of our school system who come here day after day after day after day. I want to tell you, Mr. Member, there's no way you're going to get the kind of modified, structured behaviour from our school children if you think that by not repealing this Act you're going to do something.

In short, Mr. Member, I want to tell you this: If you want to get good behaviour, if you want to get rules observed, if you want to get conduct improved, you do it in cooperation and consultation with those that you expect to conform to those standards. And you're not going to do it by the cheap, gratuitous insult that's been in this Act for 50 years — that pupils come to school clean. What nonsense!

Section 123 enables the school boards in this province, the students, the student bodies and everybody else to get together to bring a set of rules and a code of deportment that is ideal for that school, that district and those people at that point in time. That's what we should be striving for.

To stand up, the bunch of you, trapped in your waterfront idiosyncrasies, and try to lecture the pupils of this province on what they should do, to me is a sad, sad state of affairs. A sad state of affairs.

AN HON. MEMBER: It won't work.

HON. MR. HALL: It won't work. You know it will work.

MR. GIBSON: Nonsense.

HON. MR. HALL: I'm saying to you that if you'd done your homework, read this bill, read the Act before you stood on your feet and made those ridiculous arguments, we could have had something to be proud of coming out of this Legislature instead of divisive tactics and the senseless posture the Liberals have adopted. I think it's to be remarked upon that only one Member of the opposition parties has seen and has done his homework on this bill.

MR. P.C. ROLSTON (Dewdney): Mr. Chairman, years ago, students learned, and they still learn, this passage which I think is appropriate to what's just been said:

"All the world's a stage,

"And all the men and women merely players:

"They have their exits and their entrances;

"And one man in his time plays many parts,

"His acts being seven ages."

That's 300 years ago — Shakespeare. I think it's pretty relevant to what we've really heard at this time in the Legislature.

MR. GIBSON: Mr. Chairman, I just have to say something in respect to what that Minister's just said. He said that this was a centralist proposition. I want to point out to that Minister that this section which is being repealed says: "In keeping with the custom of the school as sanctioned by the board." That's about as local as you can get.

Furthermore, the Minister said that rules with respect to cleanliness and tidiness are nonsense. And I say to that Minister that they are not.

HON. MR. HALL: I never said that.

MR. GIBSON: And I say that the rules of this House....

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Point of order. There's so much misinformation placed on this record today — no one in this House said that being tidy and clean was nonsense.

MR. GIBSON: The Minister said it.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: I think you completely misinterpreted it if you read the *Hansard*.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think the proper way, though, would be for you to make your own statement afterwards.

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MR. GIBSON: The public, Mr. Chairman, can read the *Hansard* and see exactly what the Minister said. But that's what I say he said. He said....

HON. R.M. STRACHAN (Minister of Transport and Communications): What do you say you said?

MR. GIBSON: He said that rules which relate to cleanliness have to be worked out or else they're nonsense. I say to him that we come here as Members of this House, and we look for rules of order in this House as to cleanliness and as to deportment, which we try to follow. I don't see why the same kind of rules shouldn't be in place in our schools, just as they should be in place in every home in this province.

HON. G.R. LEA (Minister of Highways): Who makes rules in the House?

MR. GIBSON: And I say that the repeal of this provision is an invitation to young people across this province to say that there has been some slackening off in this kind of standard, and I say that's wrong.

HON. MR. HALL: Now the Member can read *Hansard* and he will find that he changed and added five words from the second time he spoke as compared to the first, in relation to what I said. That's the kind of thing I'm objecting to.

MR. GIBSON: What do you say I said?

HON. MR. HALL: I am objecting to that. I want to again draw to the Member's attention that he underscored my words when he talked about the rules of this House.

Who makes the rules in this House, Mr. Member? We do. We make the rules for ourselves. And that's what we're suggesting should be done from now on in the public schools of this province — that those who are involved at the level of the school, namely the board, the teachers and the pupils, will make the rules, and we'll get a better set of rules for them. And everybody knows that.

AN HON. MEMBER: That's what it says.

HON. MR. HALL: It does not say that.

MR. GIBSON: It does say that. Read the section.

Section 8 approved on the following division:

YEAS — 37

Hall

Cummings

Gabelmann

Macdonald	Levi	Gorst
Dailly	Lorimer	Rolston
Strachan	Williams, R.A.	Barnes
Nimsick	Cocke	Steves
Stupich	King	Kelly
Hartley	Lea	Curtis
Calder	Young	Chabot
Nunweiler	Radford	Bennett
Brown	Lauk	Fraser
Sanford	Nicolson	Phillips
D'Arcy	Skelly	McClelland
	Morrison	

NAYS — 6

McGeer	Williams, L.A.	Wallace
Anderson, D.A.	Gardom	Gibson

AN HON. MEMBER: I request the division be recorded.

Sections 9 to 16 inclusive approved.

On section 17.

MR. L.A. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chairman, section 17 makes some significant changes in the matter of capital expense and the raising of moneys by school boards for the carrying out of capital works. It removes from the school boards any obligation to go to the voters in their school district to obtain approval before the borrowing of capital funds in those instances when they have the approval of the Minister.

This also is a significant change in the operation of our school boards. I draw to the Minister's attention what she said when we were talking about an earlier section concerning candidacy for the office of school trustee. She said that she thought it was appropriate that candidacies not be restricted and that in the final analysis it was the people who would decide whether a person was or was not fit to be a school trustee. So she, in that respect, gives the final choice to the individuals who are entitled to vote in the school district.

Yet when it comes to the matter whether or not capital funds should be raised, whether or not there should be an imposition upon the taxpayers for the division of capital works in the school district, she would exclude the right of the public to be consulted and to express their point of view.

I happen to think that this is a wrong direction we are taking and I would be happy if the Minister could indicate what the philosophy behind these amendments is, as she said she would do during second reading.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Mr. Chairman, right across Canada I think you'll find that almost every province of Canada, exclusive of B.C., until this Act is passed,

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has removed capital referenda.

The philosophy behind it, first of all, is that we do believe sincerely that the school boards, when it comes to drawing up plans for capital projections, should have the right to do that without having to go to referendum to the

taxpayer. We believe that because, as I said to you earlier, the taxpayer can always make his judgment on the day he cast his ballot.

I also know that the school boards of this province, when they move into any massive new capital project, will not sit in isolation, I'm sure, from the public. They will have meetings to discuss with the public the needs for new sites and schools in their district. As a matter of fact, right now this takes place anyway. You find that parents themselves are vitally interested in where the new schools are going to be built in their districts. You find those consultative meetings taking place now and I know they will continue.

Another point I would like to make is that if you look at the history of school referenda in this province — it rather shocked me — you will find the average vote has been, I'm told, 12 per cent turnout of the taxpayers to vote on school referenda. Those were the figures given to me.

All I can say to you is: it's quite obvious that if you only have a 12 per cent turnout, when it comes to going to the ballot box and exercising your right on capital projections for schools, it seems to be that the taxpayer is saying, "We think the school trustees are quite capable of doing this and, of course, we'll let them know if we don't like what they're doing."

So for a number of years we have had this very low percentage across the province turning out to vote on capital referenda. Of course, the tragedy has been that you have had cases where schools have vitally needed these programmes. You know yourself, Mr. Member, we have listened to the debates in the House over the past years of unfortunate situations where referenda went down to defeat. Today, as Minister, I'm having to take up the results of those disastrous defeats.

The District of Surrey is an example where a number of referenda were defeated and now we are in the situation where we have to try and make up very quickly for those lost years.

In other words, I'm basically saying that the whole matter of planning for capital is something that, I believe, can be done best by the school board with the approval finally, of course, of the Department of Education. I think it's better for the smooth development of our capital programming. I think the people of British Columbia, through the turnouts at their voting time on capital referenda, have shown that they themselves do have faith in the school boards of the province and the department to prepare good, reasonable, sound capital projects.

MR. GIBSON: The situation the Minister has been contemplating in her remarks, which I'd largely agree with, relates to the situation where a school board may wish to advance further in the provision of capital facilities than the local ratepayers, and the approval there would then rest with the Department of Education.

But I would ask the Minister what about the opposite situation when the local school board and the local ratepayers wish to go faster and further in the provision of capital facilities than does the Department of Education. Here is where a rather strong central control comes in, and where possibly the ability to hold a referendum would act as a moral force and a persuasion to the department, that, indeed, these extra funds that the department otherwise thought unjustified, were indeed supported by strong local opinion.

Could the holding of a referendum to show support still be a voluntary if not necessary thing for a local school board, in order to convince the Department of Education that this is indeed a meaningful thing?

HON. MRS. DAILY: Well, it didn't work that way in the past. I think it gets down to the government in power and their commitment to education and to capital projects, and of course, it gets down to the money that's available which I realize all governments have to face. So we have had a history of ratepayers approving referenda over the last 20 years, overwhelmingly approving it, and not finding that the money was forthcoming because the past government made the decision that just so many funds would be allowed.

Now, we as a government have to make the decision also. You said, "Is it not true that there will be pressures and the school districts and the parents will want to go ahead of what the Department of Education decides?" Well, I will have to say, naturally...you can never accede to all the requests across the province immediately for capital

programmes, particularly today where we are having so many increases in our construction costs. We are doing our very best in this government to keep up the building needs, but it's not going to be easy.

As a matter of fact, we've already allocated \$60 million for capital expenditures over the last year. I'm asking the school boards to work with me on trying to devise more economical methods, new ways of meeting the class programme problems.

Section 17 approved.

Title approved.

HON. MRS. DAILLY: Mr. Chairman, I move that the committee rise and report the bill complete

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without amendment.

Motion approved.

The House resumed; Deputy Speaker in the chair.

Bill 89, *Public Schools Amendment Act*, 1974, reported complete without amendment, read a third time and passed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The committee further reports that there was a division on section 8 and asks leave to have this recorded in the *Journals*.

Leave granted.

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

ESTIMATES: DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

(continued)

On vote 235: Minister's office, \$100,716.

MR. WALLACE: I spoke in the debate last night. I had felt I had said all I needed to say until we had the Minister of Transport and Communications (Hon. Mr. Strachan) in full flight for the last 20 minutes last night. It is very obvious that the opposition....

Interjection.

MR. WALLACE: Oh, five minutes; it doesn't matter. What you said needs to be countered and corrected. It is very obvious — and disappointing, of course — but very obvious that the opposition hasn't made its point clear in this debate on Autoplan. I think a few more words are in order.

The Minister made the speech which was reminiscent of the kind of performance he used to give as Leader of the Opposition on this side of the House in the years I sat in this House while the Minister was also on this side.

He was a great respecter of parliament, and still is. He was a great respecter of the rights of the individual, a great respecter of the majority vote, the majority opinion, respect for minorities, et cetera — all the principles that are part and parcel of the parliamentary and democratic system.

In the midst of his great oration last night he did, however, overlook just one or two points. First of all, to a parliamentarian, let me remind him that 61 per cent of people in this province did not vote for socialism.

Interjection.

MR. WALLACE: For the record, I happen to have more than 50 per cent of the vote in my riding, which is what very few people in this House could stand up and say. Don't give me that garbage.

Interjections.

MR. WALLACE: Well, I'm just setting the record straight. Maybe you could keep the Member asleep as he usually is; he seems to be awake this morning.

There are 61 per cent of the people who did not vote for socialism, of which a main plank was a monopoly car insurance. The word "monopoly" seems to not get through to the mind of this Minister or this government. If you want to be a parliamentarian, as I know you do, one of the very first responsibilities is to listen to everybody in your riding and everybody in the province, not just the people who vote for your party any more than vote for mine.

Certainly the number of letters I've had, and contacts and phone calls and letters to the editor.... Read what people are saying. Many, many people are not the least bit happy with a monopoly situation where the government is the sole provider and where you take it or leave it on their terms.

Interjection.

MR. WALLACE: Oh, don't start chirping in.

Interjection.

MR. WALLACE: We'll get to that. That's part of the record that I'm just going to set straight and that he distorted last night at 11 o'clock. You just sit and listen without chirp, chirp, chirping, I'll give you the answers.

Interjection.

MR. WALLACE: As an individual whom I respect, the Minister of Transport and Communications believes the individual has the choice and has rights and certain freedoms of choice. I always thought from listening to the Minister when he sat on this side of the House that he felt as strongly as I do about freedom of choice. When the individual decides to buy or insure a car, or buy a house, or send his children to school, or a multitude of other functions we all carry out every day, he should have some choice as to how that should be done.

For a Minister, part of a government with 39 per cent support from the population, to stand up last night and suggest that Autoplan is the best thing since sliced bread I think was just a little hard for me to take.

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Interjection.

MR. WALLACE: You sure did.

Interjection.

MR. WALLACE: You distorted the truth.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: No.

MR. WALLACE: Yes, you did. I'll put that straight right now. I hope the Minister of Public Works (Hon. Mr. Hartley), now that he wants an answer, won't sit and gabble to his neighbour.

I and the Conservative Party are on record as having never said that we would destroy ICBC. Now you, Mr. Minister, try and deny that you didn't use the word "destroy" last night. You did use that word. I challenge you right now: provide one shred of evidence in writing, manuscripts, tapes, hotlines, that I have ever said, or used the word, that we would destroy ICBC. I have never said that; nor would it be our plan. All we have said is that we will prove to the people of British Columbia that competition is a healthy market condition in British Columbia.

Interjection.

MR. WALLACE: No, no. I didn't say that either. No, I didn't.

Interjection.

MR. WALLACE: I have had minimal contact with the insurance companies, so don't get out your broad brush and just paint everybody with one colour.

Interjection.

MR. WALLACE: We have never said that we would destroy ICBC. We have simply said — and I say it again.... It will be our platform in the next election. Don't give us all this scare tactics that the Premier tries: that we will be afraid to challenge the so-called perfect, wonderful, tremendous, unheard-of Autoplan such as the Minister of Transport and Communications described. We'll challenge it; we're not scared. It will be one of our main planks based on our fundamental concept in the Conservative Party that freedom of choice is important and vital to the individual. We will simply create a choice. ICBC can do its thing, and any private enterpriser who wants to compete will be allowed to compete.

Interjections.

MR. WALLACE: That's right. I'm giving you that assurance right now. But let's repeat....

HON. MR. STRACHAN: What have you told the insurance companies?

MR. WALLACE: I haven't talked to any insurance companies. Don't keep coming back with this implication, which is an unfair insinuation, that somehow I'm in communication with the insurance companies. I'm in communication with the people I represent. For every letter which has crossed my desk from an insurance company there are 200 from the man in the street. And it's the man on the street and the woman on the street whom I'm talking about.

We will encourage competition but we will not destroy or even attempt to destroy ICBC. The reason for that, Mr. Minister of Public Works, is very simple. Not only do we believe in freedom of choice and in competition, but there's a third part that keeps being missed in this House all the time. If you compete and you can't survive, then that proves you have no need to exist.

Interjection.

MR. WALLACE: If this government is so confident that it can give better insurance and cheaper insurance and give the citizens altogether a better deal, why are they afraid of competition? Surely the test of who is the best man is for the person to compete with others who say they can do better.

When you rule out competition, then, of course, within one year or two years, as I tried to point out on this farcical refund system, we will have no comparison. We'll have one, big, monolithic, monopolistic system providing all the car insurance a year or two years from now. The poor citizen who is concerned about his premium won't even be able to write in and say, "Well, I got it from this company last year for \$52 but this year I am paying \$100 to the government plan."

He won't even be able to say that, because there won't be any standards for comparison — no competition. As I said very clearly last night, this refund farce is the most pathetic, face-saving gesture by this government to try and

conceal the fact that it has fallen hopelessly short of meeting the kind of election commitment it made in saying that everyone would pay 20 per cent less for their car insurance.

For the Minister to get up last night at the close of debate and give us this grandiose and eloquent description of this Autoplan as though everybody and his brother was so happy that it had happened.... Let's get the record straight. I could send him letter after letter after letter that there are many, many people in this province who are not the least bit happy with Autoplan.

Compulsion. Haven't you had letters, Mr. Minister? When you sat on this side of the House,

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how you talked about freedom and rights and privileges of the individual! You must have had letters where certain people choose, on their own, not to carry collision insurance. But, oh no, now it is compulsory. Here again we have big brother government telling the persons and the individuals in our society what is good for them — government's saying: "Maybe you don't want to do it that way, but we are telling you what way you shall do it."

Where is the Minister who sat on this side of the House? I'm sure he did feel the way he said he did when he espoused the concern and the importance of individual rights and freedoms.

Interjection.

MR. WALLACE: Wake up, Roy! We are finished that debate. We discussed schools about half an hour ago; we are on Autoplan now, Roy. Wakey, wakey!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let's have a little bit of order, please.

MR. WALLACE: I would go one point further and say that I am deeply concerned. Whether the situation has been contrived or whether there have really been very serious delays, I'm very seriously concerned at the way in which we are being held in suspense by the Premier of this province in regard to an announcement as to how he will cope with the increased price of gasoline for the consumer.

I just want to make something else very plain. The Minister has asked us to make our position very plain on ICBC and I hope I have done that, especially in regard to this party's position on the question of fair competition.

If the Premier is about to further bolster the inadequacies of Autoplan by some subterfuge similar to the refund subterfuge and subsidize all premiums across the province so as to establish, let us say, the so-called postage stamp rate, then I challenge the Premier of this province that he must call an election to be allowed to do that in the eyes of the people of this province.

That will be the biggest, phony kind of subsidy to bolster a major political platform which went sour from the 1972 campaign. I am not saying that the Premier is about to do that, but the way in which the announcement has been delayed, the fact that he has said he will not do as has been done in other provinces by reducing the provincial tax on gasoline....

HON. MR. STRACHAN: How many provinces reduced the tax on gasoline?

MR. WALLACE: Two of the provinces — Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: You don't even know; you said "Manitoba."

MR. WALLACE: The fact is, Mr. Chairman, if Autoplan, which may or may not be running according to some of the figures which were produced in debate earlier this week.... One Member has suggested that costs will exceed premiums by \$10 million.

AN HON. MEMBER: He didn't read the report right.

MR. WALLACE: No, but I am stating that at least one Member in this House has made that assertion. You've said that he is wrong but the fact is....

Interjection.

MR. WALLACE: No, I'm saying that you have countered his statement. I think, Mr. Chairman, that because we respect parliament, two Members on each side of the House have the right to differ in their opinion.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: As long as you know that you are quoting an invalid figure, that's fine.

MR. WALLACE: I'm saying very clearly that the events of the last few days and weeks, the Premier's statements and this Minister's statement that the policy is one towards a uniform insurance rate in all corners of the province — the same rate for the same car of the same size and vintage.... All I am saying is that this refund system that had to be put in in a clumsy, 11th-hour fashion was an admission of this government's incompetence and inadequacies in bringing in this kind of plan which it promised at the 1972 election and upon which it garnered a substantial amount of support.

Having gone through the maze of the refund plan which, incidentally, excluded a lot of groups which were just as entitled to a refund as the people who did obtain a refund, we now have a very high index of suspicion that the Premier is about to subsidize all automobile insurance in some way or another to some degree or another simply in the most blatant political manoeuvre to appear to be helping the motorist in the face of increased gasoline costs when, in point of fact, he is looking one year down the road when this Autoplan will be in a worse financial mess. There is less political loss to subsidize it in this way now than to try and face the financial mess next year.

I'm just making it very plain that from what I've heard and read and from the discussions we have had within our party, if that should turn out to be the momentous announcement we are to have in Kamloops tonight, money is to be taken from

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consolidated revenue to subsidize Autoplan premiums in this province in order to establish a uniform rate across the province — and I suspect that is what it will be; the big Member for Little Mountain (Mr. Cummings) supports that concept — if that is to be the momentous announcement to be made tonight, then I say that the Premier of this province and this government, if it has any respect for the people of this province, both the people who voted it into power because of its Autoplan promises and the people who did not vote it in and who have been left, in many instances, paying higher insurances, then, under these circumstances, I say that the Premier does not have the right.

If this is his plan to be announced in Kamloops tonight, then this province deserves a provincial election on that issue alone. Not because it is just dollars out of somebody's pocket; it is because of the great dereliction of principle espoused in the 1972 campaign that it would be a cheaper, better plan, self-sufficient and would not be subsidized from any direction.

I still don't understand why we can't have some measure of a two-price system. In fact, we do have a two-price system to a degree already, but that is another economic argument. The fact is, in my opinion, the people of British Columbia should be given some kind of financial assistance by some mechanism or another to soften the blow which the consumer has from the increased price of gasoline. I'm not disputing that and I want to make that very plain. But equally plain, the subsidy should not be manoeuvred through Autoplan.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: We don't run the federal government. We are not in office in Ottawa. That's where that gas price increase came from. It came out of Ottawa — from the Liberal federal government.

Interjections.

MR. WALLACE: Mr. Chairman, the debate does not revolve around who put up the price of gas or whether it was too much or too little. I agree that that was a federal responsibility.

What I am saying is that both sides of the House, I think, are agreed that the consumer in British Columbia merits some form of financial assistance by some other means than presently exists. As I said earlier in the debate, the Premier has flatly rejected the idea of reducing the gasoline tax.

While some form of assistance, in my view, is indicated, if the Premier intends to use Autoplan in order to serve two very attractive political ends for his government — namely, to provide some form of help to the consumer and at the same time to give Autoplan superficially some kind of financial success which it presently does not have, as I pointed out through refund debate, plus the fact that there is a real possibility that next year it will be in an even worse financial mess — then I say that that will be the most blatant political manoeuvring that would even make W.A.C. Bennett blush.

I'm amazed at the silence from the government benches. I have to think that I've hit the nail on the head. Not a single protest or contradiction of my proposition.

HON. MR. LEA: Are you proposing that?

MR. WALLACE: You're right — I'm opposing that.

HON. MR. LEA: Proposing.

MR. WALLACE: If you want to put \$10 million or whatever is involved to subsidize the car driver, fine.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: He asked if you were proposing it. I'm making notes.

MR. WALLACE: Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry — I didn't hear the Minister's interjection.

If this is the....

Interjections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, just a bit of order so the Hon. Member for Oak Bay can continue.

MR. WALLACE: I'm almost finished my remarks. These two points, Mr. Chairman, are so extremely important that we feel if some such plan is hatching or has been hatched and is finally to be announced today that the Premier of the province must call a provincial election based on that particular kind of political decision, using taxpayers' consolidated revenue, to suggest that he is helping the motorist, but more importantly, he is indeed salvaging or attempting to salvage a plan which has been a failure in the basic goals which the plan set for itself in the 1972 election campaign.

Not only have many automobile owners reason to ask where is their 20 per cent less, but those who have applied for a refund have been told to consider themselves lucky that they're not paying any more than they did last year. That in itself is a clear admission that the extravagant promises that were made in an irresponsible way in the '72 election have certainly not been met.

Beyond these rather basic and fundamental points, there are all the other areas which are justifiably to be criticized. Here we have a government...

AN HON. MEMBER: That cares.

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MR. WALLACE: Yes, cares for itself, all right. It's busy running, going crazy to find some plan to bail out the shortcomings and the financial mistakes of Autoplan. It cares, all right. It cares about its own survival.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: That's not true.

MR. WALLACE: That is true. We've got this government spending money buying land which its own legislation has made inaccessible to claims centres. What kind of incompetence and inadequacy and stupidity is that? The government which was responsible for freezing large parts of agricultural land goes out and buys acres to build an industrial site for a claims centre. Now tell me, why should we crow about Autoplan and what it's done for the people of British Columbia when it's spending money like this?

We have something less than a complete assurance, as we pointed out in the debate last night, that on the sites where they will be built municipal taxes will be paid. I listened very carefully last night, Mr. Chairman, to the Minister when we were on this subject. Did you notice how precise his answer was? He has guaranteed payment of taxes in North Vancouver to the end of the year. That's right. That's a little bit like guaranteeing the refund to the motor driver for 1973 for one year. There's no guarantee as to what the rates are. You can wave your hand and look disgusted, Mr. Minister. The reason you're waving your hand and looking disgusted is that you're really in a tight spot right now. These are hard, cold, established facts that I'm putting into the record, and you don't like it. You can shrug, you can do a Pierre Trudeau — you haven't quite got the hair for it, but you just shrugged....

HON. MR. STRACHAN: Don't go too far.

MR. WALLACE: You just did that. So don't deny the record.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: That's a rough accusation to make.

MR. WALLACE: I withdraw the comparison to Pierre Trudeau. That's about the worst thing I could accuse you of.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: Thank you very much.

MR. WALLACE: I certainly withdraw that remark. But you did shrug, Mr. Minister.

In addition to these basic failures to meet the goals of the plan, we've had inadequacy, incompetence and wasting of money. I've pointed out the waste of money on carpeting. And the Minister, I'll acknowledge in fairness, gave a complete explanation of what happened. But the record shows that we have some bunch of incompetents who would go and order carpet, put it down and then take it up again, or whatever they did.

If the Minister were going to have carpet laid in his home, I think he would make sure that it didn't have to be taken up again and replaced by something at four times the price.

Interjections.

MR. WALLACE: Oh, very hard. I'm certainly not putting one rug under another rug, I'll tell you that.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: We're not either.

MR. WALLACE: Anyway, these are facts and I've stuck to facts.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: They're not facts. You're stuck — that's all.

MR. WALLACE: The Minister hasn't denied that these are facts, and he's stuck with them. You're stuck with them, my friend. It's the Minister that's stuck to them.

The sad thing was that I was all ready to quit last night until the Minister made his speech, but there were so many inaccuracies, Mr. Minister of Industrial Development (Hon. Mr. Lauk), and indeed an outright distortion of the position of this party in regard to the position of the Conservative Party in the next election campaign....

HON. MR. STRACHAN: I'd run for cover if I was you, too.

MR. WALLACE: I won't be running for any cover. It's not my practice to run for cover.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: Well, you run for cover right now.

MR. WALLACE: The fact is, Mr. Chairman, that....

Interjection.

MR. WALLACE: Oh, leadership isn't the most important thing in the world — just getting the facts straight, that's important. I don't care who the next leader is. Leadership for the person concerned is not the important thing, my friend.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, let's stick to the vote, if we can.

MR. WALLACE: The important thing is to put

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your record clear on the table. Tell the people what it's all about. It's very clear that Autoplan, contrary to all the glorious statements the Minister made last night, has left many people concerned at this further example of a government that has to have total control. When it was asked time and again why it had to be total control, the answer always was, well to make it economically efficient and financially cheaper to the consumer, you really have to have total control and no competition. The Minister was quoting from a famous Scottish economist not too long ago....

AN HON. MEMBER: Sir Harry Lauder. (Laughter.)

MR. WALLACE: No, I think it was Adam Smith he was referring to — *The Wealth of Nations*.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: That's right. He wrote it in 1776 and you're still back there.

MR. WALLACE: No, I think in 1776 there was still a feeling among human beings that they enjoyed freedom and the freedom of choice. And I think the facts are very clear....

HON. MR. STRACHAN: You don't even know the history of Scotland, my good friend, if you think there was freedom in Scotland in 1776.

MR. WALLACE: The history of Scotland is a fight for freedom! You know that, you fool! What's Scotland done all these years? Centuries, that's what it was! It was a fight for freedom, and that's what I'm fighting for right now! I know what the history of Scotland was! Why did we fight the English?

HON. MR. STRACHAN: There was freedom for the lairds but not for the people.

MR. WALLACE: Don't talk to me about freedom!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order! Mr. Member, would you please be seated?

Just while people are relaxing I would ask the Member for Oak Bay to withdraw the words that I think came out — "you fool."

MR. WALLACE: I withdraw that remark.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you like to continue?

HON. G.V. LAUK (Minister of Industrial Development, Trade and Commerce): Are they more than two sword lengths apart?

MR. WALLACE: I never in all my life ever imagined that one Scotsman would ask another Scotsman about

freedom. The history of Scotland is stained with blood for centuries of fighting for freedom. And all I'm trying to do today is give every citizen in British Columbia the right to choose where he buys his insurance — that's all. What's so strange about that?

You fought for freedom when you sat in this chair on this side of the House, Mr. Minister, and I used to admire, and still do, the way in which you delivered your point of view, but you've lost some of that sense of freedom and the importance of the individual's freedom. Don't tell me that Scotsmen aren't concerned about freedom.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: Do you know what the lairds kept doing to the clergy? Whose side would you be on then? Tell me that!

MR. D.M. PHILLIPS (South Peace River): Wild man! Wild man! Wild man!

HON. MR. LAUK: Dr. Wallace, would you attend to the Member for South Peace? I think he has a hernia. (Laughter.)

MR. WALLACE: Mr. Chairman, the debate's gone on long enough without going into great detail in Scottish history. But I think it brings us back to the very central theme, that individuals in society do like to have a choice.

Even if the government, by following its own particular belief espoused in the 1972 campaign, had proven that it did give a better service and it was cheaper to the individual, then to some degree I would be compelled to acknowledge that my argument was wrong or inadequate. Not only have they taken away the freedom of choice but they have not in fact met the basic thrusts and the basic goals of the plan for the reasons I've mentioned, which I needn't remunerate over and over again. That, to my way of thinking, shows that there is good reason to allow competition to re-enter the field. Maybe I can ask the Minister: would the government, in the light of the kind of facts and figures which have been discussed for many days, consider allowing competition?

For example, I just happen to have a newspaper clipping in front of me which relates to general insurance and the instances which were discovered in Saskatchewan. I'm commenting on the fact that in Saskatchewan it was made compulsory for municipal and hospital authorities to buy government insurance. And then a Liberal government in the province withdrew the requirement that these bodies had to buy their insurance from the government plan. It's interesting that since that date when the Liberal government allowed competition to come back in it

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was discovered there were some savings in premiums when competition occurred. And interestingly enough, since the NDP government regained power in Saskatchewan it has not in fact reintroduced the monopoly system. I think we even have an example of an NDP government which has learned that there is something useful in the competitive system, even although it had tried its own system once and found it really didn't create the savings for the hospitals and municipalities that were intended.

So in the light, let us say, of that experience in Saskatchewan, in light of the fact that this Minister has had to develop and implement this complicated refund plan, and since he's not given me an answer as to whether the refund will occur next year to ensure that the present recipients of refunds don't suddenly have a 30 or 40 per cent increase in their premium next year.... This Minister is always asking us to give figures and facts and do our homework, and I've tried to stick very clearly to all the information which is clearly documented — facts and figures. Here again, this example in Saskatchewan is documented. It is a fact that the NDP Saskatchewan government did not return to the monopoly system when the Liberal government had decided that competition could still keep the rates down and make them competitive for schools and municipalities.

I hope the other parties will respond also to the Minister's speech of last night, because I think we on this side of the House, and certainly in this party, want to make it very plain that anything which can be done to assure the automobile driver of the best service and the cheapest premium should be done. What we are saying unmistakably is that Autoplan has failed in that goal, and secondly, and even more importantly, that we will absolutely fight to the

last breath in our bodies if the Premier is about to carry out the most blatant political manoeuvring to salvage Autoplan by telling the people that he's making their gasoline cheaper.

MR. GIBSON: Mr. Chairman, I just have to comment briefly on something the Minister said last night relating to what he saw as reasons for keeping internal information about the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia from the public. He made a comparison with the practice relating to Crown corporations in Ottawa and he read a quote from a parliamentary secretary. He made that as a comparison, Mr. Chairman, and by inference was using that as something which would excuse not making ICBC information public.

I want to point out to him that the practices of our two parliaments are different in many regards. In some ways Ottawa protects the rights of private Members better, but they do some things wrong, too. One thing they do wrong, in my view, is the protection and the insulation from legislative review that they give to Crown corporations. I don't think therefore that that is any kind of a proper reason not to do that here.

It particularly doesn't apply when the Minister is president of the corporation involved. At least in the Ottawa case the Crown corporations are arm's length corporations and they're not run by cabinet Ministers. But this is a case where the Minister is the president and head of that corporation. So under his salary vote it seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that we have a right to all of the information about that corporation.

Now there can be, in some areas, an argument of commercial confidentiality on the grounds of competitive position. But there's no competitive position here, Mr. Chairman. The ICBC has a monopoly in this province. So the Minister doesn't have to worry that the revelation of information will damage the competitive position of the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia.

So I say that those kinds of reasons which the Minister gives for suppressing information are completely specious, and any reasons there might be are to protect the government and not to protect the corporation.

MR. R.H. McCLELLAND (Langley): I'm sorry that the Minister absented himself from the chamber, but it seems like a long time ago since we....

Interjection.

Mr. McCLELLAND: The Minister of Highways has promised to take notes. Is that what you said? Thank you.

Despite the hysterical, blustery performance in defence of ICBC last night by the Minister, I get the message loud and clear that that Minister has no faith in the corporation and that he's not so sure that things are quite as rosy as he attempts to paint them in this House. If he was sure of his footing, he wouldn't be so frightened about opening things up to free competition, and he wouldn't be so frightened about telling the people of British Columbia all of the facts about the operation of that corporation when asked to do so by the Members of this House. No, I think that that kind of blustering performance that he gave last night was a cover-up for his lack of faith in the operation of the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia.

I want to put it on the record, too, Mr. Chairman, as some of the other Members have done, as to the position that we hold in relation to the Insurance Corporation in the future when we form the government after the next election. There is no way that we want to destroy ICBC. No way, Mr. Chairman. We've made that very clear.

The Minister's inference is that if for some reason

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we open things up to free and fair competition, that in itself will destroy ICBC. If ICBC is in such a weakened position at this time when it's only beginning that it can't face up to fair competition, then there's something seriously wrong with that publicly owned corporation — something seriously wrong.

It should be able to stand on its own two feet and face any kind of fair competition. I have no hesitation in saying.... As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, it's on the record that the Social Credit Party in convention voted in favour of publicly sponsored auto insurance.

MR. D.T. KELLY (Omineca): Why didn't they put it in then?

MR. McCLELLAND: The last two conventions. Well, I'm telling you what the Social Credit Party has done, Mr. Chairman, and the record is very clear in that regard. And I feel the same way.

I have no hesitation in saying that once we form the government again we will return free competition to British Columbia. We'll return fair competition. We'll return it providing anybody still wants to do business in this province after four or five years of abuse from that government. And that's doubtful.

I'd like to thank the Minister for his frank statement in response to the Member for Saanich and the Islands (Mr. Curtis), with regard to the commitment to Gabriola Island. I think it's good that you finally put that commitment on the record. I'd like to ask whether or not you have that same kind of commitment to the Iona proposal and, if that commitment is there, what kind of consultation you have had with regional and local authorities; if you have determined yet how much farmland is going to be raped because of the commitment to install massive ferry terminals in that area on prime farmland.

Is the regional district involved at all in your discussions, and is the Land Commission involved in the discussions with regard to Iona? I think the Minister should be as frank about that commitment as he was with the commitment to Gabriola Island.

It seems a long time since I stood up and opened the debate for the opposition on this Minister's estimates. But there were....

HON. MR. STRACHAN: A week ago yesterday.

MR. McCLELLAND: It's quite a while. But I've still been waiting for some of the answers to some of the questions I asked a week ago yesterday. For instance, what is the Minister doing about slow payment to towing companies — particularly those who are up against it, some of them because they can't get their payments out of ICBC?

I think the municipalities of this province would like to know once and for all how this corporation is going to determine satisfactory performance so that those municipalities can qualify for the 30 or 40 per cent reduction in their fleet insurance rates.

They don't have any idea at the moment how they qualify and what constitutes satisfactory performance. They are afraid, as I am, that rather than getting a 30 or 40 per cent reduction in their Autoplan rates, they're going to be faced with 100, 150 per cent increases which will have to be passed on directly once again to the taxpayers of those municipalities. What does satisfactory performance mean? And will in fact any municipalities be getting the full 40 per cent reduction?

I can't accept the Minister's responses to the rip-off of motorcycle riders in British Columbia. He says that British Columbians ride their motorcycles a lot more than other parts of Canada. But that's only true of the lower mainland, and I'm not so sure that it even is a factor. I'm not so sure that it's even a factor.

But it certainly isn't enough of a factor, Mr. Chairman, to demand that a person with a \$2,000 motorbike pays twice the premium of a person with a car of the same value. What kind of fairness is that? If that isn't a rip-off of one segment of society, I don't know what it is.

The Minister in his response to some of the things that were said by the opposition talked about advertising practices. I'm not really happy with the answers that we got from him. I don't expect that we'll get any better answers from him, but he said that the advertising programme of ICBC was carrying the truth to the people. Carrying the

truth to the people!

Well, Mr. Chairman, I can't see that the kind of advertising programme that ICBC has been carrying out is anything more than propaganda for a government corporation — the same kind of propaganda that this Minister stood in this House and demanded that other governments stop. This government has been doing it more blatantly than any other government that I've ever seen.

I just happened to come across an ad the other day of about a quarter of a page in *The Democrat*, I guess. It is a blank quarter of a page and it says: "This brief pause in the advertising is brought to you with our compliments. Dunskey Advertising Ltd."

It's a payoff, Mr. Chairman, to the New Democratic Party for the ICBC ad business. That's what that little ad in *The Democrat* is: a blatant payoff from the government's advertising agency for the business they've received from ICBC.

If I could stray just for a second I'd like to refer to the next page of *The Democrat* in which there seems to be a completely illegal ad put in by Canada's Manitoba Distillery Ltd. — but bearing no disclaimer from the Liquor Control Board. And I'd hope that

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the....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Wrong estimates, Mr. Member.

MR. McCLELLAND: Yes, I said I was straying just for a moment, because I want to bring this to the attention of the Attorney-General (Hon. Mr. Macdonald) and the Minister of Consumer Services (Hon. Ms. Young). I think that should be checked out immediately because it's an illegal ad.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: I'm pretty sure that that requirement was removed a year ago.

MR. McCLELLAND: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the Minister to clarify his statements about plans for auto salvage. Now he says that the government isn't going into the auto salvage business. But I'd like to know what it's going to do with all of the cars it has spread all over this province — in the middle of some fine communities in many instances, causing a blight on the landscape of those communities.

It won't help if you continue the practice, or if ICBC continues the practice — and I really didn't get an answer from the Minister either — of towing all of these cars into some central area like Matsqui or Kelowna or Prince George or Victoria and then dumping them all in the middle of these communities so that the communities have no control once again over the way their communities are developing.

It's a shame and a scandal, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to know what ICBC is going to do to make sure that these automobiles are placed in the kind of position where they aren't a blight on the community. I'd like to ask the Minister if it's true that ICBC has either rented or purchased 10 acres — or any acreage — owned by the Empire Auto Wrecking yard in Surrey. Or have you purchased any other auto wrecking yard or rented any space from any auto wrecking yard?

Are you planning any kind of a salvage or recycling or dismantling operation under the auspices of ICBC anywhere in British Columbia? Is that your plan?

What happened in Saskatchewan with the recycling and dismantling was that they didn't allow any competitive bids and completely bypassed private enterprise in this regard. I think that the people in the business, particularly those who have already been forced out of business — and there is one in New Westminster which has — are fearful that this government again is going to bypass private enterprise and force those existing recycling yards out of business. I'd like the Minister to comment on that.

The First Member for Vancouver–Point Grey (Mr. McGeer) talked about this problem of not having an insurance policy. It's one that the people of British Columbia are concerned about, despite the Minister's flippant remark about not needing such a thing with ICBC.

The Minister talked a lot about this great dusty book of regulations which any citizen can refer to if he wants to know what he's got in his insurance. But I'd like to refer the Minister to a letter from the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia to someone who asked about their insurance policy and where it was. The insurance corporation replied that there is no policy as such. We know that. What used to be known as the statutory conditions are now contained in the regulations pursuant to the *Automobile Insurance Act*, and are available through the Queen's Printer.

Now, first of all, that demands that the policy holder is now responsible for getting his own policy and finding out what he has in that policy. It should be the other way around. It must be the insurance company which is responsible for making sure that the person who purchases his insurance knows what he is getting and knows what he has exactly.

But the next paragraph in this letter is a dandy, Mr. Chairman. They refer to the regulations and then the assistant manager writes: "These regulations are not recommended as particularly easy reading. However, the information is all there."

Well, that's part of the point, you know. The person has the right; a person who buys insurance from Autoplan has the right to be delivered some kind of a clear policy which tells him what he or she has. It isn't the responsibility of that person to go digging through these hundreds and hundreds of pages of these dry and dull regulations to find out on his own behalf what kind of coverage he has from the automobile corporation. That kind of reply from the insurance corporation itself only reinforces that possibility.

Mr. Chairman, the question of dining rooms on ferries hasn't really been answered very well. I would hope that the Minister would address himself very quickly to the question of whether or not this government intends to return to the previous level of service in the dining rooms that was in existence in the summer rush of last year. The Minister says that he will check with his officials on that, but I think that before these estimates are completed we deserve an answer.

The Minister was very clear in saying that the changes that were taking place aboard the ferries last year were only normal functions to go into some kind of a winter routine. I suggest that that is baloney to begin with, Mr. Chairman. That is baloney to begin with because you made some serious structural changes to those dining rooms which was far more than just some routine change into a winter schedule. Are you going to go back and undo those structural changes? Are you going to go back to the same level of service in the dining rooms aboard the ferries?

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What exactly are you going to do?

We don't want any more misleading of the people of British Columbia with regard to the dining room service on board the ferries.

The Minister gave some simple little answer the other day about dining room losses and referred to some kind of a deal where the staff has to have 40 minutes off on every two-hour cruise. Tell us why that is necessary.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: Now you're going to build a straw man on what I didn't say.

MR. McCLELLAND: The Minister said, Mr. Chairman, that the staff had to have 40 minutes off....

HON. MR. STRACHAN: I did not say that.

MR. McCLELLAND: You did so.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: I did not.

MR. McCLELLAND: Of course you did.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

MR. McCLELLAND: The Minister made the statement, Mr. Chairman, and it doesn't explain anything about the losses on the ferries. All I asked was that the Minister institute some kind of efficient management study of the ferry service and the dining rooms, and impose or introduce some real restaurant technology into the operation of the dining rooms on the ferries. That would go a long way toward solving some of the losses that we have.

The Minister attempted to relate the dining room service on board to dining rooms on shore. I would just like to say that there isn't any restaurant on shore that has the same opportunity of having such a captive audience delivered with such regularity as does the ferry system. No restaurant on shore has that opportunity.

I would like to ask whether or not this government plans to install any coin-operated food-dispensing machine on board the ferries as either a substitute for dining room service, as a substitute for cafeteria service or as an addition to the present service. It is a simple question: are there any coin-operated food dispensaries going on board either the ferry which is in repair now or any of the other ferries? It is a simple question that can be answered quite easily.

The final point I wish to make, Mr. Chairman, has also been made, but I would like to add my voice to the sort of on-again off-again bus service which is on the B.C. ferry system by Pacific Stage Lines. They give good service when they are on the ferries, but there are some key ferry sailings which don't have buses aboard. That would be fine if a person could refer to their bus schedule or their ferry schedule and find out which ferries do have buses on board and which don't. But what happens, in fact, is that when a person gets dropped off at the ferry terminal, as he is purchasing his ticket, at that point there is a sign in the ticket window which says "No bus on 8 a.m. ferry sailing" or whatever sailing it happens to be. By then it is too late.

Interjection.

MR. McCLELLAND: If you see the sign — that's right. It is only a tiny little sign that sits in there. Anyway, whether you see it or not, it is too late; you're there, you've got to get on board the ferry. What do you do when you get to the other end? You either take an expensive taxi ride — and most people who are walking can't afford a taxi — or you hitch-hike somehow. You get over to Victoria the best way possible. Generally, when I get stuck in that position myself I look around for somebody who doesn't look like a socialist and ask him for a ride.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON (Victoria): Do you prefer an Olds?

MR. McCLELLAND: No, no. Be kind, Mr. Member.

I think that is something that should be looked at by the ferry system. Either include the bus service in the ferry schedule or, even better, have a bus on every ferry that sails out of both ends. On the one hand, you are trying to tell us that you want to encourage foot passengers and bus transport, and on the other hand you are making it just as difficult as possible to get that kind of service. I would appreciate it if the Minister could respond to some of the questions that I have raised, Mr. Chairman.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: First of all, Mr. Chairman, at no time did I say that the staff gets 40 minutes off. I said that in each two hours the dining room has to be closed for a 40-minute period. That's what I said. The passengers are ordered to get down to the car deck, you have to unload, and then you have to load. That's what I said and it is obvious that that is the case. I thought you would have enough basic native intelligence to understand that.

With regard to the commitment I made regarding Gabriola Island, again I want you to check *Hansard* and find out exactly what I said before you get up and make the kind of statements that you made. Later on we can discuss the ferries fully.

With regard to slow payment by ICBC, I announced the other day the situation which existed with payment.

Payments are right up to date.

MR. McCLELLAND: For towing companies?

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HON. MR. STRACHAN: For everything. I want to read into the record a letter which I received, dated May 24.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: File it.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: No, I'm going to read it into the record because you people keep repeating these untrue statements.

MR. McCLELLAND: They are not untrue.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: They are absolutely untrue. I want to read this letter addressed to me:

"Dear Mr. Strachan:

"I notice that there has been substantial criticism with regard to the payment of accounts by the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia to participating body shops.

"I think it is only fair in the public interest that I should write to you to emphasize, not in my position as mayor, but in my position as an independent businessman, that the experience of Peter Pollen Ford Ltd. in receipt of payment for service rendered from the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia has been truly outstanding.

"As the largest body shop in the City of Victoria I do believe we are possibly, if not an in-depth random sampling, typical of body shops in this area.

"Contrary to the mythology that appears to be prevalent in the community, the so-called independent general insurance companies have, in my business experience, been the worst segment of the community in paying their accounts that I have had the misfortune, as a businessman, to do business with.

"Our current outstanding accounts with ICBC, which represents now almost 100 per cent of the business of our body shop, are all current. This fact, considering the volume of business that we are doing, speaks for itself.

"Signed, Peter Pollen."

That is the kind of record we have established in the business community. He is still waiting for accounts from the private insurance industry for work he did last year. We went into business the first day of March this year, and already every account is paid right up. There it is. Paid right up.

I've already covered the municipal areas you raised and the motorcycles. If you are not satisfied with my answers, okay, that's the difference of opinion.

You mentioned advertising, and again you go off on the aura of suspicion, or special privilege with regard to the handling of advertising. There are three advertising accounts within my jurisdiction: ICBC, ferries, and the motor vehicles. In each case I put a recommendation from the individual in charge of that operation after they had received submissions from a variety of insurance agencies, and in each case it has gone to a different firm. In each case I accepted the recommendation.

Interjections.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: I'm talking about who does the advertising for the three different agencies under my jurisdiction. It is three different advertising firms — three different advertising firms — based on recommendations I receive.

I can't remember the name of the one for the ferries — is it Walters, Erlich — something like that? Ross, Anthony and something have the one for the motor vehicles, and Dunsky has the one for ICBC. That's the way I operate.

I resent the accusation that there is something mysterious and wrong because that particular firm happens to get the advertising for the one account under my jurisdiction.

With regard to auto wrecking plants, it is true that we are negotiating with the Surrey auto wreckers as a place to store wrecked vehicles — not in the recycling project — as an area in which to store wrecked vehicles.

I want to tell this House that we have helped clear up the wrecks that were scattered and were being scattered around this province, because they're now all under the jurisdiction of ICBC. When they were under the jurisdiction of 180 different companies they were left lying all over the place, left lying all over the province. But now that they're under the jurisdiction of ICBC, they're towed to a central point in every area and once a week they're up for auction to the highest bidder. That's how we do it — up for auction to the highest bidder, then they take them and they recycle them. Now that's what happens. You may not like it, the fact that we're doing a better job than we've done before, but that's the answer.

So far as the policies are concerned — I agree, the regulations would be a little difficult, if that letter was correct, but here's the booklet which outlines the coverage. As a matter of fact, I've had objections to the coverage that's outlined here; I indicated that we're taking a look at that aspect of it.

There is a very simple and easily understood explanation. Have you ever read the small print in those insurance policies? And you don't understand it. This is easily understood by every individual and that is the way it is.

Now, I think that's the questions that were asked of me. I'm sorry my good friend isn't here, I wanted to talk to him about the history of Scotland.

Interjection.

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HON. MR. STRACHAN: No, you rejected that offer of mine. I'm sorry you did, but you rejected that offer.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, I would like to raise a subject which the Minister has not answered on, and that is the question of whether or not an agent of ICBC, or a director of ICBC, is telling the truth concerning the appointment of one Mr. Sharpe.

I think it's important for the Minister to take this question on which he has had fair notice in terms of the fact that it's been on the order paper in the form of a motion for three months. He got fair notice, and it's time that he faced up to the fact that it's his responsibility to inform the House where the truth lies in this matter.

Just to refresh your mind, Mr. Chairman, the issue was fairly straightforward. The claim was made by the Minister of Health, acting as director, speaking, I guess, as director of ICBC. I'll quote him:

"On the recommendation of the agents' association, which said there would not be enough of them to do the job, they came to us at the end of the year indicating quite clearly that they just couldn't handle it. The ICBC at that time made a decision to expand the number of agents who would qualify."

This is denied totally by the president of the Insurance Agents' Association, Mr. Jack Hamilton, and I quote the transcript from the interview in which he said, when asked whether or not there had been any such request, and I'll give the question and the answer: "There is one thing I want to get back to. Did the Insurance Agents of B.C." — this is the Sharpe case again — "make any representation...?"

MR. CHAIRMAN: May I interrupt you just for a moment. This matter has been canvassed thoroughly in

these estimates. If you have some new point to....

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: Well, actually the quote that I'm reading from has never been made in this House, but the answer happens to be important because we have a case, Mr. Chairman, which apparently is not fully understood by you, of an agent making a claim regarding appointments. We have a statement which is totally contradictory to the....

Interjection.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: We have a case of the director of ICBC making a statement quite contradictory. The subject was raised in this House on February 18. A motion was placed on the order paper which stayed there for some time, and I want to know whether the Minister responsible will clear this matter up.

A request was made back in February that if there was some error it be cleared up; if there was an apology due, it be made. Nothing has happened. We know full well there is no way of having the matter raised by way of a private Member's motion, therefore I raised it yesterday and I raise it again today.

I'd just like to quote the words of the Minister yesterday, the rough draft: "I don't think that anywhere in my answer did I say that the agents had recommended an increase in the agents' force." Well, does he not know at this time? He's had three months to dig into this, three months to try and find out. I think it's time that he did say it.

He goes on to say: "I don't think I said anywhere that the agents had recommended an increase in the agency force." But a director of ICBC did, and a conflict is clear.

A director of ICBC said as follows:

"When on a recommendation of the agents' association, which said that there would not be enough of them to do the job, they came to us at the end of the year indicating quite clearly they just couldn't handle it, the ICBC at that time made a decision to expand the number of agents who would qualify."

That was the statement of the director.

I just want this matter cleared up because I think it's important in terms of veracity and terms of the confidence that people can have in ICBC.

HON. D.G. COCKE (Minister of Health): Mr. Chairman, I fear this nit-picking continually deters us from doing the business of the House. This problem has been canvassed so many times, but let me suggest to you this; the front page of the *Sun* indicated very clearly...at about that time Mr. Hamilton said, and made front-page news in the *Sun*: "Chaos is coming."

When we met with the agents, the executive of the agents' association, they didn't tell us to hire, and that's not what I was saying. But they did tell us that they couldn't handle the job. They didn't think they could handle it. So therefore, the board of directors met around this problem and we expanded the force from something around 900 — I can't remember the exact figures — from 900 to 1,100 or thereabouts. In other words, we opened it up so we could put on more. Now that's all there is to it.

If you wish to put a hard-line kind of.... I recognize the word "recommendation" there. What I meant by recommendation was that they were telling us in no uncertain terms that there was going to be chaos ensuing, that there wasn't going to be enough, and that kind of thing. You know, they were listening to all this rot. So we said to ourselves, okay, we'll expand the agency force, which is precisely what we

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did. Now let's resolve the thing.

As far as my recommendation around Sharpe was concerned, I've said a million times that the guy was a

particularly good insurance man whom I had seen in action for 20 years. I recommended him as I would recommend anybody else. But all of his moving around prior to that — I had no knowledge of that until afterwards — going to the Motor Vehicle Branch, this branch and that branch. But in any event, as far as the Minister of Transport's and my remarks, they cover the same ground.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Hon. Second Member for Victoria, but not on this subject.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, on this subject....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Member, the subject has been thoroughly canvassed both in these estimates and prior to now, and I think it should rest at that. I would ask you to move on to some other matter.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: Your duty is to listen when Members raise issues of credibility.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you raise a new point, Mr. Member, you may continue, but only on a new point.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: I will quote from material not quoted from before. Will that satisfy you?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Go ahead and try.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: Right. The interview goes on:

"As a result of what was regarded by Strachan as your representations, six new agents have been appointed and 13 others have been appointed who were in the process of being qualified or had been dropped in error from the list.' Hamilton: 'Nothing to do with any representations by our association....'"

HON. MR. COCKE: They weren't going to be able to handle the job, so what's the difference?

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: The difference is fairly substantial, Mr. Minister of Health.

"Nothing to do with any representations by our departments,' said Mr. Hamilton, 'and we have been in touch with them on a daily basis for a year and a half.' Webster: 'I just wanted to get that clear.'"

HON. MR. STRACHAN: You read that yesterday.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: No, I did not read that yesterday. That is an untrue statement. I did not read that statement yesterday.

The interview goes on:

"Yesterday I tackled the Health Minister, Dennis Cocke, on a statement in Fotheringham's column that he had leaned on John Mika, assistant to Mr. Strachan, to get a special licence as an insurance agent for his friend Sharpe in the Brocklehurst Shopping Centre in Kamloops. Were you aware of that before Fotheringham ran the story?' Hamilton: 'Quite a number of people were aware of the situation.' Webster: 'Do you regard this as political interference by Mr. Cocke in the appointment of an agent?' 'I would think that is a good statement,'"

was the reply.

Now there is, unfortunately, whatever is said, a substantial difference, Mr. Chairman, between the statement made by the president of the Insurance Agents' Association and by the director of ICBC. This matter was raised more than three months ago. A request was made at that time for clarification. None was forthcoming. A request was then made by way of a motion on the order paper which asked that a committee be struck to look into this matter and nothing was done.

This issue is now being raised in this House. All we had yesterday was the attempt by the Hon. Minister to say, "Did I say that the agents had recommended an increase in the agents for us?" Well, why didn't he say it? Because it wasn't true? If it isn't true, how is it that we have the statement by the director of ICBC?

This matter, Mr. Chairman, may not strike the Minister as tremendously important because his veracity has been called into question on a number of times. But it is important, when we in this House request information, to get correct information from the government. If it happens that a Minister by error makes an inaccurate statement, it's important to have that corrected.

To suggest, as the Minister of Transport and Communications did yesterday, that he has no intention of answering questions on this is in total contempt of this House. We want to get things like this straightened out. Otherwise, we simply cannot have any faith in the credibility of government Ministers.

Could I ask the Minister again...?

Interjection.

MR. D.A. ANDERSON: Well, the Minister doesn't seem very keen on listening to this but it is an important issue. It has been there for some time and the time has now come for answers to that particular question.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: Yes, I might as well.

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Interjection.

HON. MR. STRACHAN: Well, the Member for "Smear." That's a good description. He says my veracity has been questioned a number of times. I agree with you; it has been questioned a number of times, but on a completely false basis without justification, without fact, without reason, as a cheap, political trick. Not only has my veracity been questioned on that same cheap, political basis to try and build a false picture to the people of this province but the veracity of other Members has been questioned on exactly the same basis. No matter how wild, how stupid, how wrong your accusations are, you know they'll be printed. It's part of a deliberate plan on your part to embark on a scurrilous attack on this government.

I'm concerned. I've dedicated 20 years of my life in the opposition to the maintenance of a democratic system. I find there are people in this province who, because they can't control that system, are prepared to destroy the system. I'm concerned. There are people in this province who are embarked on destroying our system in order to get rid of the NDP, and I'm very concerned.

That Member there, what does he do? He throws a bunch of garbage out on the floor. Then, like a bear, he snarls and snips and paws around in his own garbage, the garbage he threw on the floor. Other Members do the same thing. I'm sick and tired of Members across the way throwing out garbage.

I was up in Buttle Lake with my wife on a fishing trip. In my tour around they took me to the garbage dump. There were 17 bears there; 17 of them. How many Members in the opposition? (Laughter.) They were pawing and sniffing and turning over the same garbage. It's garbage that you threw out there and continue to throw out there.

I've answered your questions. It's a nothing issue. I've explained to you what the agents came to us and said. We made the decision, as the Member said, to increase the agency force and allow the agency force to be increased from 900 to 1,100. There were applications there and this one was among it. It went through with the rest. Now, you can like it or lump it; you can accept it or discard it. That's the answer and it's the only answer you're going to get. Get on with your garbage.

MR. PHILLIPS: Every time we seem to get in this Legislature to the meat of the situation, to the heart of the problem, that Minister who has had 20 years in this House, so he brags about, gets up and doesn't answer the question.

HON. MR. COCKE: There's the scavenger.

MR. PHILLIPS: Every time we want a question answered in this House he gets up and says we're trying to

destroy the system.

AN HON. MEMBER: Well, you are.

MR. PHILLIPS: Last night in this Legislature he gave us a 10-minute harangue about how we were trying to destroy the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia.

Interjection.

MR. PHILLIPS: He said we were going to bear a grudge, praying that the system wouldn't work. I want to tell you, Mr. Chairman, we were going to bed at night praying that the system would work.

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh!

MR. PHILLIPS: We didn't want the taxpayers of British Columbia to be ripped off; we didn't want the incompetency of this Minister to show forth; we didn't want the incompetency of this Minister and the incompetency of the dictatorial powers of that socialist-communist government opposite to show forth and work a hardship on the taxpayers of British Columbia.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

MR. PHILLIPS: That is what we are fighting for in this Legislature. We don't need a harangue from that Minister opposite. He tries to stand up and play his hand and talk about democracy.

Interjections.

MR. PHILLIPS: He talked about us trying to destroy the system. Every time somebody really gets to the heart of a problem in that socialist-communist government opposite, they stand up and harangue us. They say we attack them because they are socialists.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member, may I interrupt you for just a minute? I would ask you to withdraw the word that you have now used twice, the word "communistic." I don't think that is in order in this House and I would ask you to withdraw, please. Unconditionally withdraw, please.

MR. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chairman, I will withdraw it if you say so. Certainly, nobody on that side of the House has ever asked me to withdraw it because they know they are communists, a socialist dictatorial government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Member, it occurs to me that that kind of language in this House is out of

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order and not in keeping with what I think are traditions that we should be trying to maintain.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, certainly, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would ask you to withdraw it.

MR. PHILLIPS: If you find the truth offensive, I will withdraw it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Member, I would ask you to withdraw it unconditionally.

MR. PHILLIPS: I didn't notice any Chairman in this House last night asking that Member when he made offensive statements about the opposition to withdraw them. Not at all!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Member, I would ask you to withdraw unconditionally, please.

MR. PHILLIPS: As I said, if you find it offensive that the truth is known in this province, I will withdraw it,

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Member, I would ask you to withdraw unconditionally. The words are, "I withdraw."

MR. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chairman, I withdraw.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

HON. W.S. KING (Minister of Labour): Point of order. I just wanted to make the point, Mr. Chairman, that I would challenge that Member to repeat that accusation against me personally. If he would care to come to my office and make that allegation, I would be willing to discuss it with him. (Laughter.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is not a point of order.

MR. PHILLIPS: Tonight, in the town of Kamloops, Mr. Chairman, the Premier of this province, outside of this Legislature, is going to make an announcement that involves the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia. I have asked the Minister and I have asked him continually and I will ask him again: why doesn't he bring the facts before this Legislature? Why doesn't he tell the Members of the opposition and, indeed, the Members of his own government bench what is going on in the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia?

He talks about democracy. There is no more democracy in the Province of British Columbia. It is a dictatorial, one-man government. Who will make the announcement? Who runs the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia?

I want to tell you, Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources (Hon. R.A. Williams) is the biggest garbage dump in the whole outfit. He runs the government; he's the power.

AN HON. MEMBER: How come he isn't in Kamloops?

MR. PHILLIPS: No, but you've probably made the decision.

AN HON. MEMBER: He told him what to say.

MR. PHILLIPS: I've asked the question before and I will ask it again: why do not all people in British Columbia who have been charged more for their insurance this year have a right to ask for a refund? Why doesn't the Minister in charge of the Insurance Corporation stand in this Legislature and make the announcement that that corporation is going to be used to assist the motorists of this province to run their automobiles? No, the announcement will be made in Kamloops tonight, outside of this Legislature with no regard for the opposition and no regard for your own government backbenchers.

Interjections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order!

MR. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chairman, I ask that Minister again to either stand up and deny or state that the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia is going to be the tool and the vehicle, the carrier, through which motorists are going to be subsidized and given assistance to run their automobiles in British Columbia.

As I stated before in this Legislature, Mr. Chairman, too often the Minister's estimates are passed, given the rubber stamp, then announcements are made outside of this House as to the true policy, the true expenditures. Is that democracy? Is that what parliament is all about?

I want to tell you, Mr. Chairman, that this Minister has been in this Legislature for 20 years — 22 years.

Interjections.

MR. J.R. CHABOT (Columbia River): Too long.

MR. PHILLIPS: He knows what it's like to be in opposition, and he fought for the rights of individuals while he was in opposition. But now his brain is clouded with power. It's a typical socialist, typical dictatorial attitude: as soon as they....

Interjection.

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MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, heavy-handed.

Interjections.

MR. PHILLIPS: I'm not closing on a note of humour, Mr. Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources (Hon. R.A. Williams). You know, it's all very well and good for the opposition to stand up and talk about how the opposition is trying to tear this government apart; how every time they are attacked they are attacked because they're socialists. If they got into power by telling a lie — and he told it so often that the people finally believed it — you're propagating the same thing. We're trying to get to the truth of this whole situation, and it's not garbage, Mr. Minister; it's not garbage at all.

As a matter of fact, that Minister is ashamed of what he is doing in this Legislature today because he knows that the Premier of this province is going out tonight and is going to make an announcement that involves his Insurance Corporation of British Columbia. He knows that the Premier is going out tonight with complete disregard for this Legislature. That's what Hitler did. And you'd better believe that that's what's happening in British Columbia today.

That's what's happening in British Columbia today. Sure, we get condemned for attacking the opposition, and the Premier stands in the Legislature and never answers a question. But he says: "Oh, we're being attacked because we're socialists." All this loyal opposition is trying to do is get to the meat of the situation, asking honest questions.

There's the Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources who yet hasn't tabled in this Legislature his secret document with Gottesman and company.

Interjection.

MR. PHILLIPS: But your time will come. You'll be shamed out of the cabinet. You'll be shamed out of the cabinet, my friend the Minister of Highways (Hon. Mr. Lea). You'll be shamed out of the cabinet.

Interjection.

MR. PHILLIPS: This is typical of what is happening in the world. You're buying people with their own money.

When I stood in this Legislature and I said that the taxpayers of British Columbia were subsidizing the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia, I meant what I said. Who is subsidizing the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia? Every taxpayer in every city and every village in British Columbia is subsidizing the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia. Why, Mr. Chairman? Why? Because their insurance on the vehicles that they operate has gone up by 50 to 100 per cent. Every person who rents an automobile today in British Columbia is subsidizing the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia. Why, Mr. Chairman? Because since the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia imposed the dictatorial rates on rental units, everybody in the rental business has had to increase their rates sometimes by \$2 to \$3 to \$4 a day. That's another justification for the people's corporation.

We still haven't heard from this Minister as to how many units the government has insured with the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia at upwards of \$125 a year. They put an ad in the paper during their election campaign: "We insure our units for \$25 a year." More misleading advertising! How many units and how much are

they paying? You haven't told us, Mr. Minister.

Interjection.

MR. PHILLIPS: How many units of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway are insured, and for how much?

How many units and how much does the British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority pay?

No, every taxpayer in British Columbia will subsidize the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia. Mr. Chairman, they'll make it work, and they'll make it produce a profit. And the taxpayers of British Columbia will be paying. Every farmer that has to hire his produce to go to market will be subsidizing the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia.

Waste and extravagance and dictatorial...!

HON. MRS. DAILLY: With your agreement, I would like to move the committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Motion approved.

The House resumed; Deputy 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.

The House adjourned at 1:02 p.m.

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ERRATUM

The following line should read as shown:

Page 3416, column 2, line 17

Mr. P.E. Bickle who suggested that there is

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