

June 19/90

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Prebble: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise pursuant to rule 11 to present a petition to the Assembly from several hundred residents of Saskatoon and other parts of Saskatchewan. These petitioners, Mr. Speaker, are opposed to the construction of a slowpoke nuclear reactor on the University of Saskatchewan campus. They do not believe that it is in the public interest to have such a reactor built.

They are also opposed, Mr. Speaker, to the construction of a Candu reactor in the province of Saskatchewan. The petitioners call instead for increased energy conservation and research and development of environmentally safe forms of energy.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my constituents and many other residents of Saskatoon and Saskatchewan, I'm very pleased this afternoon to present these petitions to the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Rolfes: -- Mr. Speaker, pursuant to rule 11 I also rise to present some petitions to the Assembly. In fact I have names of several hundred residents of the city of Saskatoon and surrounding areas who are concerned about the development that is taking place at the University of Saskatchewan in that there may be constructed a slowpoke reactor. And these people are concerned about having such a nuclear reactor in the city of Saskatoon, and they have also stated as my colleague has indicated, that there are many other forms of energy that we should be pursuing. And on their behalf, Mr. Speaker, I take great pride in presenting these petitions to the legislature today.

Mr. Brockelbank: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise also pursuant to rule no. 11 of this Assembly to present to you several hundred names of petitioners on the same topic that my other colleagues from Saskatoon city have just referred to. It is my pleasure to put these names on the Table of the Assembly.

Ms. Atkinson: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise pursuant to rule 11 to present a petition to this Assembly for several hundred residents of Saskatchewan, but in particular residents of the constituency that I represent. These petitioners are opposed to the construction of a slowpoke nuclear reactor on the University of Saskatchewan campus and the construction of a Candu reactor in the province of Saskatchewan.

Instead, Mr. Speaker, they call on the government for increased energy conservation and research and development of environmentally safe forms of energy.

Mr. Pringle: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I join my colleagues and rise pursuant to rule 11 today to present several hundred petition names opposing the slowpoke nuclear reactor on the University of Saskatchewan campus and the construction of a Candu reactor in the province of Saskatchewan. I join my colleagues in saying that these names want increased energy conservation and research that are safe. And I'm greatly honoured to present the names on behalf of these several hundred people today.

Ms. Smart: -- Mr. Speaker, I too rise pursuant to rule 11 to present a petition to the Assembly for several hundred residents of Saskatoon and other areas of Saskatchewan including North Battleford; Leask; Canwood; Spiritwood; Mildred, Saskatchewan; Grenfell, many other communities. And these petitioners are opposed to the construction of a slowpoke nuclear reactor on the University of Saskatchewan campus and the construction of a Candu reactor in the province of Saskatchewan. And they call instead for increased energy conservation and research and development of environmentally safe forms of energy.

Mr. Koenker: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too rise pursuant to rule 11 to present petitions to the Assembly from residents of my own constituency of Saskatoon Sutherland, which is adjacent to the University of Saskatchewan campus, but also on behalf of residents from across the province from Green Lake to Carlyle, opposing the construction of a slowpoke reactor on the U of S campus, and also opposing the construction of a Candu reactor in the province of Saskatchewan.

All these petitioners call instead for increased energy conservation and research and development of environmentally safe forms of energy, Mr. Speaker. And in total the number of names presented today reaches some 7,418 people opposed to the slowpoke and Candu projects here in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Clerk: -- According to order, I have reviewed the petition that follows under rule 11(7). It is hereby read and received of Marlene Joyce Crate of Winnipeg of Manitoba, humbly praying that your Honourable Assembly may be pleased to extend the time for filing a statement of claim against Ronald Morin and Alexander Delaronde in the Court of Queen's Bench for Saskatchewan until December 31, 1990.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Solomon: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly, 100 grade 6, 7, and 8 students from the Elsie Mironuck School in my constituency in the neighbourhood of Regent Park. Accompanying the students, Mr. Speaker, are the teachers, Cheryl Ball, Cindy White, Dave Lowey and Mrs. Anderson.

I was originally scheduled to meet with them, Mr. Speaker, at 1:15 but due

to an unexpected urgent commitment that arose, I was unable to do so. But I look forward to meeting with you after question period for a picture and one or two brief moments of a visit. I ask all members to join with me in welcoming all of these students to the Assembly this afternoon.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Solomon: -- Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure as well to introduce to you and the members of the Assembly, 27 grade 4 and 5 students from St. Angela's School, located in the government gallery, behind the opposition. They are accompanied I understand, Mr. Speaker, by their teachers, Laurie Ruhr and Diana Selinger, as well as chaperons, Ingrid Ermanovics and Heather Hand.

St. Angela's School is located in the Maple Ridge subdivision of my constituency. It's a new school. I've been there a number of times and they have great teachers and terrific students, as does Elsie Mironuck, and I wish to ask all members to join with me in welcoming these fine young people to the Assembly today.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and to all members of the legislature, several retired superannuated teachers who are in the galleries today. They obviously have heard that there may be some changes to superannuated pensions. They've come to monitor the situation this afternoon and I gather tonight as well and in the days ahead. I would hope that the government will listen to these teachers. And I would ask all members of the legislature to welcome to the legislature the superannuated teachers in the gallery today, and I would ask them to rise.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to all members of the Assembly, 44 grade 3 and 4 students from St. Agnes School in Moose Jaw who are seated in your gallery here today, Mr. Speaker.

These students have already been on a tour of the Legislative Assembly buildings, and I will be meeting with them a few minutes following question period -- I'll be detained for just a few minutes -- and joining with them for pictures on the stairs of the Assembly and then we'll meet as well for refreshments and a short visit.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all of the members of the Assembly to welcome these students from St. Agnes to this, their Legislative Assembly building and this, their Legislative Assembly, and as well to wish them a very pleasant summer holidays.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with pleasure today, Mr.

Speaker, that I rise and introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, two guests in your gallery. Gayle McMartin from Watrous, and with Gayle is Hanna Frilander, an exchange student from Finland. They're down to take in the activities here today and see how the procedure works in our legislature in Saskatchewan. So I'd ask all members to welcome them here today.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wolfe: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly a group of grade 5 and 6 students from Gravelbourg, Gravelbourg Elementary School. They're seated in the Speaker's gallery. Seated with the students are teachers, Ellen Leost and Diane Dauphinais, and bus driver, Marcel Clermont. I ask all members to welcome these honoured guests.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Martin: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have some other visitors from far-off lands who I'd like to introduce to you, Mr. Speaker, and through you to the members of the House. We have six individuals from the Middle East and Africa, Mr. Speaker, who are at the University of Regina on the geology program. With your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce each of them, with your indulgence. And I will call them by name and ask them to rise as I call their name: Mr. Farouk Nasr from Cairo, Egypt; Mr. Ahmad Karami from Tehran, Iran; Mr. Dana from Amman, Jordan; Mr. Sissoko from Bamako, Mali; Fred Njamu from Zambia; and Mr. Ogunrinde from Gombe, Nigeria.

Mr. Speaker, these gentlemen will be taking part in the geology course at the University of Regina. There were some here last year as well. It will be my pleasure to meet with them and to have a little chat with them after the House, around 2:30 or so. Please welcome our guests from the far-off lands.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Changes to Student Loan Program

Mr. Rolfes: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Education. Mr. Minister, I'm sure that you are familiar with your government's policy on student loan remissions for those classified as special incentive students. These groups include, Mr. Minister, the single parents, non-status Indians or Metis, and persons accepted into the vocational rehabilitation disabled persons program.

For those who qualified, Mr. Minister, under this program and who were successful in completing their studies, your government had a policy to underwrite their indebtedness to the total of the full Canada student loan and the full Saskatchewan student loans. The first 60 weeks, Mr. Minister, of post-secondary education, was forgiven at a \$250 per week.

Mr. Minister, this year you changed that program. In fact, Mr. Minister, you have changed it so that these students now will be eligible only for a \$145 per week. And, Mr. Minister, my question to you is this: why have you made this change to those students who are the neediest of our society at this particular time?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: -- Well, Mr. Speaker, I would point out to the member opposite that we in this province still enjoy one of the best student loan programs in this country. And even though there are being some changes proposed for this year, it's my understanding that there will not be that many students that will be involved.

It's the Canada student loan part that any change is being brought about, but in so far as other students who are on the VRDP (vocational rehabilitation for disabled persons program) program or on the NORTEP (northern teacher education program), these students are not going to be affected, Mr. Speaker. So we're still going to be giving the remission on the Saskatchewan loans program. It is only a few students then that are affected, and that's the Canada students loan program that's involved.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Rolfes: -- A new question to the minister. Mr. Minister, I don't care whether it's only a few students, and I don't accept your numbers in that particular regard.

Let me remind the minister. He says it's only, it's only the Canada student loan. That's \$105 per week for these students, Mr. Minister, and that's a lot of money for those students. Let me remind you, Mr. Minister, that these were the students, the special incentive students, who simply weren't able to further their education. That's why the program was brought into effect.

Your changes right now means that these students now will be indebted to the tune of \$6,300 more when they complete their studies. That's a lot of money, Mr. Minister. And I'm asking you, Mr. Minister, how can you justify that? How can you have that kind of an attitude to the neediest people in our society when you have lots of money for other programs and for your favourite friends? How can you justify that change right now?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: -- Mr. Speaker, the student loan programs that you find in this country are not intended to cover all of the costs of a student going to university. This is simply a supplement to any other sources of income that they may have. This is all something that has to be taken into consideration. When the students loan branch receives applications, they take into consideration the needs of the student but they also take into consideration the amount of money that these students are receiving from other sources. We will continue to operate on those

rules, Mr. Speaker, and we will also continue to assess each application on its own merits.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Rolfes: -- A new question to the minister. Mr. Minister, let me remind you that you have lots of money, as I said, for your friends. Chuck Childers certainly wasn't cut; he gets \$740,000 a year. Now you tell that to the special incentive students, that Chuck Childers can have that money but they have to be cut back.

I want to remind you, Mr. Minister, that before you changed the program, before you were the government, students were able to have bursaries after \$2,640. Now, Mr. Minister, they have to borrow \$5,940 before any bursary kicks in at all.

Mr. Minister, I want to ask you: you have lots of money for your Chuck Childers; you have lots of money for Cadillac offices and Cadillac salaries for SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) people; when are you going to get those priorities straightened out and look at the needs for the special students in this province? When are you going to do that, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: -- Well, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite likes to run on making all of these different allegations. He talks. He's well-known for his exaggeration of figures in this House, Mr. Speaker. He talks about the corporate offices with SIAST. He's visited those offices himself and has indicated in fact that there's really not that much elaborate about those offices, Mr. Speaker.

But with regard to the student loans program, I would point out that the improvements that we have made to that student loans program since this government has been in power far exceeds, far exceeds, Mr. Speaker, what was in place when they were in power back in 1981-82. So we have increased the amount of money that is available, we have increased the remissions that are available, we have lower interest rates, Mr. Speaker. So I think that the student loans program that we have still is much better than you will find in the majority of provinces in this country.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Rolfes: -- Mr. Speaker, let me remind the minister, I'm sure he didn't want to mislead the people of Saskatchewan that 6 per cent interest, Mr. Minister, only applies for the first three years. Let's be very clear on that. You've changed it very dramatically, Mr. Minister, so that it's worse for the students who will want to pursue a higher education.

Mr. Minister, all I want to say to you on behalf of those students who we met with last week, again without warning, without consultation, you made these changes and added those additional burdens to these students. What you are doing, Mr. Minister, is forcing these students to go back on

welfare or stay on welfare when what you want to do is give them the incentive to pursue post-secondary education so they can make a contribution to our society. Why don't you change your priorities and help those students, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Meiklejohn: -- Mr. Speaker, we have a responsibility to all students in this province, and we are providing loans to many, many thousands of students right across the province. We are going to continue, we are going to continue to provide assistance to those people who need it. We are going to continue to provide assistance to those who are in most need, which includes those who are in the VRDP program and also those who are enrolled in our native teacher education program, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to assess each application on its own merits and will be there to help these students in the best way that we can.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mental Health Services

Ms. Simard: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Health, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, for more than a year now, we in this House have asked your government about the neglect of mental health services in this province, and nothing has been done. The Murray commission recommended that there be a serious upgrading of mental health services in this province; nothing has been done. Users of the service have been crying out for help, Mr. Minister, and nothing has been done. Why have you chosen, Mr. Minister, to ignore this important issue?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: -- The hon. member knows very well, Mr. Speaker, and all members here will have heard the estimates were just completed in the last few days. We had a good discussion about mental health. I have said in the public way, I have said in this House as well before, in response to the Murray commission report, that the area which would be first responded to in the Murray commission report, the area with the first response from the government will be the area of mental health services.

That's been clear. That was clear to the hon. member. You can stand here in question period and say nothing has been done about . . . you know, she'll say that about two or three times. The facts are the Mental Health Association and others involved in mental health made thoughtful and good submissions to the Murray commission. Those submissions were taken heed of by the Murray commission. They have some significant recommendations there. And it is the first area that will be responded to by our government, and the member can be assured of that.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Ms. Simard: -- A new question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, you say that you're going to respond to it and you're working on it, but there are

people who are in need of services now and they're suffering. They can't wait for you to complete your studies and further studies.

One example is the psychiatric ward at the University Hospital in Saskatoon, which recently conducted a study which found that while the national ratio of staff to patients in such facilities is five to one, that in Saskatchewan it's anywhere from six to eight to one, depending on the shift.

This is the highest staff to patient ratio in Canada, Mr. Minister. Is that your idea of responding to the problem?

Hon. Mr. McLeod: -- Mr. Speaker, let's just understand clearly, the position of mental health. The mental . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order. It seems like the hon. member for Regina Centre wishes to ask the questions and give the answers as well. Allow the Minister of Health to proceed. Order.

Hon. Mr. McLeod: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Let's understand very clearly the case for mental health services across Canada and what has happened in recent years, not only here in Saskatchewan, but across the country.

The member here, from his seat over here, says it's worse here in Saskatchewan. The facts are that it is not worse here in Saskatchewan. But having said that, it does not mean that we are satisfied with the circumstance of the people who are suffering from mental illness in this province, that's true.

Mr. Speaker, there has been a major move in recent years to deinstitutionalization of people who are suffering from mental illness. There have been some tremendous breakthroughs in drug therapy and the kinds of things which makes that sort of deinstitutionalization possible. That's true here in Saskatchewan and it's true across the country. The fact is, in Saskatchewan that move from institutions to outside of institutions has moved more quickly than any other place in the country, and that's also a fact.

Now, Mr. Speaker, because of that there have been some circumstances of community support organizations which have not been able to keep up with that movement from the institutions. Now that's a positive thing to move from institutions. We know that there are some circumstances that are difficult for people and for the associations that serve those people. We know that's the case.

Mr. Speaker, it is not that there's another study going on; the Murray commission has been very definitive in this area. I have already said that will be the first area of the Murray commission that this government responds to and, Mr. Speaker, that will be soon.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Ms. Simard: -- A new question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, the survey conducted by the psychiatric ward at the University Hospital was conducted some four months ago, and I understand it's been in the hospital's hands for approximately two months. On the psychiatric ward, I have been informed that the staff is becoming exhausted and that they are having difficulty providing an acceptable service.

Now we may be moving towards deinstitutionalization, Mr. Minister, but that doesn't mean that we should neglect people that need institutional services. The survey calls for five new staff immediately and 15 new staff over a period of three years. The hospital is pleading poverty. What are you doing, Mr. Minister, to address this specific problem?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: -- I've already said to the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, that this area will be responded to. Mr. Speaker, this area will be responded to. For the hon. member to stand as she tends to do . . . when we had this discussion in a reasoned way during the estimates, the hon. member wasn't portraying the question in quite the same way. But you know, when you get into question period and a little chance for a little grandstanding on a particular thing, that's what she does again.

Mr. Speaker, mental health services will be receiving significant help from the Department of Health and through the agencies of mental health. And that is the case, and it will be soon, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Ms. Simard: -- Mr. Minister, you can't abdicate your responsibility to psychiatric ward at the University Hospital by suggesting we're grandstanding. You can't do that.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Ms. Simard: -- It takes you but a few minutes to decide to give hand-outs to your corporate friends, Mr. Minister. The money that you guaranteed to Cargill is equivalent to 10 years of the mental health budget. And the money you paid recently for a study on making yourself look good, by Nancy McLean, is a 1 per cent increase to the mental health budget. Chuck Childers' salary would represent a 2 per cent increase, for example.

Those are your priorities, Mr. Minister, and the priorities of your government, but they're not the priorities of the people. Are you going to support the request for increased staff at the psychiatric ward, University Hospital -- yes or no?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: -- Mr. Speaker, the total preamble to that question is exactly what I was talking about, the grandstanding of the hon. member from Regina Lakeview who purports to care about the health services of this province when she's interested in one thing, and that's the politics of the

NDP in opposition. That's what she's interested in; nothing more than that.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: -- Mental health services are a significant concern for people who deliver health services in the province. They're significant for the people in the Department of Health of Saskatchewan, as well as the University Hospital.

The requests of the various agencies who deal with various aspects of mental health will be dealt with. They have that commitment; the member has the commitment. What more does she want?

An Hon. Member: -- When?

Hon. Mr. McLeod: -- The member says when, yes or no. Well the answer is yes and I can't tell her whether it'll be by Thursday or not.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Nuclear Reactors in Saskatchewan

Ms. Atkinson: -- Mr. Speaker, my question's to the Deputy Premier. Madam Deputy Premier, today in the House we presented petitions from 7,400 Saskatchewan residents, telling you that they don't want nuclear reactors in the province of Saskatchewan. You have had the opportunity to hear the voices of some 7,400 people. Will you assure these citizens, Madam Minister, that before your government makes any decision on this matter that you will hold full public hearings in order that these citizens' views can be heard.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Speaker, I respect very much the petition that was laid on the Table in this legislature today. It is an issue that has to be managed and it has to be managed with common sense; it has to be managed with an open mind. And, Mr. Speaker, this is an issue that has been ongoing in the province of Saskatchewan for some time.

I would want to go very briefly, Mr. Speaker, into the history of uranium and uranium mining in Saskatchewan. We well understand in this province, Mr. Speaker, it was the NDP who started, initiated uranium mining at one time in this province. It is the same NDP who has said publicly that we would close the mines.

Mr. Speaker, the position of the NDP is extremely divided; is extremely unclear on this particular issue. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, from an environmental perspective, I will review this issue. I will take it seriously, cautiously, Mr. Speaker, and right today, Mr. Speaker, there are no final decisions to be made on behalf of the public of Saskatchewan today.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: -- Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Deputy Premier of Saskatchewan. Madam Deputy Premier, can you tell this House whether or not your government is committed to channelling some \$50 million to the university to set up the infrastructure for a slowpoke nuclear reactor despite the fact that your government has considerably underfunded post-secondary education in this province in such an extent, Madam Minister, that the president at the university is looking at cutting courses and cutting colleges. He already has raised tuition fees and he has already put enrolment quotas in place. Can you tell me, Madam Minister, what your priority is. Is it funding a nuclear reactor in the province of Saskatchewan or is it ensuring that the university has enough funding so that they don't have to cut programs and colleges and that, Madam Minister, they can get rid of those enrolment quotas?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has done a good job of trying to confuse this issue and talked about funding of education which we all know, Mr. Speaker, has increased significantly under this administration. The member talked about, well what are the priorities? Mr. Speaker, I want to make it abundantly clear. The priorities of this administration are to create jobs, to create wealth, to create opportunities so that we can have more people employed, Mr. Speaker, and provide more services such as health and education to the people of Saskatchewan.

If the hon. member's real question is specifically, what about a slowpoke reactor at the University of Saskatchewan, I want the hon. member to know that officially there are not yet as of today any concrete proposals on the desk of the Minister of the Environment. I want the hon. member to know that there are many, many implications with such a proposal. It will be carefully scrutinized, Mr. Speaker, and in fact not only from a provincial perspective, but from a federal perspective as well.

The hon. member will want to know that intact in Saskatchewan today, started by the NDP, is a similar type of nuclear reactor at the University of Saskatchewan. We will take great care, Mr. Speaker, in making the proper course of action, the proper decision on behalf of Saskatchewan people.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: -- Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the minister. Mr. Minister, you have misled the situation today in this House and you haven't answered the question. And the question is this: what is your priority? Is your priority funding for a slowpoke nuclear reactor on the university campus, or is your priority funding to the University of Saskatchewan so that our young people can have access to that institution, which is presently limited, so that our young people can have access to colleges, so that the university doesn't have to cut colleges and programs. Mr. Minister, answer the question: what is your priority?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. members, if they would look at this issue in an objective light, would understand, if they weren't playing pure politics, would understand that this government has a very, very determined priority when it comes to funding of education.

Mr. Speaker, our Minister of Education has defended and defended well on behalf of Saskatchewan taxpayers and on behalf of Saskatchewan students and families and parents, the massive amounts of moneys that have gone into the public education system in this province, Mr. Speaker. And considering all factors of economic times, Mr. Speaker, it is a good record that we stand by.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Deductions from Social Assistance Payments

Mr. Prebble: -- Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister responsible for the Family, and it deals with your government's policy of not giving social assistance recipients a chance to better their lives and become once again part of the productive work-force.

Mr. Minister, your government has made it uneconomical for people on social assistance to take part-time jobs as a method of getting back into the work-force. For example, Mr. Minister, a social assistance recipient with several children who attempts to set up a small business -- shall we say a summer landscaping business -- is not allowed to keep a penny of their net earnings. Every penny is deducted off their cheque every month.

A single employable person who gets a part-time salary job is only allowed to keep \$25 a month of their earnings, and then 20 per cent of the remainder up to \$75. Now, Mr. Minister, in light of the fact that all of this money is deducted off the cheque, can you explain to the House how you justify a policy that sees these people in a situation where it is actually more economical, after they have considered their costs, to be on assistance than it is to be in the work-force, Mr. Minister? How do you justify such a policy of unfair wage exemptions?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Martin: -- Mr. Speaker, it's really an issue for the Minister of Social Services. I will however take notice in lieu of his absence and get the message back to you. It's a rather complex issue.

Mr. Prebble: -- Well, Mr. Minister, this is clearly a family issue. The minister simply can't justify deducting virtually everything a social assistance recipient makes from their cheque, so he declines to answer the question.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: -- Well, Mr. Minister, I have another question for you, and

this time it relates to education. Mr. Minister, this is another example of . . . A new question, Mr. Speaker. This is another example of how you're creating an obstacle to low income people to better their lives, this time by getting an education.

How, Mr. Minister, do you justify your new government policy in which a family, a parent with children who ordinarily would be eligible for family income plan benefits, is made ineligible because in the course of pursuing post-secondary education, your government by virtue of a recent policy change insists that all the money in the student loan that is used for tuition and books and other educational expenses is classified as income when calculating family income plan benefits, making hundreds of parents, particularly . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: -- Mr. Speaker, having served in this portfolio for at least three years, I have considerable knowledge of the calculations. The member opposite takes a lot of political licence in his allegations here. He knows full well that welfare payments are calculated, not based on income but based on need, and when . . . They're calculations made for the family's need.

And student loans are considered to be money that the family has to spend to maintain themselves during the course of the time that that individual is going to school. This government has set a record that will never be matched by any other government in allowing people on social services to go back to school to finish their education.

It happens to be that 78 per cent of the people on social services have not completed their education, and the government has brought that statistic down by paying people to go to school rather than paying them to do nothing, and that's what we've done. Thousands of people have received an education under welfare reform. The member opposite should acknowledge that. He should thank this government and be pleased that education is a priority rather than handing out cheques.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

The Speaker: -- Order, order.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 48 -- An Act to amend The Court of Appeal Act

Hon. Mr. Lane: -- Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Court of Appeal Act.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

Bill No. 49 -- An Act to amend The Queen's Bench Act

Hon. Mr. Lane: -- Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Queen's Bench Act.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

The Speaker: -- It seems to me that hon. members really aren't paying attention to the business of the House and therefore it isn't functioning as smoothly as it could be.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Speaker, I would ask leave of the Assembly at this time to move to motions for return debatable.

Mr. Lingenfelter: -- . . . (inaudible) . . . understanding that we will deal with one of the motions which is item no. 27, resolution no. 34.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Speaker, that was the understanding. We'd be happy to move to that portion of business.

Leave granted.

MOTIONS

Resolution No. 34 -- Canadian Volunteer Korean Service Medal

Mr. Brockelbank: -- I want to thank the members of the House, Mr. Speaker, for permitting this motion to be discussed at this time. I believe it to be a motion that we can readily agree upon, and at the conclusion of my remarks I will be moving this motion:

That this Assembly urges the Government of Canada in this year, the 40th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War, to strike a distinctive Canadian Volunteer Korean Service Medal to be awarded to those Canadians who served in the Korean War, June 25, 1950 to July 27, 1953.

As I said at the beginning of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I believe that I will receive unanimity from the House on this, what I believe to be a very simple and straightforward motion, but important motion to some people.

I had not had the duty of serving in the Canadian Armed Forces, although I recall as a child that my father had served in the armed forces and I recall seeing the medals that he had received from serving overseas during the First World War.

And as is the case in any war, United Nations action, whatever the terminology may be applied to it, there are people who are strongly in favour of the action, strongly opposed to the action. But regardless of where a person stands on the particular issue, this United Nations action in Korea is one where Canadians went, volunteered their services, and some

of those Canadians made the supreme sacrifice on the battlefields in Korea.

(1445)

We have an opportunity by way of this motion, if it is passed here and accepted at the federal level, to honour those Canadians who have made that very important contribution in that Korean conflict which occurred between June 25, 1950 and July 27, 1953.

The Korean veterans association of this province and other provinces really want a distinctive medal for Canadian veterans of the Korean War. Right now Canadian veterans of the Korean War are entitled to two medals: a United Nations Service Medal and a British Commonwealth Service Medal, since our forces in Korea were part of the first Commonwealth division in Korea. Canadian veterans of the Korean War have also been granted a Korean service button.

This motion has been advanced, Mr. Speaker, in other legislatures, and by way of example, mention the legislature of the province of Ontario, where it received the unanimous consent of the legislature there. And I'm hoping that that same consent would be awarded the motion here in this Assembly.

Those people who made that sacrifice in Korea on our behalf deserve our thanks, and this medal would be a concrete method of illustrating to those people that we as Canadians recognize the service that they made on behalf of Canadians. And I therefore move, seconded by the member for Regina Elphinstone:

That this Assembly urges the Government of Canada in this year, the 40th Anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War, to strike a distinctive Canadian Volunteer Korean Service Medal to be awarded to those Canadians who served in the Korean War, June 25, 1950 to July 27, 1953.

I do so move, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Britton: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I listened with some care to the hon. member's making a motion and it pleases me to rise in my place and to agree with the member. The reason I do that, Mr. Speaker, is because I well know the importance that returned men put in being recognized for their service.

Mr. Speaker, my father served in both world wars. I had two brothers and my father in the Second World War. Mr. Speaker, I didn't serve -- I was too young, I guess -- but we had 18 of our family -- cousins, uncles, brothers -- in the last war, so I am well aware of the importance that something like this would be to those Korean veterans. And to have a medal struck, distinctive and basically for just that one thing, I think is very important to them.

Mr. Speaker, I am a little remiss in not having looked to this motion. I could spend quite a little time, Mr. Speaker, speaking to this motion. I find, Mr. Speaker, when people have served their country, there's a bond that those of us that never served probably will never know. I can say

this, when I get together with my two brothers and father, when they were alive, there was a bond between those three that didn't extend to me. And I didn't regret that at all. But, Mr. Speaker, it's a bond that I don't think those of us that didn't serve would ever know.

And I would like to concur very sincerely with the member opposite in this motion. There are those, as he mentioned -- I'm a Legion member by association -- and there are those that will take a stand that says we're not too excited about this. And that's fair; that's fair ball. There are those just as sincere on the other side that say yes, those people did indeed offer their life, and I think that they should be recognized.

So, Mr. Speaker, I can see no opposition from this side on this motion, and I would certainly stand in my place and vote yes if it becomes necessary.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Britton: -- As I said, Mr. Speaker, I could probably spend a few minutes on this, but I think I have made my point known, and I will certainly stand in my place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would now ask for leave of the Assembly to proceed to second readings.

Leave granted.

PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 44 -- An Act to amend The Occupational Health and Safety Act

Mr. Prebble: -- Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased this afternoon to move second reading of a Bill to amend The Occupational Health and Safety Act.

The purpose and intention, Mr. Speaker, of this Bill is quite straightforward. What it does, Mr. Speaker, is it proposes to amend The Occupational Health and Safety Act in such a way as to give occupational health committees in the work place authority to regulate the use of tobacco in the work place, Mr. Speaker.

At the present time, occupational health committees in Saskatchewan do not have such authority. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this proposed amendment to the Act would be a significant step forward in terms of allowing employees and employers to work together to establish policies that may place restrictions on the use of tobacco in work places throughout the province of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the decision as to whether or not restrictions are placed

on tobacco and its use in the work place would lie with the occupational health committee. And such an occupational health committee exists in all work places in Saskatchewan with 10 or more employees.

And the make-up of the committees, Mr. Speaker, I think is very democratic. Half the representatives of an occupational health committee are chosen by employees in the work place, and as many as 50 per cent of the members of the committee can be chosen by the employer, Mr. Speaker.

Now it seems to me that that kind of a structure provides a very useful vehicle for debating what smoking policy should be in a work place and for instituting whatever policies members of the committee see fit. And of course, Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that this amendment to The Occupational Health and Safety Act, the current Bill before us, would in fact lead to many more work places in Saskatchewan either declaring themselves to be smoke free or to declaring that there will be restrictions placed on the use of tobacco, particularly in areas that are used by many workers. But the final decision on that matter, Mr. Speaker, rests with the occupational health committee itself.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think that this kind of an amendment is long overdue for many reasons, and they all have to do with the increased evidence that exists about the hazards associated with passive smoke inhalation or second-hand smoke in the work place, Mr. Speaker.

And if you look at statistics for the province of Saskatchewan, you can see clearly that there has been a very sharp increase in the incidence of lung cancer, Mr. Speaker, among the Saskatchewan population. In fact if you look at the records over the last 10 years and if you compare the Saskatchewan cancer commission reports of 1979 with the reports of 1988 and '89, Mr. Speaker, what you find is that the incidence of lung cancer among men has risen over the last decade by 28 per cent in the province of Saskatchewan. And among women, Mr. Speaker, it has risen an alarming 100 per cent -- a 100 per cent increase in the incidence of lung cancer among women in Saskatchewan in the last 10 years.

Now, Mr. Speaker, a good deal of that increase -- certainly not all of it, but a significant amount of it -- is clearly due to the consequences of tobacco smoking. And not only, Mr. Speaker, is that increase in the incidence of lung cancer a result of people smoking tobacco and thus putting themselves at risk but it is also, Mr. Speaker, as a consequence of tobacco smoking that puts others at risk -- in other words, the hazards associated with second-hand smoke, Mr. Speaker.

And it think it is because of the hazards of second-hand smoke, that occupational health committees need to have the authority under the occupational health Act to regulate the use of tobacco in the work place.

Now I want to just briefly outline some of the recent information about the hazards of second-hand smoke inhalation that leads me to present this private member's Bill, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, I want to point out that four years ago, both our own

National Research Council here in Canada and the U.S. Surgeon General both concluded in separate reports that there is a direct link between passive smoking and increased incidence of lung cancer. And more recently, Mr. Speaker, the Environmental Protection Agency in the United States has undertaken a detailed report that according to the June 11, 1990 issue of Newsweek is to be released this month, Mr. Speaker. And that report will conclude that second-hand smoke is causing 3,800 additional lung cancer deaths in the United States each year.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that same Newsweek article makes reference to a second study, this time done by San Francisco heart researcher, Stanton Glantz which suggests that lung cancer is only the beginning of the problem, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Glantz has calculated that passive smoking is causing 10 times as much heart disease as it is lung cancer, making it the third leading cause of preventable death in the United States. And I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, that we could safely conclude that those same figures apply to Canada and to Saskatchewan.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, the estimates are that when you add together lung cancer deaths and deaths from heart disease as a result of second-hand smoke inhalation, Mr. Speaker, the consequences of passive smoking in the work place, at home, and everywhere else, but in the United States these researchers are estimating that we're looking at approximately an additional 45,000 deaths a year in the United States. And I think we could safely say in Canada that we'd be looking at at least an additional 4,500 preventable deaths a year as a result of exposure to second-hand smoke.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one of the major ways in which people are exposed to second-hand smoke is in the work place. And right now, Mr. Speaker, for many employees they have little ability to control their exposure to second-hand smoke. What this Bill will do, Mr. Speaker, if it is passed, is it will give those employees an opportunity to make their request for the regulation of tobacco in the work place known to their occupational health and committee representatives, because half the persons on occupational health committee are chosen by employees in the work place.

(1500)

And what this Bill will do, Mr. Speaker, is it will allow for, in work places across Saskatchewan, a democratic, open discussion about whether or not tobacco should be regulated in a particular work place. And where employees and the employer reach a conclusion that such regulations should be put into effect, the occupational health committee will have full authority to implement those regulations and to enforce them, Mr. Speaker.

And as I say, it is my hope that this will lead to more smoke-free work places in Saskatchewan and more work places, Mr. Speaker, where there are some regulations and some limits put on the use of tobacco, particularly in areas that many people share in common in their work place, and areas that the public use or that several employees working together use.

So that's the intent of the Bill, Mr. Speaker, and it's my hope that the government will see fit to support the Bill. I think it strengthens The

Occupational Health and Safety Act.

And I want to say in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that not only is this amendment supported by my caucus colleagues, but it's supported by many other . . . this Bill is supported by many other important organizations in Saskatchewan. The environmental committee of the Saskatchewan Medical Association supports this initiative, Mr. Speaker. The Saskatchewan Lung Association supports this initiative, and many other health-related organizations in the province of Saskatchewan have indicated to me their strong willingness to support this Bill, Mr. Speaker.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge the government to support it or to consider bringing in their own Bill which would in effect accomplish the same thing.

I want to thank all members of the House for the opportunity to give second reading to this private members' Bill, Mr. Speaker, and I now move second reading of Bill No. 44.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member for Saskatoon University has brought forward a Bill that has many merits. It is a Bill that is well worth considering. And presently The Occupational Health and Safety Act has been studied by the occupational health and safety committee made up of representatives of employers and employees. That committee has reported and the government is in the process of preparing amendments to The Occupational Health and Safety Act. This particular amendment is something that should be further considered by the occupational health and safety committee.

I'm not saying that we are opposed to the amendment, but there are implications which a member may not be aware of, and that is that first of all, a majority of the workers may not be ruling on this because under the current status, the employer can have up to 50 per cent representation, so that theoretically fewer than or as few as 30 per cent of the workers could enact this kind of legislation in conjunction with the employer, that would ban smoking completely.

Now I might say, Mr. Speaker, that personally I have never smoked and would be very pleased to see smoking banned from all work places. However, we have to be more tolerant of members of our society who find smoking enjoyable. We have to have a difficult balance here between the rights of those people who feel that smoking is their right and those of us who do not smoke and feel that the practising of the right of others may be endangering our health.

This is a very delicate topic that is being raised in many, many work places. But above all, if we were to pass this Bill it would take away from the employer the right the employer now has to ban smoking absolutely in the work place and put it in the hands of the occupational health and safety committee. I'm not so certain that, with respect to health and the health of the employees and good management to take the power of management now to ban smoking and put it in the hands of the occupational health and

safety committee, would necessarily be a good thing. And that's why I believe it should be studied further. And I want to refer this matter to the occupational health and safety committee because right now, as the law stands, an employer could ban smoking. Period. Done with. No more smoking on the work place.

That may be done for other health and safety reasons other than the inhalation of smoke by fellow workers. And if the workers should choose to pass by resolution in their occupational health and safety committee, if they can ban smoking, they can also approve smoking. And if we take this jurisdiction away from the employer, I have to consider, as a government, the implications of the health and safety with respect to smoking on work sites outside of the smoke inhalation problem.

We also have to consider the effect that this amendment would have on other safety legislation within the government. So it is necessary to have Justice consider this legislation as opposed to current legislation.

For example, there is now government legislation that says you cannot smoke on a certain kind of work site. To bring in this legislation may allow the occupational health and safety committee to decide to allow smoking; it's not dangerous. If that is in conflict with the current legislation, we would have to have an opinion from Justice as to which legislation would be prior.

So while I agree in principle with the proposal by the member from Saskatoon University and would like to see an amendment of this nature passed, I have to study it further. I would want the occupation health and safety committee to give me their opinion on this. I've asked them if they would be prepared to listen to further proposals I put to them before passing other amendments. And this is one of those things I'd like to refer to that committee. For that reason, agreeing with the principle that having to do some further research on whether it should be passed immediately or in conjunction with other amendments, I would ask for leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Debatable)

Return No. 13

Mr. Calvert: -- Mr. Speaker, at the close of my few short remarks I will be moving an issue for a return that will ask in respect to Mr. George Hill, who is the president of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. I will be asking of the government to provide information in regard to whether he is employed under the terms of a personal services contract. Secondly, I will be asking through my motion, I will be asking his salary and other financial benefits and other benefits that may exist for 1990. Thirdly, I'll be asking the terms and the conditions of any severance or termination provisions which might apply to his position. And lastly, I will be asking the expiry date of his contract.

Mr. Speaker, I have put this question and will be moving these questions based primarily on this, Mr. Speaker. And what I have in my hand here is the contract that has been signed between the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and Mr. Charles Childers, Mr. Chuck Childers. Mr. Speaker, this contract has become widely known in the province of Saskatchewan, and most people who review this contract and its provisions have described it in terms of being obscene, in terms of its provisions, wages, and benefits paid to Mr. Childers and termination clauses and so on.

Mr. Speaker, it is of interest that this contract, to this president of a Crown corporation, was provided to the people of Saskatchewan, not through their own government of Saskatchewan; it was provided through laws in the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I'm asking this government to provide the similar kind of information as we have in this contract with Mr. Childers, in regard to the current president of SaskPower.

Mr. Speaker, just to conclude my remarks, I think I cannot phrase anything better than has been phrased by the noted Canadian journalist, writer in Maclean's magazine, correspondent in Washington, Mr. Allan Fotheringham, writing in the May 21 edition of the Maclean's magazine, May 21, 1990. And he writes, Mr. Speaker, and I quote:

Let us imagine something. Let us imagine that the American government was so docile and cowardly that it would not let its citizens know how much the top executives of publicly traded companies were paid. Let us imagine, further, that this jelly-spined Washington government would not even reveal the salaries of executives of government-owned corporations. Finally, imagine what would happen if Americans found out that all this information could be found in Canada. You are correct. There would be rioting in the streets and the public lynching of the politicians responsible for this obvious outrage.

When the opposite happens, Canadians do nothing. Canadians don't make waves, Canadians let their masters get away with murder.

He goes on to say, Mr. Speaker:

Why can't Canadians find out the salaries of the people who run Crown corporations and feed on filet, courtesy your taxpayer? Because we have a cowardly government.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Fotheringham is referring to our federal government. I refer to our provincial government. I ask this government to show courage, commitment, openness, and honesty to the people of Saskatchewan and provide the answers for the questions I ask in this motion for return.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do move that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return no. 13 showing. Mr. Speaker, my motion is seconded by the member from Regina Centre.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Speaker, the answer to this question is very

similar to the answers that were provided sometime ago when some of the hon. members sat in the reins of government. And, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to know the mechanics of the legislature and its various committees that function and function rather well. And I refer you, Mr. Speaker, to the Crown Corporations Committee.

The Crown Corporations Committee is a committee consisting of government members and opposition members who examine in great detail the financial records, the successes, and the failures, and all of the pertinent information to Crown corporations such as SaskPower. You will know, Mr. Speaker, that annually that committee does review the financial reports that are laid down on the Table each and every year.

And, Mr. Speaker, in the context of that Crown Corporations Committee, with both government members and opposition members, from time to time salaries are discussed. It has been the tradition, the past practice, and just the norm if you like, Mr. Speaker, to provide to members of the opposition, aggregate amounts of senior executive salaries grouped into certain classifications. That information is freely available, has been provided to the members.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say that the information that is provided in the Crown Corporations Committee, which is open to the public, is very sufficient. The hon. members would make the case, well we want to know precisely what this executive compared to another executive may make.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that you would acknowledge that senior executives, both in the public sector and in the private sector, are in keen, competitive demand for their services. There is confidentiality here, Mr. Speaker; there is respecting the integrity of the jobs that we hire these senior civil servants for. And I could quote from many opposition members from the days that they sat in government, the same arguments time and time again.

And as such, Mr. Speaker, I refer the essence of these types of questions to the Crown Corporations Committee, and I think that is a more realistic forum in which to deal with this issue.

(1515)

The division bells rang from 3:16 p.m. until 3:22 p.m.

Motion negatived on the following recorded division.

Yeas

Prebble	Atkinson t
Rolfes	Anguish t
Shillington	Goulet t
Lingenfelter	Hagel t
Tchorzewski	Lyons t
Koskie	Calvert t
Thompson	Lautermilch t

Brockelbank
Mitchell
Upshall
Simard
Solomon t

Trew t
Smart t
Van Mulligan t
Koenker t

-- 23 R

Nays

Muller
Schmidt
McLeod
Hodgins
Smith
Lane
Hardy
Kopelchuk
Meiklejohn
Martin
Hopfner
Swenson
Klein
Pickering t

Sauder t
Toth t
Duncan t
Petersen t
Wolfe t
McLaren t
Baker t
Muirhead t
Johnson t
Gleim t
Britton t
Gardner t
Saxinger t

-- 27 R

Return No. 14

Mr. Shillington: -- I don't intend to make any extensive remarks on this motion, applause notwithstanding. I do want to point out to the Assembly that this motion concerns SaskEnergy, about which there has been so much controversy.

The public have said time and time again, they don't want or need a division of SPC (Saskatchewan Power Corporation). Their concern centres, Mr. Speaker, not so much on ideological lines; rather, their concern is based on the fact that they believe there's additional cost and expense to dividing up SPC into two divisions, SaskEnergy and SPC. They also of course see it as the nose of the camel coming through the door of the tent on the issue of privatization.

But, Mr. Speaker, a good part of their concern is centred on the cost -- what is the additional cost of having SaskEnergy? That in part, this order for return seeks to answer that question which has been asked so extensively in Saskatchewan -- what's the extra cost?

We seek to find out one element of that. As a result of the division, there has clearly been a job for one more high-profile Tory. There's clearly been a job for a president which didn't exist before. We want to know, as do the public of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, what his income will be; what are the terms of the personal service contract; his salary and other financial benefits; and the terms and conditions of severance or termination applying to this position. Given the fact that he's announced his retirement in a while, that last will be of less relevance, but it is still of interest to us because presumably his successor will have the same term.

I therefore, Mr. Speaker, move, seconded by the member from Regina Elphinstone that an order of this Assembly do issue for return no. 14 showing.

For the benefit . . . I said it was seconded by the member from Regina Elphinstone and the name so appears on the proper form, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Speaker, I would advance to the members opposite that the same comments that I made with the previous motion with respect to not only past practices of this Assembly on both sides, Mr. Speaker, but also with respect to the fairness of protecting the individual members and protecting the integrity of our Crown corporations, it's a keen competitive market out there, Mr. Speaker, and I once again say that the past practices of this Assembly should apply in this case. The Crown corporations will be happy to deal with this type of information and my same arguments are still valid on this one, Mr. Speaker.

Motion negatived on division.

(1530)

Return No. 15

Mr. Trew: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be moving an order to this Assembly for return no. 15 respecting Bill Gibson who is the president of Crown investments corporation. And I'll be asking whether he is employed under the terms of a personal services contract; secondly, his salary and other financial benefits; and thirdly, the terms and conditions of any severance or termination provisions applying to Mr. Gibson; and the expiry date of the contract.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Bill Gibson is the president of Crown investments corporation which is the umbrella branch for all of the Crown corporations in Saskatchewan. And we have seen in the last nearly nine years, a little over eight years, we've seen the debt of the Crown corporations rise by some \$9 billion. We've witnessed this at a time when Crown corporations are being sold off holus-bolus. We see Sask Minerals privatized. We see a branch of that, the Carrot River peat division being sold to Premier Peat. There are of course many other examples of privatization that have been undertaken.

The problem, Mr. Speaker, is we have Crown corporations being sold off and yet the debt of the Crowns escalating, just spiralling at an alarming rate. We have to wonder how it is that not only is the contents of the cupboard are being sold but the cupboards also are being sold, and the debt just continues to rise.

The public, we believe, is entitled to know the terms of the contract that are rewarding the president of the Crown investments corporation. We think, if the Crown investments corporation and the government can make decisions on selling off and giving away the assets of the people of Saskatchewan, then surely the people of Saskatchewan should have the right to some access to information such as: how much is being paid to the very

top position; what are the terms of that contract; what are the terms in terms of termination provisions; and when does the contract expire.

We see a government that certainly didn't want to release Chuck Childers' salary, but that \$700,000 annual salary was released. And we're wondering if Bill Gibson has a similar provision since Crown investments corporation is the umbrella organization that includes even the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, or included it before it was privatized.

So it seems to us to be a senior position to that of president of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, and we can only speculate as to what kind of obscene contract, one Mr. Bill Gibson could possibly enjoy. And I say enjoy because I'm sure that he must be enjoying that contract.

We see unemployment going up, out-migration at scandalous levels, we see university tuition going up nearly 10 per cent in the last year -- all misplaced priorities. And while the government is misplacing these priorities, they don't seem to be terribly receptive to some simple access to information that the people of Saskatchewan deserve.

So, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Saskatoon Centre:

With respect to Bill Gibson, the President of Crown Investments Corporation: (1) Whether he is employed under the terms of a personal services contract; (2) his salary and other financial benefits for 1990; (3) the terms and conditions of any severance or termination provisions applying to this position; (4) the expiry date of the contract.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Speaker, the hon. member would certainly know that Crown investments corporation is the umbrella corporation established by the former administration under the New Democratic Party that looks after or has underneath its wings all of the Crown corporations of government. Mr. Gibson is an executive with the Crown investments corporation and in a very similar manner, as a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, in an identical manner to the answers that were provided by the opposition, Mr. Speaker, we will provide the ranges of salaries, the aggregate amounts in the Crown corporations forum. Members will know that this has been, as well, past practice of this legislature under a number of different administrations.

Motion negatived.

Return 16

Mr. Hagel: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just in response to the Government House Leader's response to each of the three motions that has preceded, I want to bring to the attention of the Assembly that what he is saying here is a blatant falsehood. It can be called nothing other . . .

The Speaker: -- Order. I think the hon. member should be very careful on the words he uses. They should not be parliamentary, and I don't think there's even any need at this point to be inflammatory. So I would just

like to bring that to his attention.

Mr. Hagel: -- Mr. Speaker, I find it difficult to understand that the House Leader is so confused that he doesn't understand past practice and reports it consistently and incorrectly. Mr. Speaker, it has been past practice in this House to provide the response to these questions, oftentimes amended, I understand that. But it has not been past practice to deny the motion entirely as the House Leader is doing here today.

Now, Mr. Speaker, these questions are being raised simply because of the precedent set in the contract of Chuck Childers. What was brought to this Assembly has been a constant source of embarrassment to every member of that government that that kind of remuneration to civil servants in the province of Saskatchewan should take place.

Mr. Speaker, I won't belabour the point by repeating the arguments of my colleagues which have been put forth very rhetorically -- accurately, I might add -- and with concern for the public interests of the province of Saskatchewan.

But I simply bring to the attention on item no. 4 for return 16 has to do with Bill Gatenby, the president of Cameco, which is still 60 per cent owned by the province of Saskatchewan. It asks whether he is employed under the terms of a personal services contract, what the salary, benefits, terms and conditions of severance and termination, and the expiry date of the contract are, Mr. Speaker.

It is not unreasonable at all that the people of Saskatchewan would know that about Mr. Gatenby's agreement with the province of Saskatchewan, as it is for a number of other questions. And I simply ask the House Leader to come clean and to start dealing with these questions responsibly.

Mr. Speaker, I will conclude then by moving, seconded by the member for Regina Elphinstone, return No. 16 showing.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Motion negatived on division.

Return No. 17

Mr. Lingenfelter: -- Mr. Speaker, I too rise to move a motion, return no. 17 showing. It deals with respect to Alex Wilde, the president of SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance), whether he is employed under the terms of a personal contract, whether his salary and other financial benefits and other benefits for 1990, the terms and conditions of any severance and termination provisions applying to this provision, and also the expiry date of the contract.

Now, Mr. Speaker, why I'm doing that is I think obvious given the remarks of my colleagues who have spoken previously. But I want to say that it seems strange indeed to me, Mr. Speaker, that this contract that I have here which is the contract for the privatized Crown corporation, the Potash

Corporation of Saskatchewan, is the actual agreement between the employer, the potash corporation privatized, and the employee, Mr. Chuck Childers. And the way we got this is by going to the U.S. Securities (& Exchange) Commission and there in this privatized company you're able to get this kind of a document which outlines in great detail and clarity the agreement that Mr. Childers has with the corporation.

And yet here in this Assembly when we ask the very same question on behalf of the taxpayers of the province to their government, the salary of Mr. Alex Wilde who works for a fully owned Crown corporation owned by the people of the province, that we're refused that information.

I say to you that this is indeed a closed government that is totally out of touch with the people of the province. If they were not they would at least give us the information that's available to us through the privatized corporation, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, through the U.S. Securities Commission. And in this contract it clearly outlines some of the conditions and arrangements with Mr. Chuck Childers -- \$740,000 a year. As well in this agreement there's a no-cut contract whereby he would be paid for the full five years of the contract. He would also get what is known as a home-purchase program. This would be allowed to Mr. Chuck Childers.

Now what we're saying is that if indeed these kinds of information are available to us for the privatized corporations, we believe that it's incumbent on the government, and has been in the past available to us, this information has been available to us, and we're wondering why this government refuses to allow the public to know the salary, for example, of Mr. Alex Wilde, the president of SGI. Is it that the contract is more lucrative than that of Mr. Chuck Childers and they're trying to hide it from the people of the province? Is it that Mr. Wilde has a home program where his home expenses are being picked up by the taxpayers? I'm not saying that that's the case, but obviously when the government refuses to give that information when the information on Mr. Childers' contract is available, obviously the assumption is going to be that the minister responsible for SGI, the member from Melville, has got a deal with Mr. Wilde that is more lucrative than that signed with Mr. Chuck Childers.

And as the year goes on we're going to be pressing the government harder and harder to get this kind of information. Because I think it's improper for the government to be signing no-cut contracts with employees that will allow employees to have contracts even if they are mentally incompetent, which is what is part of the Chuck Childers' deal. For example, if Mr. Childers dies today, he would still get several millions of dollars from the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

And we say that if all of these people that are being . . . working for the government and working in the Crown corporations have these kinds of deals, this will mean literally tens of millions of dollars that will be used up by these people at the expense of the rest of taxpayers. We think it's unfair and that the government is totally out of touch.

So I move this motion, Mr. Speaker, and try to get for the people of the

province, this kind of information which I think the taxpayers are certainly eligible to.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Lingenfelter: -- Mr. Speaker, I move the motion, seconded by the member for Regina Centre.

Motion negatived on division.

(1545)

Mr. McLaren: -- Mr. Speaker, I would ask for leave to introduce some guests, please.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. McLaren: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure again today for me to introduce some students from Yorkton. They're a grade 4 class, 41 in number, and they're from the Dr. Brass School in Yorkton, Saskatchewan.

They're seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, and they're accompanied today by two of their teachers, Marilyn Pearson and J. Zandee; and four chaperons, Mrs. Chaban, Mrs. Gulka, Mrs. Loos, and Mrs. Eckhart.

We hope you enjoy your visit to the legislature this afternoon, and I will meet a little later with you for drinks and refreshments and to answer any questions that you may have, watching the Assembly today. So I would ask all members to please recognize these students from Yorkton in the usual manner.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Debatable)

Return No. 18

Mr. Solomon: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a few comments, at which time, at the end of my comments, I'll move an order of the Assembly, No. 18, showing and requesting information regarding one Graham Taylor who is the Hong Kong agent-general for Saskatchewan.

We on this side of the House and the public, Mr. Speaker, are very interested and concerned in determining whether he is employed under the terms of a personal services contract. We are interested to know what his salary and other financial benefits are, and we want to know the terms and conditions of any severance or termination provisions applying to this position, and the expiry date of the contract.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Graham Taylor, as many will recall, was the Conservative MLA from Indian Head-Wolseley. He was in the cabinet of the Premier of the

Conservative government opposite; he was the minister responsible for the privatization program, the only economic initiative this government has undertaken over the last eight years, which has resulted in the largest debt, the fastest growing debt of any province in the country and has left us with fewer jobs, a declining population, and a Crown corporation capital debt approaching \$9 billion, Mr. Speaker.

And what we want to . . . the reason we want to find out this information is because we've heard reported through the media that Mr. Taylor has received a severance package as a former cabinet minister of around \$70,000 and he has signed a five-year contract in the vicinity of \$100,000 a year, plus all kinds of interesting perks, an office in Hong Kong that costs somewhere around \$300,000 a year to rent, plus a number of other benefits that the people of Saskatchewan are very concerned about, considering he has not produced anything for this province in the first six months of his appointment.

But, Mr. Speaker, more importantly, what we are seeing as a result of the government opposite turning down the previous orders for return requesting information with respect to other heads of Crowns and department agencies.

We are seeing clearly from this government's perspective, a move away from an order in council system of appointments of political patronage positions which are arrangements, financial arrangements which can be terminated with the coming and going of new governments with a minimal cost to the taxpayers; we are seeing a moving away from that order in council system of appointing political hacks to one where they are giving their political friends and their political hacks long-term, no-cut contracts like Chuck Childers' contract.

And what this means, Mr. Speaker, pure and simple, to the taxpayers of this province, is an extremely high cost of governments because their political pals are given these golden parachutes with these five-year contracts, and even longer in some cases. We are seeing not just one or two or three, where perhaps personal services contracts may be warranted, but we are seeing hundreds and hundreds and even thousands of individuals in this government, hired by this government without qualifications, without the appropriate qualifications to receive this pay, to long-term, five-year contracts, no-cut contracts, which will cost the taxpayers literally tens of millions of dollars if and when a government changes and decides that these political hacks, these politically sensitive positions, are not doing the job that has to be done for the province of Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have here a very serious, serious abuse of the system. They've changed the system from an order in council system which minimizes the abuse -- it's still open for abuse, but at least it's public and people know about it because orders in council are made public -- to a private, secret system of political pay-offs, in our estimation.

And, Mr. Speaker, they stand up in this House and they talk about, well, let's refer this and that to the Crown Corporations Committee. Well as co-ordinator of the Crown Corporations Committee for the opposition, I can tell the Assembly that the Crown Corporations Committee is never given this

information; and as a matter of fact, requests, for example, with respect to Mr. Gatenby, the president of Cameco. Cameco doesn't even come before the committee, so they're making reference to another corporation or another committee of this House which has no jurisdiction over these matters. And even if we do, they don't provide any information with respect to these contracts.

So they are trying in the public purview to reflect or deflect these issues to another committee which has no power to receive the answers that the public demands on these issues. So, Mr. Speaker, I believe it's a very serious matter. I believe the government has to become accountable, because they are not. I believe then the words of the former member, Bob Andrew from Kindersley, that this government is a secretive government, that we require a freedom of information Act.

The member from Kindersley, a former cabinet minister who is now appointed to Minneapolis, and we'll hear about that shortly -- an agent-general position in Minneapolis -- stood in this House on two separate occasions and moved a Bill requesting that a freedom of information Act be passed and that more access to government information and documents, such as these as we're asking today, be made public, very simply because the money that is used to pay for these contracts and these political patronage appointments is money that is raised from taxpayers.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 18 showing, seconded by the member from Moose Jaw South. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Respecting this particular motion, I think firstly the issue of agent generals is not a new one. I think for a long, long time since . . . I'm not sure of the specific date but probably . . . one member suggests since 1946 there has been agent generals in different parts of the world representing Saskatchewan people. I would advance the argument, Mr. Speaker, that never in history, never in the history of Saskatchewan has there probably been a stronger need for an agent general in Hong Kong.

Mr. Speaker, I think you know and I know that the Pacific Rim is expanding at a significant rate. The economic explosion over there is absolutely phenomenal. And, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan must take their place in the world. I think there are few people who would deny the fact that the Pacific Rim expansion is on in today's world and that Saskatchewan must, to its best ability, take advantage of that.

Now the hon. member will say, well who might be the best person to send over to Hong Kong. I think it is very well known, Mr. Speaker, that these are positions that have been held by a wide number of Saskatchewan residents. I would refer members of the New Democratic Party to a man by the name of Johnson who represented not only the New Democratic Party but the constituency of Kindersley and the agent general's job, I believe, in Hong Kong. So I don't think there is anything new about that.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. members will talk about a severance package that Mr.

Taylor received. I think that issue was very accurately addressed in a news release that I take note of here was issued back on January 18, 1990 where it was stated that Mr. Taylor will take up office in Hong Kong, that Mr. Taylor does have a contract for five years. Back in January, it certainly was an issue that was presented to the people of Saskatchewan. The Deputy Premier, I recall, made public the salary ranges of Mr. Taylor. I believe that salary range was 76 to \$98,000 annually on a five-year contract. I believe that all of that has been made public, Mr. Speaker.

Specifically on the severance issue, I think it is widely known amongst Saskatchewan people that many members who have -- not many members, I shouldn't say many members, but the members who have resigned in the last while, that would include Mr. Blakeney, did receive a severance package from this Assembly from and on behalf of his service for the people of Saskatchewan over many years. Mr. Goodale, a former leader of the Liberal Party in Saskatchewan received the same type of a severance package, Mr. Speaker.

So I believe that this whole argument has been advanced and has been addressed prior to this, Mr. Speaker.

Motion negatived on division.

Return No. 19

Mr. Van Mulligen: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The motion that I will be moving at the conclusion of my remarks deals with yet another patronage appointment by the PC government. In this case it deals with Bob Andrew.

Andrew, I think, is a figure well-known to the people of Saskatchewan. He was the first Finance minister in the PC administration and was notable for a series of deficit budgets; was finally removed from his position as Finance minister and made the minister of Justice, and was noticeable in his final year for his cowardly attack on the Provincial Auditor. He then resigned to take up this new posting, or his posting as the trade commissioner for the province of Saskatchewan in Minneapolis. Now we're not concerned about any severance package that Mr. Andrew may have received by virtue of being an MLA. I think the facts of that are well-known. That is public information.

We are curious to know, and I think the public of Saskatchewan, the taxpayers, have a right to know the terms and conditions of his employment now with the province of Saskatchewan. After all, this is taxpayers' dollars. This is not your money, Mr. Minister. This is not the money that's coming out of the back pocket of the member for Regina Wascana or any of the other members. This is money that's coming out of the pockets of taxpayers in Saskatchewan -- very hard-pressed taxpayers, I might add, Mr. Speaker. It's their money.

Mr. Speaker, this motion is simply an attempt by the opposition to get information from the government so that it can be reported to the public, and in this case about Bob Andrew.

Mr. Speaker, nothing would bring this Assembly to disrepute faster than if we establish a double standard. We have on the one had a rule that states that salaries of public servants be public information. And so it is. All those people who are members of the public service, their salaries are printed every year; they're part of the Public Accounts. This information is available to all the taxpayers. It's always been taken that position, or we've taken the position that as public servants their remuneration deserves to be a matter of public record.

But now we have another rule for quasi-public servants such as Bob Andrew where we attempt to keep this information away from the public. So I think that if we continue to hide this information, we bring the Legislative Assembly, we bring the government and politics and all politicians in this Assembly into disrepute by not making that information public, as we do for other public servants, because again we set a double standard, a double standard, Mr. Speaker -- one standard for the thousands and thousands of public servants who serve this province well, another standard for Bob Andrew or Graham Taylor who are no more than patronage appointment. And we feel the public has a right to know.

(1600)

And again I want to point out to my friend, the member for Regina Wascana, that this is not your money. This is not your money. This is the money of the taxpayers of Saskatchewan and comes out of their pockets. If it was your own money, then do with it what you want, and no one would call that into question. But this is taxpayers' dollars, taxpayers' dollars, and they have a right to know how their dollars have been expended.

So you have, as a government, an obligation to be open, and you can't take the standards that prevailed in 1980 and say, we're going to follow that standard. That just won't work any more. There were massive changes in government in 1982 as a result of some of the practices that occurred at this point.

You've always said, we want to aspire to higher standards. We say, good. Then live up to your expectations. Live up to what you said before and publish these facts. Again, this government has an obligation to be open and accountable to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan -- by accountable to be able to defend and to explain its actions, to explain in this case why it is that the information about Bob Andrew should be kept from the public, why the taxpayers should not know why this information should be made available to them.

You need to explain very carefully why this information about Bob Andrew has to be kept secret, why the taxpayers of Saskatchewan can't know -- why, unlike thousands of public servants, they can't know the secrets about what Bob Andrew is getting paid. Is it because it's an embarrassment to your government? Is it because you cut some deal that would be very embarrassing to you? Is that the reason? And if that's not the reason and if you can't explain, then vote for the motion.

And having said that, Mr. Speaker, I'll move the motion that:

With respect to Bob Andrew, Minneapolis trade commissioner for Saskatchewan: (1) whether he is employed under the terms of a personal services contract; (2) his salary and other financial benefits, and other benefits for 1990; (3) the terms and conditions of any severance or termination provision applying to this position; (4) the expiry date of the contract.

And I so move, seconded by my colleague, the member for Saskatoon Centre. Thank you.

Motion negatived on division.

Return No. 1

Mr. Koskie: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the close of my remarks I'm going to move an order of the Assembly which in essence requests of the government to provide us information as to:

The total amount paid by each government department, agency, and Crown corporation for the period July 11, 1989 to the date this return was ordered, to commercial airlines and travel agencies for air fares, including in each instance: (1) the names and position of those for whom the fares were authorized; (2) the cost, purpose, and destination points of each trip.

Mr. Speaker, in the past we asked the government to break down the particular expenses into hotel rooms, taxi fares, meals, entertainment, other sundry commodities that may be needed by high-travelling, high-flying cabinet ministers from this province.

We asked this question here because this government has been known to be world travellers -- world travellers travelling throughout the world. And I'll tell you there's been back-benchers that have been taken all the way to China. That's right. At no jurisdiction. Well I'll tell you, not bad. I'll tell you it's not bad. That's right -- it's not bad because they're getting paid to work here, not to travel to China on the public purse.

And we have had Crown corporation chairmen who pretend that they were doing the work for no fee. And do you know what they end up doing? Taking a world tour with their wife and a couple executives that cost the people for one trip, \$28,000.

These people operate as though this money is just manufactured by the taxpayer for them to run around and caravan around the world. And at the same time . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The member from Kelvington-Wadena had better be careful because I'm telling you, your practices are catching up to you. The practices of waste and mismanagement and corruption is catching up with you boys.

And that's what we want from this here, is information in just respect to the waste and the amount of money that has been spent by this cabinet without any results in respect to the economy of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: -- And accordingly, I move, seconded, Mr. Speaker, by the member from Athabasca:

The total amount paid by each government department, agency, Crown corporation for the period July 11, 1989, to the date this return was ordered, to commercial airlines and travel agencies for air fares, including in each instances: (1) the names and position of those for whom the fares were authorized; (2) the cost, purpose, and destination points for each trip.

I so move.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Speaker, this particular type of a return has been before the Assembly I think on an annual basis. I do recall last year and the year before dealing with this particular type of a return, providing significant information to the opposition. And I think, on behalf of the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan do want to know how many dollars are being spent for instance on air travel.

Mr. Speaker, I can refer to some words of the opposition. I don't know if I should point out a whole lot of them to take up the Assembly's time, but I would refer to the current Leader of the Opposition, as a matter of fact, in one sentence where he says, there will be many trips outside of Saskatchewan, perhaps even outside of Canada, the Pacific Rim, the United States, wherever.

And I think, Mr. Speaker, what the Leader of the Opposition at that time was recognizing, and I commend him for that, was recognizing that yes, government officials and government politicians from time to time do have to travel outside of Saskatchewan. I think that has even changed, Mr. Speaker, to being more pressing and more necessary today, as Saskatchewan attempts to diversify and take its rightful stance in the world.

And, Mr. Speaker, I therefore would provide information to the opposition showing the total amount by each government department, each government agency, each government Crown corporation for the period July 11 to the date this return was ordered and give total amounts of the air transportation.

To accomplish that, Mr. Speaker, I would delete some of the details that I believe are redundant. I would therefore move an amendment, seconded by the member from Meadow Lake:

That all words after the words "air fares" be deleted.

Mr. Koskie: -- I want to, Mr. Speaker, speak to the amendment here. Just imagine what this minister is doing. We ask for a breakdown of costs in the previous year and we left out the breakdown of costs this year, and now

he's gone another step and he's said all that he will do is give a global amount in respect to air fares. He will not even provide the names and the positions of those whom the fares were authorized, because you know what? They're ashamed of it.

They're getting close to an election, and those records of the waste and mismanagement would be evidence against the individual ministers. They won't give the cost, the purpose, or the destination of the trips. All they will want to do is to give one global figure in respect to the air fares. There is absolutely . . . and last year, previously, we got that information, because we're asking for a breakdown and he wouldn't provide that because we might get into how much they spent on meals or on liquor or on whatever. And they refuse to break it down in that manner.

Now he's getting . . . this is supposed to be this new government, this open government, listening to the people. They're afraid to disclose and they're hiding just like they did, Mr. Speaker, in respect to the auditor, which was a disgrace to this legislature. They went so far as to an elected official of this Assembly who is duty-bound to audit the books of this government and they refused the information to the auditor.

Now we ask for simple information in respect to their travelling and the reason for it, who went with it, and the individual cost and the purpose of the destination. And they absolutely refuse that information. No government has stooped to such levels of deceit and cover-up as this government has here.

And I urge any hon. member on the other side to halt the cover-up that is going on by the front benches that basically is destroying the back-benchers over there. And they sit like trained seals and vote with the front bench that is destroying them with a cover-up the nature that is set out in the amendment to this resolution.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Amendment agreed to on division.

Motion negatived.

(1615)

The Speaker: -- The motion was called, the motion was declared as lost. It went in this manner. We voted on the amendment and the amendment was passed. Then I indicated to the Assembly in virtually these words: "The motion now before the Assembly is the motion moved by the member for Quill Lakes and seconded by the member for Athabasca. Is the Assembly ready for the question?"

An Hon. Member: -- And that means, as amended, right?

The Speaker: -- Yes, that's what that means. That's exactly what it means.

The Speaker: -- I recognize the hon. member from Moose Jaw North.

Mr. Trew: -- Unless they moved my constituency, Mr. Speaker, it's still Regina North, not Moose Jaw North. The member from Moose Jaw North, I'm sure, doesn't want to trade and I can assure you that I like my constituency as it is.

Mr. Speaker, I am moving an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 2 showing:

For the period July 11, 1988, to the date this return was ordered, the number of public opinion polls and market research projects ordered, performed, or commissioned by or for each government department, agency and Crown corporation, including in each case: (1) a brief description of the purpose of the poll or project; (2) the total cost of the poll or project; (3) the method by which the work was awarded; (4) the names of the individuals or companies who performed the work.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of open and accessible and listening and caring government that members opposite try and portray themselves to be, I think the flip side or the part of that new-found openness and accessibility includes a responsibility to share with the taxpayers of Saskatchewan what it is that the taxpayers' money is being spent on. If in fact the government has intentions of being open and accessible, listening to the people, they will hear this call from the people to find out what it is that is being undertaken by way of polling and market research.

The examples are legion, Mr. Speaker, of polling that has been done, of market research that has been done. Virtually every government department is involved in it to some extent.

In estimates the other night for the Provincial Secretary, which is supposedly a non-political effort, that department, Mr. Speaker, is charged with keeping the Great Seal of Saskatchewan; we found out a couple of things the other night. First, the minister responsible does in fact not keep the great seal in his office. That was a great revelation to some of us. But we secondly found out that that department had undertaken \$40,000 worth of polling -- \$40,000 from Provincial Secretary whose job is simply that of keeping the Great Seal of Saskatchewan.

Now we are very concerned, wondering what in the world kind of polling could have been done. Was it the minister wondering whether in fact the people wanted him to keep the great seal in his office; or whether in fact the people wanted him to privatize the warehousing and storage of the Great Seal of Saskatchewan; or whether they were polling to see who should feed the Great Seal of Saskatchewan? We're just not too sure.

But I think that \$40,000 spent around the keeper of the great seal should be a concern. There are hungry children in Regina; there's certainly hungry children in Saskatchewan. Forty thousand dollars would have gone a great distance to providing nutritional lunches for hungry children. Forty thousand dollars, Mr. Speaker, could have been spent any one of thousands

of ways much better than through polling and market research by the Provincial Secretary's office.

So I just pulled out one item, one example, if you like, of the polling that has been done. Over the past few months my colleagues have raised the matter repeatedly in the Legislative Assembly. We have essentially gotten no responses from the government, certainly no satisfactory responses as to what the polling is all about. We see the government that is more concerned with its image than with the content of providing actual good government. So if they can justify any of this polling and market research, Mr. Speaker, surely then there would be no hesitation to provide this information as we're asking for.

And it's rather innocuous when you look at what we're asking for: a brief description of the purpose of the poll or project. We're not asking for huge details, but why was the poll done, why was the market research done? It was to aid X. Simple request; simple information that we're asking for; nothing there that any open and accessible, honest government wouldn't be more than happy to share with all taxpayers and all voters.

The second thing we're asking for, Mr. Speaker, is the total cost of the poll or the project. Well it's simple -- the project costs \$30,000, \$50,000, \$100,000, whatever the amount was. Surely there is no need for secrecy on the cost of a poll after the fact. It's simply, the poll was done. If you can justify doing the poll in the first place, you should be able to justify the cost of that poll. And if a government cannot justify either the purpose of the poll or the cost of the poll, then that government should not have been wasting and squandering the taxpayers' money; they should have been spending that money on other more worthwhile purposes.

Some of the polling, some of the market research, sir, I am certain was appropriate. Some of it was appropriate, and we just want to make sure that as much as possible of the market research in the polling is appropriate.

Third, we are interested in knowing the method by which the work was awarded. What were the terms of the contract? Did it go through an ad agency? Did it go through Dome for example? Is it somehow being used to build an election slush fund, or is it direct from departments? Is the money in fact being spent and allocated appropriately.

Fourthly, Mr. Speaker, we're asking for the names of the individuals or companies who performed the work. And that's a straightforward request simply asking that we know that it was a reputable firm that did the work and not simply some political hack that was paid an outrageous sum of money to do unnecessary, unneeded polling or market research that we suspect in some cases, Mr. Speaker, to be bogus.

So I am asking the government to change its ways. So far in motions for return we have seen everything defeated. In the spirit of openness, in the spirit of accessibility, in the spirit of a listening and a caring government, I ask that the government pass this motion for return, motion

no. 2:

For the period July 11, 1988 to the date this return was ordered, the number of public opinion polls and market research projects ordered, performed, or commissioned by or for each government department agency and Crown corporation, including in each case: (1) a brief description of the purpose of the poll or the project; (2) the total cost of the poll or project; (3) the method by which the work was awarded; (4) the names of the individuals or companies who performed the work.

Mr. Speaker, I so move, seconded by the member for Saskatoon Centre.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Speaker, I will be proposing an amendment to this motion, and I would firstly point out to the hon. member, and I expect that the hon. member would agree, that there was an error in the typing of this particular motion. It has asked for information from the period July 11, 1988. In fact there was a previous motion covering 1988 to 1989. And in fact if we were to supply the information from July 1989 to present it would be more appropriate because it would not be redundant from the motion that was previously on the paper.

The other amendment that I would make, Mr. Speaker, would delete:

That all words after (3) be deleted and the words "the name of the individual or company conducting the poll" substituted therefor.

And, Mr. Speaker, what that would do would be to provide in essence the vast majority of information that the hon. member has asked for. It would retain the brief description of the purpose of the poll that the member has asked for. It would provide the total cost of the poll or the project.

What it would not do, Mr. Speaker, is provide the method by which the work was awarded. I think it is fairly well-recognized, Mr. Speaker, that work of this nature has been at the pleasure of the government. Traditionally firms such as advertising agencies and other firms that specialize in this type of business . . . some have been associated more so with a Conservative government, others with a New Democratic government.

And I therefore, Mr. Speaker, would move the following motion, seconded by my seat mate, the member for Meadow Lake:

That all the words after (3) be deleted and the words "the name of the individual or company conducting the poll" substituted therefor, and that the year 1988 be replaced by the year 1989.

Amendment agreed to on division.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Ms. Atkinson: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask for leave to introduce some guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Atkinson: -- Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the legislature, several teachers who are gathered in the east gallery. The teachers are here this afternoon monitoring some of the legislation that may be brought forward this day, and I understand that teachers will be here over the next several days. So I would ask the teachers to stand and I would ask all members of the legislature to welcome our guests.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

(1630)

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Debatable)

Return No. 5

Mr. Calvert: -- Mr. Speaker, after a very brief remark or two, I will be moving an order that will request the information from the government opposite concerning the names, titles, and remuneration of all non-clerical staff employed in or assigned to the offices of ministers of the Crown in the Government of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, last evening I had the privilege to be in the community of Swift Current where I met with about 100 people. I had a question that was addressed to me, a twofold question. The first question on people's minds last night was a question that's phrased, where has the money gone? Mr. Speaker, they ask of this government -- they've been selling off assets and so on and so on -- and people are asking where has the money gone?

The second part of that question is that for the last four years at least, they know that their government in Regina has been asking them to tighten their belts, to tighten their belts. And they've seen services disappear and they've seen taxes go up and they've been asked to tighten their belts. And they ask why this government opposite hasn't done the same.

Sir, I turn in the Hansard, the index of the Hansard, and you can turn there too, and we'll find today listed 18 individuals with hon. in front of their name, 18 ministers of the Crown -- ministers and junior ministers of the Crown. A very large cabinet, Mr. Speaker, and that's since the untimely departure of the former minister of Multiculturalism and Recreation. Mr. Minister, that's a very large cabinet and the people of Saskatchewan ask: when we're being asked to tighten our belts, why is our government in Regina not doing the very same?

This is the information that has to do with the cost of this size of cabinet. As we all know, with the privilege and responsibility of serving in cabinet comes along a certain number of expenses to the people of Saskatchewan. It includes offices, the use of cars, airplanes, trips, and staff. Mr. Speaker, this order for return will ask to provide the names, the titles, the remuneration of all non-clerical staff employed in the

cabinet ministers' offices.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I do move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 5 showing, and the motion is seconded by the member for Saskatoon Centre.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Speaker, I would propose an amendment at the end of my remarks that would in essence keep the majority of what this motions says, except what it would do is delete the words "assigned," because, Mr. Speaker, that is a very difficult thing to keep track of. You will know, Mr. Speaker, from time to time ministers do ask certain individuals to work on special projects from their departments.

Mr. Speaker, we do though have no problem in providing the names, the titles, and the amount of moneys paid to all non-clerical staff that are employed in the offices of any minister of the Crown.

I do move, seconded by my seat mate, the hon. member for Meadow Lake:

That the words "or assigned to" be deleted.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 6

Ms. Smart: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the end of my remarks I'm going to move that an order be returned giving information regarding the number of out-of-province trips made by each member of the government since July 11, 1989 and details of those trips.

Mr. Speaker, it's a very important motion because we have so many members who are ministers or associate ministers in the government opposite as my colleague, the member from Moose Jaw South, has pointed out. From July 11 of '89 there have been 22 members in the House opposite who've had the status of minister or associate minister.

And we know that the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden took trips that amounted to \$100,000. That's a lot of money for one minister, and we're looking at the possibility of 22. So there could be a lot of the taxpayers' money involved here, Mr. Speaker. Therefore this motion is quite important, as are all the motions that have been brought forward here this afternoon. This is a government opposite that says that they want to look at freedom of information and yet constantly all afternoon they've been denying access to information to the taxpayers of this province. And it's their money that has gone into funding the items that we want to get account for here in the Assembly.

The minister, the member from Melville is constantly saying in this House that we are the naysayers, that the New Democrats are negative. And he and his government opposite have said nothing but no all afternoon in terms of the information we've been trying to get -- just nay, nay, nay -- naysayers

all afternoon, Mr. Speaker, about very important issues regarding the taxpayers' money. And I object to that, Mr. Speaker. I think that the government opposite should be accountable and that we should know, particularly when they've got such a large cabinet, we should know what the ministers opposite have been spending.

As I've pointed out, we already have an example of \$100,000 for one minister. And we have 22. Out of province trips -- we don't know what they've been doing but we want to get the information and we believe that the people of Saskatchewan deserve that information. And we challenge and I challenge the government opposite to stop being so negative and to say yes to giving us some of this information that we're asking for this afternoon.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Sutherland that:

For the period July 11, 1989, to the date this return was ordered: (1) the total number of out-of-province trips made by each minister of the government; (2) in each case, the destination and purpose of the trip; (3) in each case, the names and positions of those who accompanied the minister at government expense; (4) in each case, the amount charged on behalf of each person travelling at government expense; (5) in each case, the total cost of the trip separated according to costs incurred for: (a) air fares, (b) hotels, (c) meals, and (d) entertainment expenses.

And I will be very interested to hear the House Leader and the member for Melfort decide how he's going to refuse this request.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Speaker, I will be making an amendment to this motion. What will be provided to the hon. members is that we will be making an amendment. I will read the amendment:

That all words after "(2)" be deleted and the words "the destination of each trip" (which I think is important, Mr. Speaker, that we provide the destination of each trip); and the total cost of the air fare.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that that is important that you provide where you are going, what is the destination, and what is the total cost of the air fare. The other requests that the member did have were extremely detailed, Mr. Speaker, and I would submit to you, probably more detailed question than has ever been asked in the legislature, and it would be very difficult and unreasonable to provide that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will move the following amendment, seconded by my seat mate, the member for Meadow Lake:

That the words "of the Government" be deleted from clause (1), and that all the words after "(2)" be deleted and the words "the destination of each trip; (3) the total cost of the air fare." be substituted therefor.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 8

Mr. Thompson: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. After a few short comments I want to move the following motion seconded by the member for Quill Lakes. And the information that I will be asking for is:

For the period July 11, 1989 to the date this return was ordered, a detailed list of the aircrafts chartered by each department, agency, or Crown corporation of the Government of Saskatchewan, including in each instance: (1) the purpose of the charter and the minister who authorized it; (2) the name of the individual or company who provided the charter service; (3) the total cost of the charter and the name of the department, agency, or Crown corporation to which it was charged; (4) the date of the flight; (5) all destinations on the flight; (6) the names of each MLA or government employee on the flight; (7) the number of family members of MLAs on each flight.

Mr. Speaker, the information that we are requesting in this motion is not out of the ordinary. It's a public expenditure. And I feel that the citizens of the province have a right to know this information because of the public expense.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, we have executive aircraft that are available to the ministers in the province. But I do realize that on many occasions the executive aircraft are not available and charters have to be arranged. And, Mr. Speaker, I think the information that we want to know is that when charters are used, that it's done on a fair and equitable basis, Mr. Minister.

There are many air carriers in the province, in Regina and many other places in the province, and I realize that charters is something that has to be used by ministers and governments, government agencies, and I just would like you to consider that and to pass that information over to us without any amendments, Mr. Minister. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 8 showing. I so move.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Speaker, I will be offering an amendment to the Assembly on this motion, and what will be provided with this amendment, if it is accepted, is the date of the flight, the charter company, the number of passengers on the flight, the destination of the flight, the minister who authorized the flight -- with a couple of exceptions. And I think the hon. member would likely agree with these exceptions because the hon. member is from northern Saskatchewan. What I would like to do is accept the Department of Health's air ambulance medical services division, northern health services . . .

An Hon. Member: -- Exempt.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Exempt, I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker . . . and Saskatchewan hearing aid plan programs, as well as the Department of Justice's northern circuit point flights, and provide a slightly altered type of information for those services. The hon. member would know that there's most of the executive air flights are with those two agencies.

And so therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by seat mate, the member for Meadow Lake:

That all the words after the word "instance" be deleted and the following substituted therefor: (1) the date of the flight; (2) the charter company; (3) the number of passengers on the flight; (4) the destination of the flight; and (5) the minister who authorized the flight, with the exception of the Department of Health's air ambulance medical services division, northern health services, and Saskatchewan hearing aid plan programs, and the Department of Justice's northern circuit points flights for which the following summary information is to be provided for each department: (1) the purpose of the aircraft charters for the program; (2) the names of the individuals or companies who provided charter aircraft services during the period of this return; (3) the total amount paid to each individual or company for chartered services during the period of the return; and (4) the total number of flights chartered by each of the above departmental programs during the period of this return.

Amendment agreed to on division.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 9

Ms. Atkinson: -- Mr. Speaker, at the end of my remarks I'll be moving a motion that deals specifically with information regarding the Government of Saskatchewan's executive aircraft, and some details surrounding those flights.

As my colleague, the member for Moose Jaw South said, citizens of Saskatchewan are asking more and more, where has all the money gone? Citizens of Saskatchewan are asking more and more often, what are the priorities of this government? There doesn't seem to be enough money for education. There doesn't seem to be enough money for health care, but there does seem to be enough money for government cabinet ministers to fly all over Saskatchewan, all over Canada, and all over the world. And so it's a matter of priorities.

We've also had brought to our attention recently that the government is demanding more and more specific information regarding non-government organizations' accounting, and they're asking very specifically to have non-government organizations indicate very clearly how they're spending their money. And more and more often, the citizens of Saskatchewan are starting to demand very specific information in terms of how this government spends its money, and it's called accountability.

No wonder dozens and dozens of citizens and groups are asking for access to information, because we see on more and more occasions that this government spends its money in specific areas but doesn't want to spend its money in the areas that are important to the people of Saskatchewan, i.e., health and education.

So for that reason, we want to know how the Government of Saskatchewan is spending the taxpayers' money. Specifically we want to know, and I will read the motion, or the order for return that I've asked for some information on, and the motion of return reads like this:

For the period July 11, 1989, to the date this return was ordered, a detailed list of the flights taken by the Government of Saskatchewan's executive aircraft, including in each instance: (1) the purpose of the flight and the minister who authorized it; (2) the date of the flight; (3) all destination points of the flight; (4) to which department, agency, or corporation the cost of the flight was charged, and the amount of the charge; (5) the name of each MLA on the flight; (6) the name of each government employee on the flight; (7) the number of family members of MLAs on each flight; (8) the total number of persons on each flight.

Mr. Speaker, I would move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 9 showing. And it's seconded by the member from Regina Centre.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Speaker, I will be making an amendment to this that would in essence provide the date of the flight and the flight number -- I think that's important, Mr. Speaker, the destination of the flight, where's the airplane going; who authorized the flight; who was the senior official on board as well as the number of passengers on the flight. This type of information, Mr. Speaker, is routinely kept. It is available and we will be pleased to provide it in this form.

I would therefore move, seconded by my seat mate, the hon. member for Meadow Lake:

That the all the words after the word "instance" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

(1) the date of the flight and flight number; (2) the destination of the flight; (3) who authorized the flight; (4) the senior official on board the flight; (5) the number of passengers on the flight.

Amendment agreed to on division.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 10

Mr. Shillington: -- Thank you very much. I'm going to be relatively brief, given the hour.

An Hon. Member: -- Agreed. This one's agreed; let's go.

Mr. Shillington: -- If I have that assurance, I will not try to . . . All right, if I have that assurance from the House Leader, I will simply move an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 10 showing. Seconded by the member from Regina Elphinstone.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 12

Mr. Solomon: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 12 showing:

The provincial government's expenditure for the 1989-90 annual operational budget for all of the province's trade offices in Hong Kong, London, New York, Ottawa, Geneva and Minneapolis.

Seconded by the member from Regina Elphinstone.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Speaker, I would seek leave of the Assembly at this time to move to government business.

Leave granted.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 37 -- An Act to amend The Cost of Credit Disclosure Act

Hon. Mr. Klein: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a few words on what I am proposing to amend in Bill 37, The Cost of Credit Disclosure Act. This Act requires lenders and sellers to disclose credit charges in writing. The Act covers provincially regulated lenders such as credit unions and trust and loan companies. It also covers sellers such as department stores or farm implement dealers who finance purchases. And these are sometimes called line lenders.

Hon. members will appreciate that the market-place changes rapidly, especially where lending and borrowing are involved, and the proposed amendments will permit regulation which is more responsive to these rapid, ongoing changes.

Some sections of the current Act are simply unnecessary or absolutely out of date. For example, consumer demand for financial products with variable loan rates is substantial. Such rate expand consumer choice in financing. The Saskatchewan lending industry has also requested that we recognize this market-place reality and provide basic elements of government regulation in this area.

The Act provides for fundamental elements of disclosure regarding variable rate loans. The Bill covers disclosure at the time the contract is signed,

upon any change in the rate, upon request of the borrower, and at periodic intervals.

The need for additional disclosure requirements will be discussed with industry and other governments. For example, an area of concern for many consumers is the use of plain language, particularly where credit contracts are concerned. We expect consultations with the credit industry may lead to more standardized contracts in ordinary language.

I am pleased to tell the members that the level of co-operation and spirit of working together has never been better between our department and credit granters. This year, for example, during the National Consumer Week the Department of Consumer and Commercial Affairs and the credit granters' association of Saskatchewan released credit granting guide-lines. These guide-lines have been distributed to provincial lenders and reflect our commitment to fair lending practices.

Mr. Speaker, the cost of credit disclosure is also an area where we are working together with other jurisdictions to achieve national uniformity. And it's therefore likely that more uniformity will be worked out through our continuing consultation with other governments and implemented under the new regulatory powers of this Act. The Bill will enable the government to pass additional regulations governing variable rate disclosure if that's necessary.

These amendments do not affect the civil rights of Saskatchewan citizens, nor will additional administrative or other public costs be required.

Mr. Speaker, I now move second reading of Bill No. 37, An Act to amend The Cost of Credit Disclosure Act and I invite all the hon. members to support these changes.

Mr. Calvert: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just in response to the minister's comments, the second reading stage of the Bill. I would like to indicate that having reviewed this Bill rather carefully and having consulted with a number of people -- on one side in the financial community, in the lending community; and on the other side, borrowers and consumers -- I am certainly prepared to give my support to this piece of legislation.

It is, Mr. Speaker, an improvement over the legislation which currently exists, and I might say, Mr. Speaker, an improvement over a Bill that was introduced in this House in 1988 with a very similar title and purpose. At that time the opposition critic, the member from Saskatoon Sutherland, pointed out some real inadequacies in that legislation that came forward in 1988 and at that point the legislation was dropped.

So I want to commend the government for heeding some of the concerns that were raised at that time by my colleague from Saskatoon Sutherland and bringing this Bill back to the House substantially, Mr. Speaker, I say substantially improved.

Mr. Speaker, obviously credit is an important fact of life for consumers, for business people, for farming people. As the minister has pointed out,

this legislation will provide to the borrower greater information and now particularly in the whole area of variable credit rates and that's appreciated by consumers in the province.

(1700)

Mr. Speaker, while we're certainly prepared to support this Bill, I would point out, sir, that what this Bill does is to disclose the cost of credit -- to disclose the cost of credit. And I would ask the minister and the government opposite to consider dealing, as government, in their influence with Ottawa, not simply about the disclosure of the cost, but the actual cost of credit.

Mr. Speaker, you may be aware that the standing committee of the House of Commons on consumer affairs in October 1989 tabled a study which called for a number of changes in the interest rates on credit cards, and capping those interest rates on credit cards. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the newly appointed Consumer and Corporate Affairs, at the federal level, Pierre Blais, has refused to act on that study.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the consumers of Saskatchewan, I would ask the minister opposite and his government to put whatever influence and pressure they can on their federal counterparts to look not simply at the disclosure of the cost of credit, but to look at the actual cost of credit for consumers in this country.

And also, Mr. Speaker, I would point out -- and as all members of this House will well know -- the high interest rate policy of the federal Conservative government, which directly influences the cost of credit to consumers and farmers and business people in this province with its adverse effect, is hurting Saskatchewan. And I encourage this government, through the minister and through all ministers and the Minister of Finance, to do all in their power to influence the federal government to come to some sane interest rate policy in this country because credit is a very significant fact of life for our province.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to indicate that we will be supporting this legislation as an improvement to consumer information in the province. We'll have a few short questions to put in committee and hope to see this become law before the close of the session.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole at the next sitting.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.