

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
May 8, 1995

The Assembly met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to present a petition on behalf of the people from the Gull Lake area of the province. I'll read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to allocate adequate funding dedicated towards the double-laning of Highway No. 1; and further, that the Government of Saskatchewan direct any monies available from the federal infrastructure program towards double-laning Highway No. 1, rather than allocating these funds towards capital construction projections in the province.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

I'm happy to table these today, Mr. Speaker.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Deputy Clerk: — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed, and pursuant to rule 12(7) they are hereby read and received.

Of citizens of the province of Saskatchewan humbly praying that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to oppose changes to federal legislation regarding firearm ownership.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a notice of motion that I would like to introduce on behalf of the member of Saskatoon Greystone respecting the first reading for Bills.

I give notice that I shall on Wednesday next move the first reading of a Bill, an Act to amend the district health Act.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have another notice of motion that I would like to introduce on behalf of the member from Saskatoon Greystone.

I give notice that I shall on Wednesday next move first reading of a Bill to amend The Tabling of Documents Act, 1991.

The Speaker: — I think it's highly improper for the member from Shaunavon to introduce a motion on behalf of another member in the Assembly. This simply hasn't been done, and I would think that that is out of order. And therefore I rule it out of order.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — Order. Before introduction of guests, I would like to outline today's special program for recognition of Second World War veterans. After my opening remarks, I shall invite the Premier, the representative of the official opposition, and the representative of the third party to pay tribute to the veterans seated in the galleries. I shall then ask the Associate Minister of Finance to introduce them.

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pleasure and deep respect that I rise to pay tribute to the very distinguished guests who have joined us today in celebration of VE (Victory in Europe) Day.

As has already been said in the rotunda ceremonies, this celebration is part of our Canada Remembers program. And I invite all members of the Assembly to join in welcoming the members of veterans' organizations, the war brides, and the serving members of the Canadian Forces and the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) who are seated in the galleries today. Welcome to all of you.

Mr. Speaker, it is the courage of our veterans during six years of war that paved the way for the peaceful communities, provinces, and Canada, that we enjoy today.

And as we know, Saskatchewan people were involved in all aspects of the Second World War. Some flew the Spitfires in the Battle of Britain; some flew bombers over Europe. Others proved that prairie boys made great sailors when, from the ships of the Royal Canadian Navy and the Merchant Marine, they helped keep the lifeline to Europe open during the Battle of the Atlantic. And still others served as soldiers in the infantry, armoured artillery, and support units.

Mr. Speaker, the American aviator, Amelia Earhart, once said that: "Courage is the price that life exacts for granting peace." Well in Hong Kong, Dieppe, North Africa, in Sicily and in Italy, in the Mediterranean, in Burma, south-east Asia, in Normandy, and north-west Europe, young men and women paid that price on our behalf. Some paid the ultimate price and never returned. They live on in our memories and we offer a special word of gratitude for their sacrifice.

Mr. Speaker, today we remember the heavy losses suffered by the South Saskatchewan Regiment in the Dieppe raid of 1942, the sinking of the H.M.C.S. (Her Majesty's Canadian Ship) Regina in the English Channel in 1944, and the bravery of the Regina Rifles who were among the first units to land on the Normandy beaches on D-Day, and the first to reach their objective.

We also remember the British Commonwealth air training plan which played such a vital role in the war effort. And we also remember the significant contributions of those here on the home front, their voluntary service and their hard work in keeping our economic and social structures together during that

very stressful and difficult time.

Mr. Speaker, this morning as part of VE Day, perhaps not strictly speaking but certainly spiritually, a sod-turning ceremony was held for a First World War Memorial which will grace the grounds of the Legislative Building — a long overdue tribute to the Saskatchewan men and women who lost their lives in the 1914-1918 war.

And this morning we declared open the Saskatchewan archives display entitled "Saskatchewan at War, 1939 to 1945." I urge all members, in fact members of the public, to visit this excellent display and learn more about Saskatchewan's heroic contribution during that time, that difficult time, in our history.

Mr. Speaker, let me conclude by expressing on behalf of all Saskatchewan people, our gratitude towards all those who helped make peace possible for their generation and for ours. We thank them for their determination, their willingness, their bravery, their courage; as Earhart said: to pay the price that life exacts . . . In so doing, they created a world of hope and secured freedom at home and abroad. We are all very, very, very proud of them today.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I consider it a great privilege today to be asked, on behalf of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, to honour the thousands of men and women who fought so bravely to ensure the freedoms that we all enjoy.

May 8 marks the 50th anniversary, Mr. Speaker, of the end of the world war in Europe. World War II began on that continent almost six years earlier and still continued for a while in Asia, and fortunately for most Canadians, the greatest bulk of the conflict was over.

Canadian forces, and specifically those from Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, in the days of the Second World War, made a tremendous difference. They made a difference in a time of all-out conflict, when failure would have meant subordination of democracy to an unspeakable tyranny.

When the war first began, Canada had a small, very small, number of professionals enlisted in the Armed Forces. In fact I was surprised to learn that there were only about 4,500 soldiers in the army, 3,100 members in the air force, and 1,800 people in the navy. And yet very quickly thousands of people, including thousands from Saskatchewan, men and women, answered the call, and by the end of the war I'm told about 75,000 Saskatchewan people had served our country in the Armed Forces, both at home, overseas, on the land, on the sea, and in the air.

As well we all know about the contribution Saskatchewan made as the home to the 15th training sites for the British

Commonwealth airborne training plan in locations such as Moose Jaw, Estevan, Regina, Davidson, Saskatoon, North Battleford, and others.

The contribution of Saskatchewan individuals was great. And we are all indebted to their services, their sacrifices, and most importantly to the thousands who have lost their lives attempting to make life better for all of us.

As we remember today, Mr. Speaker, and honour those who fought and died, let us all pay tribute also to the thousands of families. Because as the people went off to serve their country, it meant that many young children would not know mothers and fathers who did not return, and the hardships that they endured as a result.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand today in recognition of some the bravest men and women that have ever lived — truly courageous and outstanding individuals. We must all remember and teach our children the significance of those who have worn and those who still honourably wear the Queen's uniform, and to share pride in them.

It seems at times, Mr. Speaker, in the 1990s that it is not the most politically correct thing to do these days — to be in the Armed Forces. But I believe, Mr. Speaker, it certainly is the right thing to do.

On behalf of the official opposition, I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all of the valiant men and women who helped secure the freedom that we take for granted. And thank you to the men and women today who represent both the veterans and the current Armed Forces who have joined us in this gallery. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Bergman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the Liberal Party caucus, I want to welcome the many special guests who are with us today to mark the 50th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day. VE Day marks the complete defeat and utter destruction of Naziism and the crushing of a dictator's dream of global conquest.

The defeat of Hitlerism required the mobilization of the world and resulted in the deaths of more than 30 million men, women, and children. Fifty years later, we cannot doubt that the struggle was worth the price because some wars must be fought as long as there are tyrants who respond to nothing less than force.

War requires many personal sacrifices by everyone, not only those who fought in the war but those who stayed at home. The world will never forget that the victory in Europe would not have been possible without the immense contribution in men and material by Canada and the sacrifice of many of its bravest and best.

While today many commemorate the end of the hostilities in Europe, it does not mark the end of the war nor the end of the

injuries and deaths. A month after VE Day, my father, Arthur Goodman, who served as lieutenant in charge of a bomb disposal unit, lost both his legs when he and a comrade stepped on a mine in France.

I came to know firsthand, through my father, how the war left a lifelong legacy of pain for many who served and survived.

Today we honour our guests who fought in the front lines and experienced firsthand the atrocities of war that we pray will never again be visited on us or our nation. We honour their families and fellow citizens who supported the war effort wherever and however they could here on the home front.

And finally, we honour those who did not come home, those who lost their lives in a far-away land, fighting for a freedom they never lived to enjoy.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is my special honour to introduce some veterans and others who are here to lend special meaning to today.

It was exactly 50 years ago yesterday that Winston Churchill announced to an exhausted and devastated continent the end of the war in Europe. By any standard it had been the largest conflict in the history of mankind. It was certainly the most destructive and murderous war ever waged by man. Indeed it was some time before we realized the awful horrors which had been committed by the Nazis. We have been much longer in appreciating its significance.

The American president Woodrow Wilson said of the First World War that it was a war to make the world safe for democracy. Through no fault of anyone who sacrificed in the First World War, we failed to achieve that objective. Where the First World War failed, the Second World War succeeded. And the half-century which has followed the end of the war has been a period of continual peace and growing prosperity that has few if any parallels in history. For these blessings, Mr. Speaker, we have our guests to thank; the post-war world was built upon their sacrifices. And so in 1995 a grateful nation has taken time to assure the veterans that we remember.

This evening many Canadians will be watching the first TV episode of Herman Wouk's epic novel, *War and Remembrance*. Although it's many years since I read the book, I recall the first line as clearly as if I'd read it yesterday. The book began by saying:

War, like slavery in an earlier period or cannibalism in an even earlier period, has become an outmoded pattern of human thought.

The reaction of many might be, dear God, let us hope that some day that comes true. The events in Bosnia-Herzegovina suggest

we have a ways to go before war does indeed become an outmoded pattern of human thought.

I suspect that if the veterans which I'm about to introduce had but a single request, it would not be that we express our gratitude — although that is richly deserved — or that we remember, as we do, but I believe they would request that we ensure that our children and our grandchildren understand the true horror of war. If we do so, then there is a chance that war may indeed become an outmoded pattern of human thought and the world will continue to be safe for democracy. It is in this spirit that we welcome a number of guests to the legislature.

Before calling on the veterans, I'd like to begin by recognizing the mayor of our provincial capital, who has done an enormous amount, both to support Canada Remembers and the First World War Memorial, His Worship Doug Archer.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — It's not on my list of people to introduce, but I'm next going to call upon Joyce Johnson, wife of a former lieutenant governor, Fred Johnson.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — We all know Fred Johnson as a distinguished jurist, chief justice of the Queen's Bench for some years, and equally distinguished lieutenant governor. We may not know that he spent five years in Europe as a veteran. And perhaps Mrs. Johnson, as much as anyone, symbolizes the wives and the girlfriends who stayed at home, kept the factories and the farms running to feed an army in Europe.

I'd like to call on Bill Barclay, provincial president of the Royal Canadian Legion. I'd ask him to stand and with him the other executive members and other members of the Royal Canadian Legion who are here.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Karl Karasin, honorary provincial president, and other members of the Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Ian MacLeish, president of the Disabled Veterans Association; other members of the Disabled Veterans Association.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — David Greyeyes, a much-decorated veteran of the Italian campaign in his own right. He also represents the Saskatchewan Indian Veterans Association and other members of this association.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Senator Stan Durocher and members of the Saskatchewan Metis Veterans.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Helen Hammer, representing the Saskatchewan War Brides Association, and other members of the war brides association.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — William Dunn and members of the Royal Canadian Airforce Association.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Dr. Ralph Cheesman and members of the Naval Officers Association.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Henry Lebiota and members of the Polish Veterans Association.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — James O'Kane, president of the Royal United Services Institute of Regina, and members of the executive of the institute.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, I would next like introduce a very special group of people, dedicated citizens who have worked hard to ensure that a long-overdue project came off with such success. I refer to the First World War Memorial for which the Deputy Premier turned the sod and of which the Premier spoke a few moments earlier.

I'd now ask Lloyd Jones, chairman of the First World War Memorial Committee, and his committee members, to please rise and be acknowledged.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, the Canadian forces and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police continue today the proud tradition of these veterans. They're well represented here this afternoon.

I'd first ask you to acknowledge the senior Canadian forces representative present — a person who has strongly supported our Canada Remembers program and indeed supported this program in this province in many, many ways — the commander of Wing 15, Canadian Forces Base, Moose Jaw, Colonel Bill Kalbfleisch.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Next, representing a proud Saskatchewan regiment, one which led the way on the beaches of Normandy on D-Day 1944 and provides a large share of our peacekeepers today, I introduce the present commanding officer of the Royal Canadian Rifles, Lieutenant Colonel Wayne Marr.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Representing the navy, Naval Lieutenant Barry Leslie, executive officer of the H.M.C.S. Queen.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — The commanding officer of the 16 Medical Company, Major Donna Robb.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — The commanding officer of 734 Communications Squadron in Regina, Major Joanne Murphy.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — The commander of Cadet Detachment Regina, Major Peter Garton.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Representing F Division of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Superintendent Jack Cronkite.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Representing the training academy of the RCMP, Superintendent Les Chipperfield.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, I'm informed as well that Colonel Frank Hanton, who was a recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross — he is a farmer and he's a principal aide-de-camp to the Lieutenant Governor; we've seen him in here frequently — I'm told he's here as well.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Similarly, Mr. Bill de Lint, the honorary Consul of the Netherlands, liberated by the Canadian soldiers in 1945 — Bill de Lint.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Harold Hague, Chair of the Regina Canada Remembers Committee.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — And Gregg Trout, Chair of the

Estevan committee.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, I take my chair. I do so in . . . I express, I believe, the view of all members. We deeply appreciate the sacrifice and the efforts of these people on our behalf.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to introduce eight guests from the city of Harbin in the province of Heilongjiang from the Republic of China. I would ask them to stand and be recognized. Mr. Ren, the deputy mayor of the People's Government of Sui Hua City.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Li, the chief engineer of the Bureau of Aquatic Products of Sui Hua Prefecture; Mr. Li, with the Fisheries Marketing Development Corporation in Sui Hua City; Madam Liu, the division chief of the agriculture division of the Heilongjiang Provincial Commission of Science and Technology; Mr. Ren, the interpreter from the Foreign Affairs Office; Mr. Sheng, the director of Harbin Aquatic Research Institute; Mr. Cheng, the division chief of the Foreign Affairs Office of Harbin municipal government; and Mr. Xi Feng Chen, the division chief of the agriculture and rural village division of Harbin Municipal Science and Technology Commission.

On behalf of my colleague, the Hon. Bernie Wiens, Minister of Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management, we are pleased to welcome our honoured guests.

Mr. Speaker, our guests are here to proceed in the fish species transfer project; to learn about the cultural techniques and fisheries management of wall-eye and other fish species in Saskatchewan; to receive 1 million wall-eye eggs from Saskatchewan; to discuss further details on fisheries and agriculture cooperation; and to discuss trade opportunities between the two provinces.

We look forward to a growing and strengthening relationship with our colleagues from the People's Republic of China. Welcome to Saskatchewan.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a moment as well to introduce to the Assembly personally, a couple of friends who have joined us this afternoon, legion members from the Whitewood area, Wayne and Sue Shepherd.

I'd like to welcome them and thank them for their work and efforts in representing the legion in our area, and certainly, speaking out on behalf of the legion, and what work the legion has done through the years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to . . . it is indeed with great pride that I introduce Indian and Metis veterans. Mr. Speaker, on the Metis side, as was introduced before, we have Senator Stan Durocher. I also understand there is Alex Daniels that is here from Regina. On the Indian veterans, we have had David Greyeyes from Muskeg Lake that has been introduced, and also Gilbert McLeod from Peepeekisis.

Mr. Speaker, there's also representatives from Cumberland veterans: William Carriere, Solomon Goulet, and Joe McGillvary.

It is with great respect and honour that I express our deepest appreciation to the Indian and Metis veterans of this province. Treaty Indians, along with the Metis, joined the Armed Forces to fight for our country in large numbers. As an example, since World War I, Cumberland House has had 81 veterans. There was 26 listed on World War I, 33 in World War II, 22 as present-day peacemakers.

Indian and Metis soldiers distinguished themselves in preparation and in combat. They played a key role in reconnaissance in the front lines. Some were used in communications using their own language because the German and Italian armies could not decode their messages. We thank you again for your bravery, your courage, and your determination to save our country, to liberate Europe, and bring peace to the world.

Mr. Speaker, with due respect to all languages, I will now say a few words in translation with one of our indigenous languages, Cree, that was used to save many of our Canadian and allied troops.

(Translation in Cree: Otuyumiw, Mistuhi Kisteneetumuhineek isi ka noote nunaskomagok iskoniqueneenniyuk uschi apektuhigossanuk ootu Kiseeskachiwunoohk.

Meechet iskonigunenni igu apektuhigossan. Ki gee notinigestumagoniw oomu ootu Kituskeenuw. Isu pogo apo nistomitunuw nistosap napewuk ka gee simagunseeganchik Kaministigominuhigoskak oochi.

Misowe keesi nugucheehisiyuk uschi Kee neeta notinigewuk. Kee apuchetawuk meenu otuiyumeeniyau iga egohachi nistootagogchik Germunu igu Italiyunu.

Ki nunaskomitanin inigook ka gee soogigapuhistumek oomu Kituskeenuw, Ugamuskeeniw meenu ka gee puspiyayek uschi Kaginuw unisinni wuskituskumik.

Aw egosi.)

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it's very fitting

that today of all days I should have the opportunity to introduce to you and through you to other members of the Legislative Assembly, some 57 students from grades 4 and 7 in Ruth Pawson School in the north end of Regina. They're seated in your west gallery, Mr. Speaker. It will be my joy to meet with this group a little bit later, the group that has been here for much of the ceremonies that we've enjoyed so far today. But I look forward to meeting them, having our photo taken, and sharing a refreshment with them.

These students of course are the future that many of our veterans were fighting for 50-and-beyond years ago. So I ask all members to join me in welcoming the Ruth Pawson School here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly, four important special guests seated in your gallery. And I'd ask them stand as they're introduced.

First of all, Mr. Jackie Dadon, the head of production for CineFin Corporation; Gary Kaufman, head of business affairs for Buffalo Films; Mark Borte, producer, CineFin Corporation; as well as our good friend, Kevin DeWalt, president and owner of Minds Eye Pictures here in Regina.

Mr. Speaker, CineFin Corporation is a Paris-based company with offices in Los Angeles involved in the financing of production of the feed for worldwide distributions of movie production. CineFin is also the production arm of Orion Pictures of Los Angeles, whose claim to fame includes films like *Dances with Wolves*, *Silence of the Lambs*, *The Terminator*, *Robocop*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, just to name a few. And not to say that has any application here.

But I do want to say that these individuals have spent the last three days looking at potential locations, I guess I would say, in Saskatchewan. And I want to say that we wish you the best of luck in making a decision to locate some of your future productions here in the province of Saskatchewan.

And I know that all members will want to welcome the company and companies here today and wish you a great visit in the province of Saskatchewan.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

VE Day Anniversary

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, well before I emigrated from The Netherlands to Canada as a young boy, I was raised to appreciate and respect Canadians for their dominant role in the liberation of my then country. Genuine, strong gratitude is what Dutch people will always feel for Canadian courage and acts of valour that resulted in their freedom. The Dutch stand as one

with Canadians in mourning the loss of thousands of young Canadian soldiers lost in the World War II campaign of liberation.

Canadians today, who have always enjoyed freedom and have never lost it, may find it hard to understand the outpouring of joy and celebration by the Dutch even now, 50 years after liberation. Consider the impact of liberation on my family. My grandmother Jacoba, a widow, and her children — my aunts and uncles — sheltered a Jewish family of four from the fall of 1942 until liberation. One uncle had escaped from a German POW (prisoner of war) camp. My parents hid an American flyer in their own home. All this in small towns near the German border.

This meant living every moment with the oppressive burden of fear of being exposed, of being caught out. Liberation, freedom — these are more than words to express an absence of oppression. They were, 50 years ago, and still are today for my family, occasions of tremendous joy, an outpouring of relief, of life renewed, and of bottomless gratitude for Canada and the Canadian soldiers who made that possible. Thank you, Canada. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Murray: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On VE Day, I was two years old. And while I can't remember the joyous celebrations in my home town of Rotterdam, Holland, my parents spoke of them often and my mother still does. In fact my mother says that my first word was not mommy or daddy but Churchill.

The war was a devastating experience for many. My father was taken prisoner, and while my mother had no idea where he was or even if he were still alive, she became involved with the resistance movement, helping where she could. She even distributed pamphlets from my baby carriage. Eventually my father escaped, and with the help of sympathetic German families, he walked back home in time for the celebrations in May of 1945.

Mr. Speaker, those of us who are here because of the courage and sacrifices of those splendid Canadian men and women, can only imagine the unspeakable horror of war. Here in Canada out of a population of 12 million people, 1 million served in the forces, most as volunteers. Few countries in the west were so committed to fighting for the cause of freedom.

My pride in being a Canadian comes from the gratitude of my family and the thousands of other Dutch families who saw firsthand, 50 years ago, the generosity, the courage, and the compassion that have always been characterized by Canadians. Those attributes were certainly evident in Holland in May 1945. Thank you. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is

with humble appreciation I join my colleagues today to add my words to this important celebration.

Saskatchewan had an important role to play in the British Commonwealth air training plan. There were many training bases established throughout Saskatchewan, including a bombing and gunnery school at Dafoe. There is a farm at Dafoe which now has one of the largest farm storage buildings in the province. It is used to be a hangar for the bombing and gunnery school. A concrete gunnery target is still visible from the highway, and private planes are still using some of the runways that were needed for training some 50 years ago.

In 1940, Saskatchewan was home to six service flying training schools and five elementary flying training schools. In addition, there were bombing and gunnery schools, such as Dafoe and Mossbank. There were air observer schools at Prince Albert and Regina and initial training schools in Saskatchewan and Regina.

Canada was a good choice for many of these training schools: our wide open spaces, recruits who were eager to get involved, and our proximity to the United States and to Great Britain. The sites of these training air schools are an important part of Saskatchewan's past. Many young men passed through our province over 50 years ago and learned enough about flying to make a significant contribution in the war effort. On behalf of all my colleagues in this Assembly, I thank all veterans for your courage and your dedication to our country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for the past week we've observed, by the televisions in our living rooms, the ravages of war. We've observed the triumph in victory and the appreciation in remembrance. And I think our hearts have been moved as we've just watched the proceedings that have taken place and the celebrations across the world. And certainly in many nations in Europe . . . were saying thank you and remembering the time when their land was liberated.

And I can only add, Mr. Speaker, that while we've had comments about the wars to end all wars, in this great country of ours we certainly have a lot to be thankful for. And I believe while we celebrate today, it certainly is imperative that as a nation we continue to push for and strive for lasting peace, as we see men and women, boys and girls in parts of the world, have to continually live with and suffer under war.

And while we pay tribute to the legionnaires, our Armed Forces and the services represented here today, and we say thank you, let us only pray that we can have our part in indeed making not only this nation one of the greatest nations to live in, but working to build that better world.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday it was my honour to attend Moose Jaw's VE Day anniversary celebration and to lay a wreath on behalf of the province, along with the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow. Perhaps because of our closeness to 15 Wing, where hundreds of Canadians and Allied pilots earned their wings, Moose Javians feel a special pride in the service and victory of our military.

I am pleased to note that this summer a group of Moose Jaw youth, three generations younger than the veterans of VE Day, will pay tribute to fallen Canadians on Dutch soil. The Moose Jaw children's choir has been invited to an international choir festival in Arnhem, Holland. During the festival, on the day after Canada Day, they will pay a special visit to the Canadian war cemetery and lay a wreath of their own.

In doing that, Mr. Speaker, they will say thanks to our veterans in the most meaningful way possible — with their youth, their freedom, and with hearts filled with the joy of song. Mr. Speaker, Moose Javians feel that the ultimate memorial to the sacrifices of war is the preservation and celebration of peace. None say that better than our children.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Teichrob: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recall VE Day as a warm and sunny day in Saskatoon. People were out working in their lawns and gardens when neighbours who had been listening to their radios inside came running out, crying, the war is over, the war is over! There was much hugging and joyful, spontaneous celebration, for there was scarce a household which was not directly affected by the loss or absence of loved ones.

In our household the news was bittersweet. My mother and sister and I followed my father, from the time he enlisted in 1939, from Dundurn to Chilliwack to Trois Rivières, from where he embarked for Europe with his division of the Saskatoon Light Infantry in 1943.

Then we returned to Saskatoon to live with my maternal grandparents. Besides a son-in-law — my father — my grandmother had three sons all enlisted, all in Europe, one each in the army, navy, and air force. As far as we knew on VE Day, all were safe but one. One uncle had gone missing in action a year before.

I will never forget the day the courier brought the telegram and my grandmother could only read as far as, we regret to inform you, before she gave way to tears.

Veterans began to return shortly after VE Day. Ration books could be discarded and life began to improve. My own father was involved in the paperwork of the decommissioning process in Britain and returned in September of 1945. As for my uncle, it turned out that as a dispatch rider in Italy his motorcycle had hit a land mine, and he did return home eventually, although

wounded.

It is remembrances like these, Mr. Speaker, which make us every day thank God and all the veterans and peacekeepers of this country for the peace and freedom that the children and grandchildren of our generation have known. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Draper: — Mr. Speaker, sir, I was too young to be involved directly in the Second World War, but I was old enough to be a target. We had four bombs in our roof. Fortunately they didn't explode. Possibly they came from Oscar Schindler's factory.

Nevertheless my memories of VE Day are definitely sound and light. The sounds were when we were awakened by the church bells from St. Luke's Parish Church just down the road, and by carillons of St. Hillary's, St. Mary's, and All Saints. In those days, sir, there were real bells in every parish church.

And from the ships in Wallasey Pool, Birkenhead ship yards, and the Mersey, fog horns boomed out triumphantly. In the back streets were parties with tables and chairs in the roadway. Flags and bunting were everywhere. The dot, dot, dot, dash was painted on roads and walls. On factories we had paintings of the Union Jack and good old Winnie and good old Joe, meaning Stalin of course.

Unfortunately I lived on the main street with all the buses and all the trucks so we couldn't have a party, and we felt a bit left out of this, Raymond Bott, a colleague and I.

But that night it was the lights that struck me. For over five years the street lamps had been blacked out completely. Every window had to be completely covered and blacked out to prevent bombers from using them for guidance in their deadly missions.

But on this night, May 8, 1945, everything changed. Everything became brilliantly illuminated and I realized the significance of Vera Lynn's song: when the lights go on again all over the world. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Crow Benefit Pay-out

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Minister, could you outline your policy on distribution of the Crow pay-out? Specifically, how is the Crow pay-out going to be distributed to those farmers who are in the process of purchasing Crown lands in the province of Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — On the pay-out of Crown land, if somebody has an agreement for sale that they are buying the

Crown land or have boughten it, we will pass the full Crow benefit on to those producers.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Minister, you have made the commitment to pass the Crow pay-out on to producers. However, that isn't exactly what you're doing, is it, Mr. Minister? I have a letter here that you sent to one farmer who is purchasing Crown land, Mr. Jim Barmby from Lang.

Now I understand that you sent out a lot of these letters to people in the province, and this letter outlines how this money is going to be distributed. First the letter says the proceeds will be applied against any arrears outstanding on the sales agreement. That seems fair enough.

But then you say that any remaining funds will be applied against the principal balance. Now even if the farmer is right up to date in his payments, like Mr. Barmby is . . . Mr. Minister, why is it necessary for you to get first claim on all of this money? Why don't you pass it on to the producers and let them decide how they will use the money that they don't need applied to their principal and maybe need for spring seeding commitments in Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, we've committed to pass the money on whether . . . obviously if there's arrears owing, we would deduct that from the arrears, and we'll deduct it from the money that's owed to us on the land.

I don't know how much fairer you can get than that. I don't think other lenders, or other people who in the same situation, may even be doing that. Technically, as I understand the federal legislation, it will be who owns the land as of February 27. If we have title to the land, we obviously would get the cheque.

What we're saying is we're going to pass it on to the farmer — the full amount of it — to the people who are in the process of buying it because that seems like a fair thing to do, to us. And that's what we're doing. We're passing on the full amount to the producer. He gets the full benefit of that payment.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Minister, that is a very confusing kind of an answer. You can't have it and not have it, it doesn't seem to me.

Well, Mr. Minister, what you are effectively doing is breaking another contract with farmers. Even if a farmer is right up to date in his payments, you are forcing him to make an additional payment on his loan. You just have to get your hands on every possible dollar you can, don't you, Mr. Minister?

Now this money is supposed to be used to offset significant increases in transportation costs, yet you find it necessary to

take it away and apply it against land payments even if those payments are right up to date, Mr. Minister. That's not fair.

Again, Mr. Minister, farmers want to make their own decisions on how to spend their money instead of having you do it for them. They don't think you know best. They think they know best how their money needs to be spent.

Will you change this policy and see to it that this money goes to the producers as per your previous commitment which you have made some time ago?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the commitment that we made previously was that when we found out from the federal government whether or not there was going to be money, we would make a decision as to how to pass it on. I don't know what more the member opposite can ask for. We're saying in the situation where there is an agreement for sale, even though the federal legislation doesn't oblige us to pass this money on, we're going to pass it on. I don't know how much fairer you could be than that, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Montreal Lake Area Co-Management Plan

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister responsible for Indian and Metis Affairs.

Madam Minister, as you are aware, there are growing problems with respect to the co-management plan being proposed by you and the federal government for the Montreal Lake area. This agreement transfers sweeping powers to a council 50 per cent controlled by the Montreal Lake Band, with 25 per cent going to the provincial and the federal governments.

This agreement, Madam Minister, affects 3 million acres, including the entire Prince Albert National Park. This is a land mass roughly equivalent to three times the size of Prince Edward Island. And yet the taxpayers, property owners, and RMs (rural municipality), have yet to be consulted on this issue. As a matter of fact, negotiations had been going on for over a year before they knew about it.

Madam Minister, what is your role in this débâcle and what are you planning to do to rectify this situation?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — I'd like to thank the member for his question.

I will start out by affirming that this is Minister Irwin's plan — the Liberal federal minister responsible for Indian Affairs — and that we have made clear several times to him that this is not our process and that we do not agree with the statements he's making and do not agree with the way he is conducting himself regarding co-management.

We do have a process in Saskatchewan by which we discuss these issues and they do involve bringing all stakeholders affected into the discussion, and it's an orderly and systematic process that includes all of those who may be affected.

You've seen in other situations where we've adopted a willing partners type of approach to resolution of these kinds of issues, so we would just have to ask Mr. Irwin to discipline himself and to get into the process that we've set up here to deal with these things.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Madam Minister, it appears there is certainly a difference of opinion between you and the federal government and I think it's about time your government recognized its responsibility and accepted it.

The federal Minister of Indian Affairs, Ron Irwin, said it was your government that initiated this deal. In fact, this morning on CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) radio, he said the Saskatchewan government invited him to put together a co-management deal in the province and that everything was going fine until a few months ago.

Also, the chief of the Montreal Lake Indian Band blames you for the trouble with municipalities. He said, and I quote: one thing the provincial government cannot back down from is that they left the RMs out to dry and they did not inform them of the paper that was presented.

Madam Minister, the chief of the Indian band has said you left people out to dry. So let's start with the basics and get you on the record. Do you support the co-management proposal — yes or no?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — I'll make another attempt to explain this to you, that this is something that Minister Irwin is doing on his own. We have conveyed to him in writing several times that we do not agree with his conduct in this matter, and that we instead would like him to follow the orderly process that we have already laid out for co-management discussions.

It really is incumbent on the federal government to come to grips with these issues of jurisdiction, and because they're unwilling to do that, they keep shuffling it off in these kinds of politically reckless sort of arrangements; that they're trying to replace some actual legal and responsible decisions in terms of jurisdiction that are clearly in their court to make.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Well, Madam Minister, it seems quite convenient to blame the federal government when you invited the federal government to, in fact, ask them to . . . it was your government that initiated the deal. And, Madam Minister, recent media accounts are saying that landowners and residents of villages and rural municipalities are stunned that such sweeping changes are being contemplated.

And that was the same concern that was raised with me in Maidstone a week ago. Madam Minister, is it your intention to not only consult but actually listen to these concerns? Or better yet, is your intention to seek their approval before any documents or agreements are signed?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — The provincial government has no intention to sign any agreements that fall outside our legal responsibility/authority to do so. And whatever is contemplated by the federal minister is contemplated by himself alone, and I guess whoever else chooses to join him on this particular path, but that certainly isn't ourselves.

We have a process in place by which we discuss these things. He's not following that process, and we will continue to remind him of what the process is. And I can only say to you today that we have no intention of going down this path, and we have made that clear to the federal minister.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, Madam Minister, can the individuals or the people living in this area of the province . . . are you giving them your assurances today that their approval will be sought before any documents or agreements are signed? Is that what you're saying, Madam Minister?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — I can only speak for the provincial government, but the provincial government will not be party to any agreements that haven't involved the willing participation of the stakeholders in a full discussion of whatever resolution would be made. So yes, I can give you that insurance for those matters which fall within our jurisdiction. Other matters you may have to take up with the federal minister.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Crown Construction Tendering Agreement

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the government's choice to ignore the wishes of businesses across the province and implement the new Crown Tendering Agreement speaks volumes about this NDP (New Democratic Party) government. This government and this policy will cost more and could cost local workers valuable jobs.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business has joined the fight against this costly tendering policy. And I quote from a recent letter that states costs for utility customers and taxpayers inevitably goes up anywhere from 5 to 20 per cent above previous competitive bidding. And I'd like to table that letter now, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Premier today. How much public pressure will it take for you to admit that implementing this policy was wrong?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, we are monitoring this. We believe that this program will prove itself when it's had an opportunity to be in effect for a construction season. There's every reason to believe that this program isn't going to cost the taxpayer anything, that it will not cost the taxpayer anything. We are going to monitor it; we have said that. At the end of the year we'll review it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, it was a week ago that I raised that \$115 million more to Saskatchewan taxpayers for your program. Mr. Speaker, the public is not pleased with this agreement. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business has compiled a list of over 300 contracting companies who oppose this union preference policy. That's over 300 companies who employ thousands of people in this province who oppose your Crown Tendering Agreement.

And I'd like to read a *Leader-Post* argument, May 4, 1995, and I quote:

Romanow says the policy is designed to help keep skilled jobs in Saskatchewan.

But he conceded it may be reviewed if it has a negative impact on companies and workers.

The negative impact is real, Mr. Speaker.

My question again to the Premier. Over 300 companies and employers can't be wrong; will you commit to ending this agreement today?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, I'd remind the member from Shaunavon that there's nothing unique about this policy. If you find it so offensive, you might want to have your leader speak to the federal government; they've had this very same policy in effect for decades and it's worked fine for them.

This is a bit of Liberal policy in fact which we're trying here. We believe, as has been the experience at the national level, that it isn't going to cost anything. That's been the experience in Ottawa and we believe that that will be the experience here.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPherson: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Minister, I'll tell you what's unique — and it's only in Saskatchewan — you're willing to give up the jobs of workers and companies to bring in a union-only policy. That's what's unique.

Mr. Speaker, the Crown Tendering Agreement has only been implemented for a very short period of time and already one company is moving out of Saskatchewan because of this new tendering policy. The president of Mechanical Management and

Consulting Inc. stated in a recent news article, and I quote: That's why I moved my company headquarters out of Saskatchewan. And he went on to say that as long as Saskatchewan maintains its current labour and taxation policies, its tax base will continue to shrink and its economy will suffer.

And I'd like to send a copy of that letter across over to the Premier, so he could perhaps read along, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the Premier: how can you stand by this policy when in just a few short weeks it is already clear that companies are leaving the province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Shillington: — Perhaps the member would just send the written question over and then it might be easier to understand.

I want to say to the member from Shaunavon, that this policy establishes a level playing-field. It'll be the same for union and non-union firms. I also want to say to the member opposite that this is in real distinction with the way Liberals hand out contracts when they're actually in office. The Prime Minister is accused of awarding a contract to his son-in-law — that's the way the Liberals do business. That's not how this government does business. We award the contracts on a fair, even, level plane. That's our . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order, order! Before I call on the next . . . Order. I want to ask the member from Shaunavon that in the future, if he asks a question, I think he should have the courtesy of listening to the answer.

Government Financial Planning

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Finance. Madam Minister, your government is still refusing to give Saskatchewan people a complete picture with regard to the province's finances. The very first point the auditor makes in his spring report is the government needs to present the Assembly with a complete financial plan.

The auditor says the '95-96 budget is incomplete because the General Revenue Fund only accounts for about 60 per cent of the government's activities.

As a result (the auditor says), comparisons of planned and actual . . . results for the Government as a whole (are not) . . . possible. Such comparisons are needed to understand and assess the Government's financial performance.

Madam Minister, why won't you follow the auditor's advice? Why won't you include the Crowns as part of the annual budget?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, again he's using selective evidence. What he's not reading is what else the auditor said about our accounting practices. He said they're amongst the best in Canada. And in terms of our accounting, we give a full and complete accounting of all activities of the government, including the Crown corporations.

Now he's talking about budgeting. The way we budget is the way the vast majority of provinces in Canada budget.

Mr. Speaker, I stand proud of the accomplishments of this government in terms of opening the books and ensuring that we are accountable to the people of the province for the finances of the province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the question's relevant because of the answers of Madam Minister last Friday in debate on a Bill. And this is a problem, Mr. Speaker, because during that debate the minister admitted to increasing taxes by a net of \$225 million — not the \$220 million decrease that she's been bragging about in recent days.

The minister says that she raised taxes in total by \$225 million, but she couldn't tell us the size of the increases in utility rates which, Mr. Speaker, as we all know, can be another form of taxation.

So even though the Minister of Finance sits here today, she can't tell us about 40 per cent of the government's spending. Now, Madam Minister, wouldn't the picture be a lot clearer if the annual budget included all government operations as proposed in our Taxpayers' Protection Act?

Why not amend your balanced budget legislation to include this provision, so that we could see the entire picture, Madam Minister.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, I would welcome the opportunity to answer the member's question because it was very, very interesting — the former premier of the province, standing up, trying to say that a utility rate increase is a tax. That means when Alberta Power, a private company, increases power rates in Alberta, that's a tax. That means when Bell Canada, a private company in Ontario, increases telephone rates, it's a tax.

But what was so absolutely revealing was the comment by the former premier that you might have some money in the Crown corporations; why wouldn't you just move it across and spend it — and spend it.

Mr. Speaker, what I say to the members opposite is our

Balanced Budget Act, if the members would care to pass it, does cover all the operations of the government because the debt management plan applies to all parts of government including Crown corporations. So I invite them to join us in passing our balanced budget legislation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister knows that just rings hollow. In all other jurisdictions, there's a review process where the public can understand why those utility rates go up. The only review process we've got in this province is the Premier's former law partner, Don Ching, sitting on high at CIC (Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan), saying we need some more money to balance the budget. There's no review process, Madam Minister. It's done in the dark of night over at CIC, and you know it.

Now by your own admission on Friday, you've hit Saskatchewan taxpayers with a net tax increase of \$225 million since 1991. That's net, Madam Minister, including the tax cuts you like to talk about. Now we don't even know what the utility rate increases have come from because you either don't know or you refuse to tell us.

The point is, Madam Minister, isn't it time taxpayers started to see some protection from you simply raising more revenue by gouging taxpayers with your tax and utility rate increases. Isn't time we had some protection like the taxpayer protection Act? You made a good start, Madam Minister, on Friday, admitting you actually raised taxes since '91. Take one more step, Madam Minister. Protect Saskatchewan tax. . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. The member must have a question.

Mr. Swenson: — I do, sir. Madam Minister, will you pass our taxpayer protection Act so that you cannot gouge taxpayers in this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite. You do have to have a sense of humour to sit in this legislature, to hear the Tories talk about creating a PURC (Public Utilities Review Commission) when they were the ones that disbanded it; to hear the Tories talk about taxes, the party that came to power talking about cutting the sales tax, cutting the income tax, cutting the gas tax — what they did was raise the gas tax, raise the sales tax, raise the income tax.

If we did not have the debt that these members opposite created for this province, if we didn't have to pay over \$800 million a year in interest, we wouldn't have to have an E&H (education and health) tax in this province.

Mr. Speaker, we have opened the books of the province. We have a new plan for the finances of the province, which includes tax cuts and paying down the debt. That's where we

stand. Where do you stand?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Madam Minister, you know full well that you don't have to create another PURC. There's another piece of legislation before this House that if you had the courage to use it, Madam Minister, would put a majority of your members in charge of reviewing those utility rate increases. And I'd sooner have the New Democrat members of this House, Madam Minister, review it than the Premier's friend, Don Ching, over at CIC because at least it would have to be done out in the open.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: — Now, Madam Minister, why don't you start . . . if you are scared, if you are afraid of The Taxpayers' Protection Act, then go back and at least pass the piece of legislation that would allow the members of this Assembly to review those rates before you impose them.

Would you at least do that, Madam Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, you know I fear that the Tories have developed the Liberal disease, the one hand not knowing what the other hand is doing. On the one hand was their platform released last week, in which they spend \$170 million cutting the sales tax. And they find it, sort of, they say, somewhere.

An Hon. Member: — Sort of.

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Sort of. By cuts that people are supposed to figure out where those cuts are. That's on the one hand.

But then on the other hand, which is what they're talking about today, is their Act. And in there they're going to reduce the debt of the province in 25 years, which happens to cost \$500-and-some million a year. Now where the heck is that money coming from?

Mr. Speaker, the opposition parties can't go out promising everything to everybody — tax cuts, paying down the debt — and saying, I don't know where the money's coming from; you figure it out.

Mr. Speaker, what they want is a government with a plan where everything is laid out, and only we provide that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Agricultural Employment Offices

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to either the Minister of Agriculture or the Minister of Labour. It's in reference to the labour force statistics which

we've just been perusing.

We note that agricultural employment, Minister, has increased 3,000 from the March 1995 levels, to 72,000. And that's a very significant number.

Largely responsible, Minister, for these job placements are the local agricultural employment offices, which are of course a federal jurisdiction. They are to be closed, we hear, in September and those jobs will be no longer be placed.

Mr. Minister, what are you doing, first of all, to save the jobs of the people who work in these offices, and what are you going to do to provide an alternative for this service in the province of Saskatchewan to place agricultural workers in the future?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Chairman, the member opposite quite rightly points out that the agricultural employment service centres are — I believe seven of them in the province — are being closed down by the federal government by September, I believe. We believe this is going to be a hardship on Saskatchewan farmers; I've written a letter to the federal minister expressing our concerns about it.

But, Mr. Speaker, again we will not be able to backfill all of the cuts that the federal government is making, particularly in the field of agriculture and transportation. They've hit western Canada very, very hard, and this is just one more hit on the agricultural industry that we will . . . (inaudible) . . . be unable to backfill that service for farmers in Saskatchewan.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 65 — An Act to amend The Members of the Legislature Assembly Superannuation Act, 1979 (No. 2)

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Members of the Legislative Assembly Superannuation Act, 1979 (No. 2).

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, as it relates to written question no. 74, I believe, I would move it be converted to motions for return (debatable), and question no. 75.

The Speaker: — Question no. 75, motion for return debate.

(1445)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 27

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Carson that **Bill No. 27 — An Act to amend The Urban Municipality Act, 1984, and to make a Consequential Amendment to The Municipal Board Act** be now read a second time.

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

Bill No. 29

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Carson that **Bill No. 29 — An Act to amend the Rural Municipality Act, 1989** be now read a second time.

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

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 58 — An Act to amend The Income Tax Act

Clause 1

Mr. Devine: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What are the implications of taxes that the minister I'm sure is aware of . . . are the activities of the federal government in its relationship with provinces? I notice recently that, as a result of the federal budget, there have been some revenue implications for the province of Saskatchewan that could have some impact on our revenue and our taxation.

Would the minister have any . . . could provide the public with an indication of, briefly, what implications on our revenue the federal government budget, the federal budget, had on our level of revenue as it might impact on our need for taxation.

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, to the member opposite, very little impact. Less than a million dollars from what was in this budget has any impact on our budget. Most of the tax measures . . . gas tax has no impact for us, for example.

Mr. Devine: — So on this budget, so I understand, that there has been really no appreciable — not to discount a million dollars, but in terms of the budget here of a \$5 billion budget approximately — there's been no appreciable impact on the revenue for the province of Saskatchewan. It's pretty much neutral. It's about a million dollars is all the revenue impact and that would be a million dollars negative for us? Or how did it wash out?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, just about half a million more. But this is just from taxes. We're not talking about any of the expenditure items that they announced. But if you look at the revenue items that were announced in this budget, half a million at most effect on our budget this year . . .

(inaudible interjection) . . . Yes.

Mr. Devine: — Thank you, Madam Minister. Would that be true over the last few years, '93-94, 4 and 5, or has it been pretty neutral; or have they offloaded or have they taken away, added? If this year is worth half a million dollars to us, did that kind of make up for anything in the past?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Well, Mr. Speaker, last year and this year there would be a negative, if you look at the whole picture of what was announced in the budget. Every time they change unemployment insurance it means hundreds and hundreds of dollars more in welfare payments. So each and every budget they have offloaded onto the province much more in costs than you've ever gained in revenue.

Mr. Devine: — I suspected that, Madam Minister. Could you or your officials just briefly itemize . . . I mean what areas did they offload? Where did we get hit and what did it cost us? Just the major categories and in part where, in your view as the minister, where you think it impacted the people of Saskatchewan more.

And going back to the other day, was it a balance of an impact on individuals versus the business community? Or did it hit pretty much everybody on a 50/50 basis? But generally just the impact in the major categories over the last few years would be very helpful.

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, to the member opposite, clearly one of the biggest areas of offloading has been the area of agriculture, which of course in the budget they announced the elimination of the Crow benefit. They announced 30 per cent cuts in other farm subsidies. So there has been significant reductions there.

There's also been reductions in all social programs. They've frozen their commitments in health and post-secondary education, which has meant reductions. And a major source of offloading has been changes in unemployment insurance and other similar social programs.

Another decision which was very detrimental to the people of Saskatchewan was transferring responsibility for treaty Indians from the federal jurisdiction to the province. As soon as treaty Indians leave a reserve they're now the responsibility of the province, so that has cost us significantly.

Our estimate is that over the last decade Saskatchewan people have absorbed about \$522 million in cuts of one kind or another that have come from the federal government. The most dramatic of these have been in the areas that I've described, and they continue into the future.

Mr. Devine: — Thanks, Madam Minister. Would you have a brief summary of what you think this has cost Saskatchewan in the last . . . in your administration, since '91-92 to date, and how you think it might have balanced? Give me a ballpark on individuals versus businesses.

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — A rough estimate would be about a billion and a half in the '90s have been offloaded from the federal government to the people of Saskatchewan in one way or another from the programs that I've talked to you about — agriculture, social programs, across the piece . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . 1.5 billion has been offloaded onto the people of Saskatchewan in terms of things the federal government used to cover, they no longer cover, and are having to be covered by the province or else have been eliminated.

Mr. Devine: — Well let's . . . there's two different figures there, Madam Minister. You said it was about 522 million in the last 10 years. Then I asked you for the last four years and you said it's 1.5 billion. So it doesn't . . . it just doesn't work. Could you or your officials give me a . . . over the last . . . since your administration came in, what the cuts have been to the province of Saskatchewan in terms of the federal government offloading?

I mean you'd have them, I'm sure, quite readily available. And it is a little confusing when you said over the last 10 years it was 522 million and then you said over the last five years it was 1.5 billion. Now that's quite a difference.

So perhaps we could take another run at that and just . . . Over the last four years, or since your administration came in, what have been the cuts imposed on the people of Saskatchewan from the federal budget in terms of offloading to the people?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, to the member opposite. Actually the document I'm looking at is in the budget, page 82 in the . . . 86 in the budget. And there's a graph there and it goes through all of the different years.

The correction is 522 is 1995-96, that one year alone. But the graph goes and it starts with . . . what it has here is 1991-92, 497; 1993-94, 499; 1995-96, 522. And then if you look at the pie chart in the budget, they break down where those reductions have been — 278 million for established programs financing, which is health, education, post-secondary education; agriculture, 150 million; treaty Indians, 43 million; and other, 51 million — that would include things like unemployment insurance changes.

So the pie chart shows the distribution in the different areas, and the graphs show the reductions each and every year.

(1500)

Mr. Devine: — Thank you, Madam Minister. To finish that picture, do you have a similar pie diagram or chart in terms of the province's contribution to health and education, rural municipalities, urban municipalities, in terms of local government financing?

In other words, have we been keeping up our help and assistance to health, education, and rural municipalities over the same period of time? If you've got a pie diagram and a chart for the feds, do you have one for the province that would sort of give us the same summary over the last few years?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Not exactly, but on page 44 there's a breakdown of the spending of the government, comparing 1991, 1995-96, and projected 1998-99. And it shows the distribution of spending.

And as I say, that's on page 44 of the budget. And what you find there is that the province's contributions to health are about the same, will be about the same, this year as they were in 1991 in terms of the pie chart — similar numbers in education and very similar on social programs.

So I think the distribution is very similar in terms of the amount that's being spent in each area.

Mr. Devine: — So are you saying, Madam Minister, that your administration has maintained the expenditures to third parties — that is, rural municipalities, urban municipalities and your grants to universities and to education and to health care and to social services. In terms of third parties, other levels of government, have you maintained your expenditures there? Or have there been, as they say, any indications or could you tell me of any indications of what are called corresponding offloading to other levels of government that have been experienced?

And obviously we've heard of levels of offloading from local politicians elected at other levels. So I'm trying to find out where it all washes out. How have the rural municipalities, for example, been treated? And then we can go through each one of them.

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, to the member opposite. What I said is . . . no, we do not have tables like that. The only tables we have in the breakdown is on page 44 of the budget, and it talks of the pie of spending, what percentages goes to health; of the pie of spending, what percentage goes to education. The information the member is mentioning, no, we do not have that.

Mr. Devine: — Well, Madam Minister, percentages don't tell us a lot about how the municipalities are doing. I think you would admit that or acknowledge that. Do you have any indication, or do your officials have any indication, whether the budget this year, for example, increased or decreased the amount of money that went to rural municipalities in terms of revenue sharing?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, to the member opposite, what I would say is that of course is in the *Estimates*. The member opposite will know that that has been frozen, but they will also be participating in a percentage of VLT (video lottery terminal) revenues.

Mr. Devine: — Well, Madam Minister, it would be very helpful in going through this Bill to know how people have fared in terms of taxation at the local level as a result of your administration. And we would just like for you to have some summaries to present to us.

If you are going to change income tax but at the same time you've had some impact on local taxation . . . I think, you know, members of the legislature used to be in municipal government. Some were on city council, some now sitting in here in the legislature.

City councils have to perhaps raise taxes to meet their budgets if in fact money doesn't come from provincial governments or doesn't come from federal governments. And it would be . . . I'm sure you have the numbers, Madam Minister, in terms of the amount of money and revenue sharing that has gone to third levels of government. And I politely ask you again, would you have the increases or decreases and the amount of money that goes to municipalities?

I mean, the Department of Finance does this all the time. I'm sure you have that because obviously that has some impact on their level of taxation, and if it's all awash that's fine. If they've had to bear some more costs, therefore they've probably had to raise some taxes. If they've got some windfalls, they probably could hold the line on taxes or reduce them.

And I wonder if the minister's officials . . . I asked again. If you could just give us a summary of whether you're spending more for municipal governments or you're spending less, and how much that was. You were kind enough to give me the numbers on the federal government in terms of offloading or in terms of differences. Could you do the same for municipal governments?

I think it's only fair and reasonable to get informations on the two levels of government because you're in the middle. You deal with the federal government, and of course you deal with the municipalities. It's not right that you just talk about the feds and not talk about how the provincial municipal governments have fared.

Again I would ask your officials, or ask you to through to your officials to . . . could they give us the net change in revenue to third parties, and particularly to municipal governments in the province, over the last four, five . . . or last four years?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, to the member opposite, what we announced in the budget is a freeze in monies to municipal governments across the province. They'll also be participating in the VLT (video lottery terminal) revenue, 10 per cent of the VLT revenue, in some way.

I'm sorry we do not have that information. We're here, I would remind the member opposite through the chairman, to discuss a tax Bill. We do not have those cumulative figures; they're not available. And I'm sorry; we do not have the capacity to put them together right now.

Now if the member has questions about the tax Bill, we of course would be most pleased to answer questions about the tax Bill.

Mr. Devine: — Well, Madam Minister, my questions about the tax Bill are as . . . in the way that you're bringing forth this Bill,

perhaps you could be more generous when we get the total picture. But as we heard in question period and we've heard from the auditor and we're hearing again, we don't have the whole picture.

Well what we would like and what the taxpayer would like is . . . just what is the financial picture in terms of revenues to the municipalities? You said, Madam Minister, that there was a freeze in revenue sharing to the municipalities in this budget. Could you give me therefore what it was. I'm sure that you have it at your fingertips. Was it froze last year, and was it froze the year before, or was there an increase or a decrease?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, to the member opposite. The practice of the government is to announce third-party grants two years out. It is frozen this year, 1995-96; it is frozen '96-97, but there will be participation in the 10 per cent VLT revenue in some way by these other parties.

Mr. Devine: — I got that, Madam Minister. Could you tell me if it was froze in '94-95 and '93-94?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, to the member opposite, that information will be available in the budgets. We do not have all the past budgets here, but it would be easy to get research staff to . . . your research staff to look back and find out what it was. I don't have that information here as of now.

Mr. Devine: — Minister, that's very difficult to fathom that you wouldn't know whether you had increases or decreases in revenue sharing to the municipalities over the last couple three years. You had the total increases in taxes, the total decreases in taxes, and the net change in taxes over the last four years the last time we were in this . . . discussing this Bill. That was available. This is a lot less complicated than that.

Madam Minister, I would just ask you to . . . Could you have your officials — we have time this afternoon — could you ask your officials just to check the last two or three budgets and find out if the contributions to the municipalities went up, down, or went sideways in the last two or three years. I don't think that's too much to ask because we could begin to get a sense of any success or — if you will — burden, pain on taxation to the local people because obviously there is only one taxpayer. That's at the local level. And if you change taxes there, you're going to have an impact on the municipalities as well as health and education.

So, Madam Minister, do you think your officials could get those numbers, perhaps later this afternoon? Or would they be able to just make a phone call and say, what's the revenue sharing been over the last three years in our jurisdiction? It's probably a phone call, Madam Minister. Do you think we could do that?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, I'm sure that somebody's research staff could easily look back over past budgets and find out the number. But, Mr. Chairman, I just would remind the members opposite that what we're looking at

is a tax Bill to cut taxes in the province of Saskatchewan, to reduce the income tax rate for a significant number of taxpayers.

Mr. Devine: — Madam Minister, what we're seeing here is your reluctance to be honest with the taxpayer. You've said — and it's relevant — that there's a freeze in revenue sharing in '95-96, '96-97. Now that's important for us to know when we're looking at taxation.

Would the minister tell me . . . perhaps her officials have . . . what their estimate of the rate of inflation or cost of doing business is for the municipalities on those two years that she's frozen the money going to the municipalities.

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — The member opposite would know that we don't do particular estimates for municipalities so that the estimates we have would be for the province.

Mr. Devine: — Madam Minister, we're going to be here an awful long time on this Bill on taxation if we don't get a little bit more cooperation. And we want to know why it's necessary that you have these particular provisions in the Bill. And to know that, Madam Minister, we need to know how the taxpayer has been faring.

The taxpayer at the local level picks up the slack that you and the federal government impose on them because of offloading, and anybody knows that. Any municipal councillor knows it. Any member of the legislature knows it. Anybody involved in any kind of government knows that it is this three-way contribution that is necessary.

So, Madam Minister, I would respectfully like to know, on behalf of the taxpayers, if you can give us the rate of inflation that you expect when you put together your budget so that we know how much the taxation has an impact on local people. Then we have an idea of what the cost is. And if you've cut education and cut health care or cut your contributions to municipalities, obviously there's another level of funding that the taxpayer has to come up with.

So I ask you again, could you reconsider and provide us with as much information as possible so that we could get an idea on behalf of municipal councillors, the city of Regina, city of Saskatoon, local RMs, rural and urban municipalities, how they have fared under your jurisdiction? I mean just give us a rough go at it. People are going to wonder what you're afraid of. If you've done a pretty good job, you shouldn't be ashamed of it. You'd say, well we've treated them fairly, and here it is. I don't know why we necessarily have to have a difficulty here . . . just basically what has it been, how is it, so we can get a rough estimate of how the taxpayer is faring under this tax provision.

And again I point out, with respect, that you seem to have the summary of the offloading from the federal government; I think you would have something similar for municipal governments because you deal with them. And it's a little strange — it seems to me — that you would avoid that.

If you think you've done a good job, just lay them out for us, and we'll have an idea of what we're talking about.

(1515)

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, to the member opposite, much of the information he's asking for is contained in our budget document. And I can refer him to page 32. We do not have a table. We are not going to provide a table on the municipal side. It doesn't exist.

But what we do have is . . . you asked for the Canadian price index, inflation. I would remind the member opposite that the budget says 1.2 per cent. And you can look at all the assumptions right throughout on page 32 of this year's budget.

Mr. Devine: — Would the minister give us, just because she has officials and I don't here, what the budget was or your contribution is to municipal governments, third party people, Health, Education, and Municipal Government for '95-96?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Freeze. It was exactly the same as it was the year before.

Mr. Chairman, to the member opposite, I would remind him again what we're talking about is a tax Bill to cut taxes for individuals in this province. But what I would say is page 93 of the budget . . . it's a matter of adding up third party grants on page 93 of the budget.

So you can do Health, 1.5. You can add up Education, 880. You can add up part of Municipal Government at 198 although infrastructure money is in there as well and culture money. So the two main ones are Education and Health.

Mr. Devine: — Well all right, Madam Minister. What I'm trying to get . . . If your officials could add those up . . . what the third party money is . . . and we've got 2 per cent inflation, and it was a little higher than that in the last two or three years. And you've either frozen it or rolled it back a bit. We'll have an idea of how much offloading that the local taxpayer has had to bear as a result of your budgets.

So it looks to me like it is in the ballpark — \$872 million plus \$198 million plus probably 1.4, \$1.5 billion. Now you've cut some of that back, and you've frozen it when there's inflation. I imagine it's fair to say we've had, say, four years of inflation at 2 per cent. That's 8 per cent cut. Plus you've cut some others on 1.5 billion, so you're looking at maybe 15 to 20 per cent cut net in that budget over the last four years. And 20 per cent on a billion dollars is \$200 million. Would that be about accurate, Madam Minister?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, to the member opposite, what I would say is we're talking about a tax Bill here. We do not have the capacity to go into great detail breaking down other estimates. The member opposite would know. If you're getting less money from the federal government, of course we have cut third parties. Of course he remembers that

very clearly.

We do not have that number here, available today. I'm sure at some point research staff can get it, but it's not here, available today. And as I say, what we're talking about is an income tax Bill.

Mr. Devine: — Madam Minister, this is so relevant. We're talking about taxes, and we're talking about municipal governments. It's so relevant.

It's almost unbelievable that you wouldn't have taxation numbers and revenue that you share with municipalities over the last two or three years when you have at your fingertips the federal number. And you just said, if the feds offload, we have to offload. You said that here's the fed's offload, and now you're reluctant to say what your offload was.

Well we can put it together, Madam Minister, and I'm just asking for your concurrence. You have officials. You have calculators. You have computers. You have telephones. You have several hundred staff.

If you have 1.5 billion budget and over four years you've cut it in the neighbourhood of 15 or 20 per cent, given inflation and given 2 per cent here and 2 per cent and 2 per cent there, we're looking at maybe — what? — a couple of hundred million dollars in offloading to municipal governments and third parties.

Now, Madam Minister, they had to make that up with taxes. See the relevance? This Bill is about taxes and about income tax. And that local municipal person, that taxpayer, has to pay health and education tax for local government because you've been offloading and dumping on them. Madam Minister, it seems to me fairly relevant. And particularly, you've given me everything but, okay? You've given me the federal offload. You've given me the fact that you had to freeze it. You've given me the rate of inflation. You've given me the totals in budgets. I just want you to calculate what the pain is or the level of tax increases at the local level as a result of your particular government coming into power. I'm sure, Madam Minister, that you would be able . . . I'm sure you have the figures there.

Or maybe put it another way. If that budget on those departments is one and a half billion dollars, and you freeze it or reduce it, and you've got a rate of inflation of 2 per cent, and you do that for four years, would the cut generally be in the neighbourhood of \$200 million? Is that about the cost of offloading to the local taxpayer as a result of your administration?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, that of course is a question for estimates, and we would be delighted to get into it at estimates time.

Mr. Devine: — Madam Minister . . . Mr. Chairman, isn't it interesting, Mr. Chairman, that the minister was ready with the numbers on the other players and not on the local Saskatchewan

taxpayers? Now I know it's political, Mr. Chairman. It's very difficult. We're dealing with taxes at the local level, and the minister wants to say this is all about tax reductions. No, it's not, Mr. Chairman.

What we see and the accumulation of the effect in this province is that we had a \$250 million net tax increase that the minister admitted the last time we talked — net tax increase to the people of Saskatchewan; all tax increases and all decreases.

Now what we didn't cover — and we tried to — is the offloading which is another couple of hundred million dollars. The utilities, which the minister says when you raise the power rates and telephone rates and SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) rates, those aren't tax increases; they just take money out of people's pockets. We didn't include those.

Now when we get the net, net, net — as my colleague asked for here in question period because the auditor said we should have some restatements here — what we look at coming out of the taxpayers' pockets is utility rate increases of a couple of hundred million dollars at least, offloading of a couple hundred million dollars, and your tax increase is net of \$250 million that you admitted to the other day. So, Madam Minister, that adds up to in the neighbourhood of 6, \$700 million net tax increases on the people of Saskatchewan. And you're waltzing in here with this piece of legislation saying this is all about tax decreases. You see why we're a little sceptical.

Madam Minister, three and a half years ago you talked a lot about taxes. You said, we will reduce the PST (provincial sales tax). We will eliminate the PST on harmonized goods, and we'll never raise taxes — never. You said no taxes on the people of Saskatchewan — 1991; I remember it clearly.

And what you have here — and it's relevant to the taxation that you're talking about in this Bill — is over \$200 million in net tax increases, over \$200 million in offloading onto cities, towns, and communities, and \$200 million plus in utilities, Madam Minister. If you don't want to call those taxes, I guess you could say well it's picking the pockets of the local taxpayer. And it's a utility, and it's offloading, and it's municipal tax. I'll just ask you, Madam Minister, maybe to help you in terms of the relevance of this, would you call federal offloading out of the province of Saskatchewan a tax increase for the people of Saskatchewan?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, to the member opposite, he raises many points, and most of them lack basis in fact — most importantly, the fact that we ever promised to eliminate the PST.

What I'll say to the member opposite is this. This is not about taxes at the local level. This is not about utility rates. This is a tax Bill to reduce the income tax rates for people in Saskatchewan — \$150 per person, \$300 per family — and to provide targeted tax cuts to business. We would invite the members opposite to debate this Bill, to tell us what they like, what they don't like about this Bill. But I think it's incumbent

upon them to direct their attention to this Bill because it's a very important piece of legislation to the people of this province.

Mr. Devine: — Well, Madam Minister, the point is with all of your tax increases, this Bill should remove the burden of this special taxation. You've got a net increase of taxes of \$200-and-some million, offloading of 200 million, and utilities of \$200 million, and you're talking about a slight decrease here. What . . . my argument in this Bill is that you should just wipe it all out because you're not being honest with the taxpayers, and you won't be honest with me in the legislature, and you won't tell the viewing public what the total tax increases are.

I asked you a question. I will ask you once again: do you consider federal offloading a tax burden to the people of Saskatchewan? Could you answer that?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, what I consider federal offloading is a cost to the people of Saskatchewan. It's obviously a cost to people who have to go on to unemployment insurance, getting less benefits. It's a cost to people who've had difficulties in health care and education.

And I would ask the member again to remember that we're talking about a tax Bill which cuts income tax for the average family — \$150 per taxpayer, \$300 per family . . . targeted tax cuts to business. And that's the legislation before the House. We want to talk about other measures. We should go into estimates which is the time when we have all the information here to answer those questions.

Mr. Devine: — Madam Minister, would you give me your commitment that you will answer the questions that I have put forward here when we get to your financial estimates? In other words, what we'd like to know and the taxpayer would like to know is what is the revenue sharing position net versus your contributions versus your cuts versus your freezes since you were elected? Could you give us that? In other words, the total offloading onto local governments that have to raise taxes to make up the difference . . . Because you said, Madam Minister, if the feds offload — and you just finished saying this — then we have to offload. That's what you said.

So all I'm asking you is, could you tell me how much you've offloaded? And obviously, for political reasons, you don't want to do that. But what I would ask you is that if we get into estimates — your estimates, financial estimates — are you prepared to come here and say, here is the net position on revenue sharing? Here is the net position on taxes. Here are the net position that we could accumulate, if you will, on other sources of revenue. Crown corporations, we'll have to get in Crowns, but we can come up with some estimates there.

An Hon. Member: — No, we won't.

Mr. Devine: — Well we will eventually, I guess, if they ever sit.

Madam Minister, would you give me your assurance that you

will bring those numbers to the estimates of Finance when we get into them, so we can have a summary position?

As well, Madam Minister, would you also agree or could you agree to bring forward the amount of money that you've taken from rural residents in terms of their crop insurance and their GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) package? In other words, I think it's 189 to \$200-and-some million which is obviously taken out of their pockets. And it ended up somewhere, and we'll find out where that is. But could you summarize or would you be prepared to cooperate in your financial estimates to get us that kind of information so that we could look forward to . . . If you don't want to do it here, fair enough. If you're not going to do it at all, these Bills are going to take a long time.

But I just think that if you think it's estimates, in your estimates, then fair enough; we would be glad to do it in the estimate of Finance. Could you give me that assurance?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, to the member opposite, I can assure the member opposite that when we get into estimates, we will do our very best to address the broad questions that the member opposite has asked.

Mr. Devine: — Well thank you, Madam Minister. Are you confident, Madam Minister, that the impact that you are having here will have a neutral position on whether it affects taxpayers as individuals versus taxpayers as business? Your balance over the last three or four years . . . can you feel confident that the balance between what business has experienced in terms of its tax increases and the average taxpayer, individual taxpayer, has experienced is fair?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, to the member opposite, yes, we believe it's fair.

Mr. Devine: — Well thank you, Madam Minister. Would you have any other tax provisions, Madam Minister, that you think that you'll be including in a Bill like this? Or do you have any other Bills or any other pieces of legislation that would affect taxation that you could tell us about?

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, to the member opposite, no.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 11 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

(1530)

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank the officials for their work over the last several days on this Bill.

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I too would like to thank the officials for the time that they've spent in the

Chamber on this particular issue and look forward to seeing them in Finance estimates later.

Bill No. 60 — An Act to amend The Department of Health Act

The Chair: — Before we proceed to clause 1, I would ask the minister to please introduce the officials who have joined us here today.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Today I am joined by Mr. Cy Scheske who is vice-president of the international division of Saskatchewan Health, and Mr. Glenn Van Iderstine, director of the international health services, international division of Saskatchewan Health.

Clause 1

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, you stated that Bill 60 will allow Saskatchewan to benefit economically from our knowledge and achievements in the health field. And I believe what you indicated . . . it allows the government to enter into commercial agreements related to health technology, expertise, and information. I'm wondering, Mr. Minister, if you could be a little more specific and outline this to some of the sorts of technology that you are referring to in the areas where we will benefit as far as the Bill and the reason for the Bill before us today.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Chair, to the member's question, it is a combination of both the technologies which we have pioneered in Saskatchewan and will continue to pioneer in the future, the actual technologies, and some of our vast data base that has been collected in Saskatchewan over a number of years.

Essentially what is being marketed is information, data, and the technology that is being developed in our province, particularly around the health reform initiatives because other jurisdictions in Canada and around the world are moving in these same directions. Because we're leading, many are looking to us for the technologies that we'll employ, also looking to us as they have in the past for a source of substantive data.

Mr. Toth: — I understand as well, Mr. Minister, that this legislation allows for this division to conduct market research and establish partnerships to achieve these objectives. Who or what organizations would conduct market research for the Health department?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Chair, to make it clear to members of the House, this enables us to do that actual research ourselves and to be in partnership to do that research ourselves. And to date we have partnered with both universities in the province using their academic facilities and academic resources to . . . And the point of the research is to explore where in a national or international or global context we might have possibilities for marketing our technologies and data. So we're using . . . Our partners in this case doing the research are the

two universities.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Minister, you mentioned about the . . . mentioned the fact that while many jurisdictions are looking at ways in which they can use our technology and our expertise to certainly enhance the delivery of health care in their nation or country, I'm wondering Mr. Minister, what . . . are we as well looking at gathering information from other countries that may have technology and have some expertise that we, to this point, have not achieved? It that part of this legislation as well?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — It's not, Mr. Chair. It's not particularly related to this legislation, but certainly one of the roles that the international division plays is to work with other health care providers nationally and internationally and to share expertise and to learn from one another. In fact we're doing some of that work right now in Europe that's not specifically related to the parameters of this legislation, but it's part of the work that the international division is engaged in.

Mr. Toth: — I think you mentioned a moment earlier that your involvement with universities is an area that this Bill allows for. And maybe that is part of the reference that is made to establishing partnerships. And now the question was, what are some of the specifics? Would those be some of the specifics, where you're working together with the universities in developing this expertise and then helping other countries by sharing it with them? Is that what you're talking of, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Those who are with me today and were working very closely with this field say, yes, that's certainly part of it. That's exactly what is happening. And some of this exchange of information is just that.

But I also want to emphasize that we're here looking at some opportunities where we can market some of our technologies and informations beyond the border, so there will be cooperative working relationships. But at the same time, we know we have some marketable data and marketable technologies that other people will be interested, I think, in securing.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Minister, you stated that in recent months, health officials from Wales, South Africa, the Republic of Georgia, and others have visited our province. And I'm going to give you three questions rather than just up and down. What were the purposes of each of these visits? Did any of the visits result in any sort of contract with our province? And were any promises made to conduct business together with these countries made during the visits?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, to the . . . and I may say that I'm not . . . I don't have a full contingent of the details of each of these, but here, Mr. Speaker, or Mr. Chairman, are some broad comments.

Our visitors from Wales that were referred to, were here to look generally at delivery of health care across Saskatchewan. The

Republic of Georgia people who were here are very interested in organizing . . . You'll understand the change of the political climate in their nation and land, and they're particularly looking at organizing a health-care system.

And very same was true from the people who have visited us here from South Africa. Again, they're into a new democracy in South Africa. They're charged as a new government with organizing an entirely new Department of Health and health-care delivery.

Working with the officials from South Africa, we've moved onto another stage now into looking at sources of funding that we could use to work with them in helping organize their Department of Health. And we've identified, at this point, 17 potential sources for that funding, and each of those are being explored to provide some resources to help us and to help them do that.

Mr. Toth: — Well, Mr. Minister, I just hope that at the end of the day once this legislation's in place and we've got all these countries coming to this province to review what we've got, that we really have something to show them. I think in some ways some of the changes over the last two or three years may have some people really wondering.

But we're quite well aware of the fact that certainly we all . . . and if we're going to move ahead into the 21st century, there will be change. And there isn't an area for our society that doesn't and will not see change over the next number of years.

But it seems to me, Mr. Minister, I hope while we're working at change we're not just throwing out some of the technology and the expertise we had in the past, some of the services. Because I think that's what people are looking at, the fact that the reduction in service certainly has a major impact.

So while we talk about what countries are looking for, I suppose most countries would look at us and think, well even if they've changed and reduced some of the services, it's still a lot better than what we have.

And I can only hope that we can build on what we have, and certainly build into the future and work together with other countries in developing and building a health system, as even the United States is pursuing right now, a different method of how they deliver health services that meets the needs.

And I guess what I would say, Mr. Minister, is meets . . . maybe we need to sit down and outline what are the basic, fundamental needs and how we perceive a universal delivery of health care. We may not, in the future, be able to deliver all the services but deliver what is essential to maintaining human life.

Mr. Minister, you stated that Saskatchewan has received speaking opportunities and invitations from many other countries and organizations, including the Pan American Health Organization in Washington, D.C. (District of Columbia); Bolivia, Taiwan, and Northern Ireland. What were the specifics

of these invitations? And I know that some had more to do with the overall health reform than shared information and technology.

And the second question: did any of these trips or invitations end up in any agreements to share Saskatchewan's health information and technology?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'm rather excited about some of the issues that are identified here with these. And I want to be clear, Mr. Speaker, these are used as illustrative. Other nations and jurisdictions have also been in touch with us.

The Bolivian experience was an invitation to have health officials travel to Bolivia and speak about health reform generally.

Again, in terms of Taiwan, again health officials from the department travelled to Taiwan. Interestingly, Mr. Chair, in Taiwan they are only now beginning to move towards a universal medicare system like we've enjoyed in Canada — which I may say is put at threat by some political leadership in this country — but the universal health care system we've enjoyed in Canada is now being adopted in Taiwan, and they're very anxious to learn from us.

But further to that, Mr. Speaker, the Taiwanese government have dedicated one-half a billion dollars, \$500 million, to developing a health information technology, and we're expecting at the end of this month or early in June, representatives from the Government of Taiwan to be in the province and undergoing further discussions with us.

(1545)

The Northern Ireland example involved a speaking engagement by the former minister of Health, Louise Simard. She was invited by the European Economic Community to address the conference in Northern Ireland, and speak specifically about our health care information technology in Saskatchewan and the areas in which we're developing that technology.

And we are anticipating, by the middle of June actually, a nine-nation consortium, of which we will be a part, in terms of health care information technology. Now there has been some little delay over this as a result of turbot and fishing disputes on the east coast of Canada. Now that they seem to be resolved, I think we're back to levelling out that relationship with the European Economic Community, and we're looking forward to some very, very positive results as a result of the former minister's trip to Northern Ireland.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Minister, I believe that in this province certainly everyone would agree with the fact that we need to develop means of using our expertise, and certainly creating economic development. And I would certainly expect that your government would want to do everything it can to enhance economic development in this province as well. I think you need it as well as everybody else.

And one would ask, what exactly are the economic benefits that you may expect from Bill 60? And do you have any sort of researches or specific numbers regarding the economic benefits that you perceive may come in the future, due to the passage of Bill 60?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Chairman, I'm very happy to be answering the member's question in this regard because there's some very exciting and very positive things here.

In terms of our expertise — if I may start simply with our expertise — when we are able to share that expertise in an international context we know that we are sharing that expertise with many in our world who are much less fortunate than we, whose health care systems, whose services, are rudimentary at best in some cases. And we know that in sharing some of our expertise, we are going to improve the lot of human life around the globe.

This we do, Mr. Chair, with financial backing from the World Bank. We are able to access support from the World Bank to share this kind of expertise with nations and jurisdictions around the world which will truly improve the lot of human life on our globe.

On the matter of technologies that we will be marketing, the profound benefit from the context that we're making around the world through our international division, the benefit of the export of technologies, is the benefit that will flow to the information technology firms here located in Saskatchewan.

They will be exporting softwares that have been developed here in Saskatchewan. We will be working with them through our connection to the international division to make them international players in the health care field. And so the benefit of the technological expertise that we're marketing is a benefit that really flows to Saskatchewan companies, to Saskatchewan informational technology companies.

And then, Mr. Chair, when I refer to the marketing of our data, this becomes a direct benefit to the government and therefore to the people of Saskatchewan as we're able to market this data. This has been an already fast-growing thing. We anticipate next year, for instance, that we will be able to raise \$1.5 million through the marketing of some data that should be available to us, and I'm assured that that number is fast rising.

Mr. Toth: — So while you're anticipating revenues of about 1.5 million just for the marketing of the data, what are you . . . do you anticipate that any new jobs may develop as a result of this legislation being passed and brought into place, and how many?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Chair, we don't anticipate any large increase of employment within the department itself, but we do anticipate significant job creation in the information technology field in our province.

To be able to tap our firms into this international market-place

for health care data through the auspices of the marketing division, the international marketing division of the Department of Health, we know will have a significant impact on the IT (information technology) field in our province as we develop our own systems and then begin to market that technology. So I don't have exact numbers of jobs, but we know it's going to have a significant impact on the industry here in our province.

Mr. Toth: — Do you have any rough idea of the number of jobs. You indicate that you don't have an exact number. There must be some idea of what may develop, Mr. Minister. Maybe you could just give us an idea of what you anticipate may be there.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Chair, because we're working with the private sector in the development of softwares and technologies, we don't have hard and fast numbers available to us. They're going to have to make some of their own corporate decisions.

But what we know is that this is a very significant development in terms of information technology in our province. And given the base of the industry which is now here and the expertise which is here, we just . . . we're very confident that there's going to be a significant impact on that industry and therefore job growth.

But we don't have numbers because these will be corporate decisions made in the private sector here in our province.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Minister, maybe you could give us a bit of a clarification. The Bill allows the department to "develop health systems and health technology or expertise." If there is no dollar figure placed upon these initiatives, what sort of money are we talking about here?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Chair, just to be clear. What we have here is a Bill which is in essence enabling legislation, to put into law the provision to do this. When we begin to move in this field in a significant way of course, that would become part of the budget deliberations for the department. It would be identified in the budgetary processes. And so we don't have those kind of numbers here today.

This is enabling legislation to give us the legal and legislative framework to move in that regard. So we're not coming here today with the financial plans for future. The member will see those reflected in future budget presentations.

Mr. Toth: — Well when you talk about revenue, where will a person find the budget revenues going and where will they be accounted for?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — This is . . . the member may not like this answer, but it will flow back to the Consolidated Fund. I'm not sure I like it either. I'd like to have it a little more clearly identified to the department so we could follow.

But just in the processes of government . . . As you know, as

the auditor indicates, that things should flow through the Consolidated Fund. So when it comes as revenue to government — when we make a sale of some data, it comes as revenue to government — it flows not to the Department of Health but flows to the Department of Finance into the Consolidated Fund.

Now there will be a careful, careful accounting and a careful monitoring of those funds and they'll be fully accountable and reportable. And I'm sure in the process of estimates we can identify them. But they will flow back to government through the Consolidated Fund.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Minister, I think that's important. Because while we're talking about expertise, we're talking about the technology, we're talking about marketing, down the road we want to actually be able to say and look and find the line that would indicate the number of dollars that have derived as a result of the introduction and the passage of this Bill and the marketing of the expertise we have.

So I think it's important that there is a clear line identified because certainly once it's . . . if it doesn't really reach your hands and you're still accountable for this legislation, you'd want to know exactly where that money is as well. And it might be appropriate to just make sure you've got a clear understanding with the Minister of Finance that you'll be coming to follow up because you want to know how well your program has done for you.

Is there a limit to the amount of money that the department can spend on developing health systems or health technology or expertise in this province?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Yes, there will be, Mr. Chair, of course when we establish budgeting, as we do with each of our programs and initiatives. They will have a budgetary figure attached to them and the department will have to live within that budgetary figure. If that budgetary figure is exceeded, they'd have to answer to the minister, and to the Executive Council, to the government caucus, and eventually to the legislature and the people of the province. And so there will be parameters.

And to date I may say that in terms of overall expenditures within the budget of the Department of Health, this department has been very good at working within its budgeted amounts.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Minister, Bill 60 deals with exercising power regarding personal information within the meaning of The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Just what sorts of situations would require this clause to be added to the Bill? Why is the clause added here? And has releasing health information been any sort of problem in the past?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Chair, the member raises what I think is a very, very important question that has to do with the confidentiality issues when we're dealing with information and technology that comes from the health field. And so we've been

very, very sensitive about the need to protect confidentiality and ensure that the data is appropriately used.

It has not arisen as an issue primarily because any inquiry or any exploration made to our government for this kind of data — whether it comes from another government, whether it comes from a pharmaceutical company or someone doing medical research — each inquiry must pass through what we describe as the ethical review panel. And so the questions being asked are reviewed very carefully. Those who will be asking the questions, seeking our data for purchase, will be monitored very, very, very carefully. And we take every measure to ensure that no personal data, no data can be related to any individual. And so I think it's a very important question that the member raised. I thank you for raising it and I want to assure him and all members that the matter of confidentiality of this data is absolutely assured.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Minister, I guess there's one real important question that needs to be asked and I'm not sure how the department addresses it, but I was just reading an article the other day — I believe it was in the most recent *Reader's Digest* — about computer hackers and the fact that so much of the information we are developing and designing now is actually being placed on computers.

What I'm wondering is what the department is doing to indeed address this concern as we've just talked about it. And how do you protect yourself from an individual who may knowingly or unwittingly or accidentally gain access to a computer that may have a lot of sensitive information? What does the department do to protect itself from those circumstances?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Chair, I don't want to mislead the member, to pretend that I have a great deal of expertise in computer technology. That would become quickly apparent to the member and all members. Let me just back up a bit and say in response to the member's question, this has been a concern for some time. We've been computerizing data in Health for some period of time now. Even in the period of time before we were into computers, where we kept data simply in paper and in files, there's been always the issues of confidentiality. This is not a new issue.

But as the computer technologies, the information technology, increases and improves, we do hear of more people gaining access to various databases and so on. I am assured by the Department of Health officials that in fact we spend a great deal of money and resource in ensuring that the data remains confidential. And they tell me of what's described as fire wall technology, which is expensive, but we secure it because it is so important.

This fire wall technology means that data can be released — it's a one-way street where the data can move that way — but no one can come in. Please do not ask me how this is accomplished in the technical sense. But I am absolutely assured that we spend a significant number of resources and a significant amount of time to ensure, to double-check, to

triple-check, that either by accident or by design, someone cannot access this database for other than the purposes that are intended.

(1600)

Mr. Toth: — Well thank you, Mr. Minister. And just to put your mind at ease, I'm not really an expert on computers as well, so when it comes down to the technical aspects on working, I'm as green as anyone else.

But I do know that it is creating a major problem in major businesses; companies have had major problems because individuals have actually tied into, tagged into, their systems. Banks are finding some difficulties with it, and so I would be surprised if computer companies themselves aren't working out new technology to make sure that they can really protect themselves from this type of interference by individuals.

As far as marketing health systems and technology to persons, other governments, international agencies, or commercial or non-profit organizations, one would wonder if this is an overlap of services already existing.

I'm wondering, Mr. Minister, when I say that, if there would have been a venue through the — or an avenue — through Economic Development branch of government that whereby we could have dedicated some of our marketing research even in the health field in that manner. Or was it . . . why did your officials feel that we needed a specific marketing agency out of the arm of Health versus working with Economic Development?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Chair, I think the simple answer here is that in this field, in the field of health data and health research, those who will be seeking to purchase information or data from us, or technologies, expect the level of expertise in health to exist at our end.

For instance, we've just been able to secure an arrangement with the Food and Drug Administration of the United States to secure some of our data. They want to work closely with health-related, specific health-related, people — people that are working in the field with a great deal of expertise. That kind of expertise we couldn't expect to be present in the Department of Economic Development.

And so that's why the unit is housed in Health because it draws on the health expertise as well as the IT expertise that's present in the department.

Mr. Toth: — I guess the other question is, does this create just another . . . add to the bureaucratic avenue of government, another level of bureaucracy? Are we creating a much larger level? And that's the question that we have to ask at the end of the day.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Chair, you see sitting beside me the one add-on for the international division; that's Mr. Cy Scheske.

We think his contribution to this department, to this government, to this program, is exceptional. It's going to do great things for the people of Saskatchewan but it is in essence, as we speak, a one-person division.

Mr. Toth: — So what you're saying, as you indicated earlier when you were talking about the number of jobs you'd foresee coming, the reality is the avenue of government or the department of government is basically down to one or two individuals. The other jobs you're looking at would be derived from, if I remember hearing you correctly, I think you made a comment about the private sector and some of the expertise, and the development in that area.

One further question I believe that basically wraps up some of the questions and the concerns regarding the Bill before us, Bill C-60 states that the department will be allowed to "enter into any agreements that the minister considers necessary for the purposes of exercising any power or function pursuant to this section."

That appears to be a fairly broad mandate, one that seems to have no cap unless the minister creates one. What are the limits, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Chair, we believe that within the confines of the amendment to the Act there is some pretty clear definition about what is intended, and that definition therefore puts restrictions or puts the fence on the minister.

I don't think the member's asking the question about sort of the total amount of the financial value. I would like to think that as we grow in this field in the future, that this could become a very substantial part of a revenue base for us to provide health care to the people of Saskatchewan.

But we feel that the Act itself defines very clearly to commercial agreements with governments and private industry and so on, that the parameters are right there contained within the Act itself.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Chairman, so what you're saying basically, you're indicating that, in your mind anyway, the Act is fairly explicit as to the powers the minister would have and the broadness of the powers the minister would have as far as the mandate and the function of the minister. That's what you're indicating, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — That's precisely it, Mr. Chair. And of course every minister of every department responsible for every piece of legislation is always subject to the scrutiny of this House and the public scrutiny, so there's always that set of parameters on the role as well. But we think that the legislation describes pretty clearly what we're about here and the minister's role in the area.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 and 3 agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to take a moment to thank the minister and his officials for having joined us this afternoon and responding to the questions. And can I say good luck in your further endeavours as you apply the principles of this Bill and market the technology and health expertise we've been building in our province through the past number of years.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Chair, I too would want to extend a thanks to my opposition colleague for his helpful questioning today, and a particular thanks to Cy Scheske and Glenn Van Iderstine who are working in this field within the department. Thanks for their work in the field and thanks for their assistance to the members today.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 58 — An Act to amend The Income Tax Act

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I move the Bill now be read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Bill No. 60 — An Act to amend The Department of Health Act

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I move that this Bill now be read the third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

General Revenue Fund Women's Secretariat Vote 41

The Chair: — Before we proceed to item 1, I would ask the minister to please introduce the officials who have joined us here today.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Hello. With me today is Faye Rafter, acting executive coordinator, Saskatchewan Women's Secretariat; and Joan Pederson, assistant executive coordinator, Saskatchewan Women's Secretariat.

Item 1

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome to the minister and her officials joining us this afternoon.

Madam Minister, I have a few questions I'd like to put forward, but first of all let me thank you for sending across the globals prior to the debate in the Assembly on estimates. I think it

certainly helps us and enhances us in raising our questions, rather than coming to estimates, having the globals introduced, and then trying to go through the globals and address a number of the other questions. So we appreciate that.

First of all, there's a few questions I'd like to ask on the objectives of the Women's Secretariat. And a general question is . . . Madam Minister, I don't think a lot of women appreciate what the Women's Secretariat does for them. I would suspect that many women in Saskatchewan maybe are not even aware of the fact that such a secretariat exists, that the Women's Secretariat exists. And I feel, believe, that many women would feel that the money spent on wages is being wasted when it could be redirected to women's shelters or expanding important programs in Saskatchewan, such as the breast screening program.

I wonder, Madam Minister, do you feel that perhaps the 975,000 set aside for this agency is an appropriate expenditure? In the 1991-92 *Estimates*, the Women's Secretariat received a total of 487,400; '92-93 was 786; '93-94 is 768; last year, 892; and now we see 975,000.

I'm wondering, Madam Minister, could you give the explanations as to why this department has seen such a substantial jump in expenditures? And how do you perceive . . . do you perceive that these expenditures are certainly essential and beneficial to the women of this province?

(1615)

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — There have been many ways that governments have tried to grapple with introducing policy in an integrated way throughout the whole network of policy and programs and services that governments are involved in, and the Women's Secretariat is really structured to raise the understanding of how government expenditures and government programs affect women. Because of course over the years most of these decisions have been made by men, who have been the, I guess, dominant players in the field of policy and financial decision-making. And quite often there has not been enough thought given to how these policies affect women.

So really the purpose behind the Women's Secretariat is to bring some equity into the policy, program, and funding discussions that face governments, and to try to make sure that all of the population is served by the decisions that government makes.

So part of the function would be a policy function where when new policies are constructed, the Women's Secretariat would review those with an eye to how are those going to affect the 52 per cent of the population that are women.

When they're dealing with program development, again are those programs going to be accessible to women, are they going to be meaningful and useful to women? Because women sometimes, by virtue of various constraints of the home, etc., don't have the mobility that men might have in accessing

programs — the same in regards to education, employment, and a range of other policy areas.

Now as government does expand its initiatives in this area, there then becomes educational work that is needed to be done, for example, in the area of sexual harassment. So with the introduction of sexual harassment in the occupational health and safety code, it required that people then become familiar with how you determine what is, in current day thinking, acceptable workplace practices and to train people to understand how to create a workplace where sexual harassment is not part of the daily feature facing women in the workplace.

So I would say, if I had to summarize it, policy, program, education — those are the kinds of functions that are undertaken by the Women's Secretariat. And the Women's Secretariat has a very limited role in funding. We really have no funding capacity other than to operate other various functions that the Secretariat's involved in.

Mr. Toth: — Madam Minister, when we see the expenditure of \$975,000, where is that money spent? How many employees does the Women's Secretariat employ? And as far as the employment, how much money goes into administration, how much money into salaries, how much money into programs?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — The total for the Women's Secretariat is 975,000 of which a substantial portion of that is the actual salaries for the employees — 671,000. Other expenses under 186,000 are things like training, public education, awareness — that type of activity. And then there's also rent at 118,000. So it's a pretty slim budget overall.

Mr. Toth: — How many employees are paid the \$671,000?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Thirteen.

Mr. Toth: — That's roughly about \$50,000 a person I would take it. When we're looking at 13 individuals, do you have an associate minister and a deputy minister? What levels do you have in the Women's Secretariat, and how would the salary level break down?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — I'm not sure how much detail you want because, I mean, there's quite a bit of detail could be provided. And I think in the previous go round we did provide some of this information. So if you can just be a little more clear on exactly what you'd like, then I can give you . . .

Mr. Toth: — Well, Madam Minister, what we'd like to know is who's employed at what levels . . . and what their areas of responsibility and the level of salary.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — We read the salaries into the record, I believe, the last time that we were in estimates. But at the management level, there's essentially three senior people, and that would be the acting executive coordinator, the assistant executive coordinator, and the senior policy analyst. Now these are all senior positions responsible for policy and program

implementation. The office manager would be the only position within there that's in the support range.

Most of the positions here . . . let me just count them up. There's about eight positions that are really of the policy analysis variety and educational variety, so they would be teaching, like a teaching role. Then there's about three positions that are at the support level in terms of clerk typist, secretarial types of functions. Now I don't know if you want it more specifically than that, but that would be the general range of what's there.

Mr. Toth: — I'm just taking a quick look, Madam Minister, to check and see if that's in the global questions, whether we've got the list of the individuals with their different positions and salary levels. I'm just not sure right off hand.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Yes, this did go over to yourself. And it listed the in-scope permanent at 6.2; in-scope temporary casual labour service at .8; out-of-scope permanent at 2.7; and contract at 1.0, for a total of 10.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Madam Minister. Regarding the objectives of the Women's Secretariat, the Women's Secretariat annual report list its objectives as number 1:

to research and develop policy on issues of concern to women;

And I'm wondering, Madam Minister, if you could provide us with any information relating to this objective and whether the Women's Secretariat feels that they have reached the objectives they have established for themselves?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — I'll give you . . . there's quite a long list here, and I suppose when you feel you have enough you can stop me, but I'll just go down the list here.

One of the things that was worked on is the options for implementation of pay equity in Saskatchewan, trying to assess the experience of other provinces and looking how realistically it could be implemented here in Saskatchewan.

The analysis of how the impact to the proposed federal changes to unemployment insurance would impact particularly on women workers, the impacts on women of the changes to the federal social security review with the Canada Assistance Plan, a paper on unpaid work and the link to the economic value of women's work, some research on inclusion of domestic workers under The Labour Standards Act.

Quite a considerable amount of work on the mandate of the interdepartmental committee on family violence to develop a government-wide policy on family violence and violence against women, and some operating frameworks for implementing some of that. Research, information, and referrals to the public and other government departments who requested information on issues affecting women, and that would be providing a wide range of just information, statistics, etc.

And the particular function of the department that's very time consuming is to work on a number of interdepartmental committees — everything from the child action plan steering committee, the committee to identify barriers to employment for equity groups, the interdepartmental committee on family violence, the social security policy and task group committees, the midwifery advisory committee, the victims services — there's a range of interdepartmental committees that they have a presence on.

And that would sort of encompass for this past year a lot of the research that's been undertaken. I could, if you're interested, go into some of the areas that are being worked on into the future.

Mr. Toth: — Madam Minister, a couple questions here. One I'll basically just ask you — maybe you could just send it over in writing if it's fairly extensive — and that is: what policies were researched and policies that were developed? Maybe you could provide us with any areas of policy research and development and the papers that were developed regarding this research.

And also I'm wondering, Madam Minister, if Women's Secretariat actually did a study into the impact of the abolition of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan and how it affected women. I think mostly . . . the largest majority of individuals participating in that plan were women. And maybe you could address that and let us know whether or not any research was done in that regard.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — As far as the list of research, there's no difficulty providing that although there would be some difficulty with providing some of the research papers because not all of them are public documents. Some of them are done for the central agencies of government — like Treasury Board and whatnot, Executive Council — in giving background to decisions that would be taken by cabinet. So they're not all published or public documents. The ones that are available we can certainly send over.

The issue of the pension plan is a very important and sensitive issue for women. And the issue regarding the previous pension plan that was implemented by the previous government was really an issue of affordability of the plan, not the need for the plan.

There is definitely a need for a better method of making sure that women's work is pensionable and that adequate pensions are there. But it also, at the same time, has to be an affordable plan because in the absence of a direct wage to finance that pension or an employer, it then becomes a tax dollar that supports that pension. But we continue to be concerned about that area and are continuing to look at options for how we might be able to handle that . . . and also in cooperation with the federal government in terms of the income security review.

Mr. Toth: — Well, Madam Minister, you're quite correct in the fact that it has impacted women. You're also correct in the fact that it must be affordable. But one would have to ask, in the

way it was disbanded or abolished, I'm not exactly sure if enough of a review was given to the program to not only look at its merits and the objectives of the program, but also determine ways in which it could have been developed and maybe designed to be more affordable because I would suggest, Madam Minister, if we can get people to build for their future, to design a pension plan that they can work with, that the individuals contribute to, at the end of the day it really won't be any more costly than where we're sitting right now.

And the fact is if . . . and especially in the case of a lot of women . . . fall into that category of being the — can I use the term? — retired poor. I'm not exactly sure if that's an appropriate term. But when we took a look at income support programs, if the funds aren't there, then we design programs at the other end to meet those objective needs of at least providing an adequate living for individuals. And unfortunately so many women fall into that area.

(1630)

And it would seem to me, Madam Minister, that it would have been appropriate to look at a way in which Saskatchewan Pension Plan could have continued to work. The government would have even been involved with minimal dollars. Because if you're going to put money in through income supplement programs, why not help people develop programs or pensions or income opportunities for them in the future?

And I guess that's the question one has to ask, Madam Minister. What are you doing today to address the long-term goal of helping to build programs or initiatives that will create self-sustaining programs, if you will, for not only all individuals but in fact women across this province?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — There's a number of steps we did take in terms of funded pension plans. For example, in 1992 The Pension Benefits Act was changed, and this gave better benefits to survivors and ensured a better situation for widows.

The other piece of legislation you'll be familiar with is the prorating of benefits under the part-time workers legislation. And again if the province had not been in such extreme financial straits, we may have been able to take a broader look at the pension plan that the previous government had instituted where all of the matching dollars came from the tax base.

Now into the future, I mean I think you're hitting on an important question that if we can't afford to fund all of these, then what can we do? And I think you're right that we may have to bring a different kind of solution to this. And some of that might be making sure that people have better information with which to do some of their own investment from a younger age in their own pension because none of us can really anticipate what's going to happen at the federal level. But if there are less public pensions available, then people will no doubt have to rely more on whatever they're able to set up for themselves.

And certainly I would say there's been a big change in the past

few years in the way women are approaching their own investments on their behalf. But more work needs to be done on this, and we will be looking at some of that in more detail over the coming year. And I thank you for your concern and interest over it.

Mr. Toth: — Well, Madam Minister, I think for far too long we've used the argument that we couldn't afford it. And that's why some of the radical decisions were made, and especially with the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, that affected . . . the majority of the individuals being affected were women.

Now you mentioned, Madam Minister, the part-time employees that have been addressed in some form, and yet I find many part-time employees still trying to struggle with their workload and the hours of work and whether . . . because of the way the hours are juggled, many times they just do not get the benefits.

I also find, Madam Minister, that you've got . . . while we talk about affordability, we do have a pension plan in this province that just addresses pensions for a few people, and that's the government pensions. And many people in this province, whether you're working for a Crown, whether you're a teacher or a nurse or MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly), you're actually building a pretty good pension. And it's a publicly funded pension plan and much higher than what the Saskatchewan Pension Plan would have achieved for the individuals that you were trying to address and the concern there.

And I also can understand your concern when I hear the federal government talking about and the Finance minister talking about readdressing our RRSPs (registered retirement savings plan) and lowering that factor and maybe even reducing it. I think any government that would want to take away from initiatives that would help the taxpayers to build for themselves is certainly defeating the long-term purpose and goal of trying to help and make people more self-sustainable and help them to design programs that would indeed give them a level of living in their retirement that would be appropriate.

And I don't think we want to build rich, if you will, pension plans. I think most people are asking for something that would be fair and equitable. So while you would suggest that we're facing such difficult circumstances, the Minister of Finance was telling us today that really things aren't as bad as they appear to be, that maybe things have improved substantially. And yet I think we've got a long ways to go.

But I think . . . I guess what I'm saying is I'm disappointed that, Madam Minister, the initiative wasn't taken to . . . when the decision came to slash the pension plan, of really reviewing it before it was just chopped . . . because I think at the end of the day the reason it was disbanded so unceremoniously had more to do with politics than the reality of reaching out to meet the needs of individuals.

So I guess I can just ask you again: what is the Women's Secretariat doing to address these needs that may arise for

women in the future?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — If there was any politics that I would say was operative in this whole thing, it's the politics of deficit financing by governments, and I'm just going to toss that one clearly back on your shoulders. If we had \$15 billion that was blown by the previous government, we wouldn't have had to even consider measures like that. So I guess the politics of deficit financing is the issue on that particular score.

As far as your concerns over the part-time legislation — of course this is not fully implemented yet and won't be for several months yet as all the regulations and the working through of the various workplaces and what not and the implementation of it . . . So you will not yet see the full effect of this Bill for several months yet.

As far as the other point you raise — I mean really what you're saying, if in fact we're moving into a more broad-based pension scheme, I mean there's two ways you can do that. And one has always been the Canada Pension Plan which we've always counted on the federal government to assume responsibility for that.

In the absence of that we would be in a very different scenario as far as looking at a provincial response to an issue of that magnitude, which really has only been in the federal government's capacity to respond to.

And it also brings in issues of how we define work. If you're suggesting a much broader definition of work and to include a lot of the currently unpaid work of women into the definition of work, then that would certainly be a desirable objective, but it would also require then a relooking at the whole issue of taxation and what not. If we now are redefining some of those roles and some of the way we compensate for those roles, whether through negative taxation, some kind of tax credit system, or whatever we might get into . . . But I guess I'd just conclude by saying that the Women's Secretariat has no authority over pension plans.

It is advisory to the process of the development of pension plans, and so when the government looks at the broader issue of pensions, we would certainly be in on that discussion but not totally directing the process.

Mr. Toth: — Well thank you, Madam Minister. And I guess the reason we raise the question is because I believe the objective of the Women's Secretariat is to deal with issues affecting women. Certainly the Saskatchewan Pension Plan had . . . the majority of individuals involved were women.

Also I maybe just need to remind you one more time, Madam Minister, while you keep throwing the \$15 billion in my face, there was roughly \$8 billion that was there prior to 1982 that the government continues to put on the back burner and says it was never there and that was all created during the 1980s and now we've gone from the . . . if you look at the auditor's report, the auditor's report goes from . . . shows that we're not at

fourteen and a half, we're up at over \$20 billion if all things considered. So if you want to continue the debate, continue the debate on deficit financing, we can certainly take some time to do that.

Madam Minister, another objective I believe of Women's Secretariat is to educate the public on women's issues. What issues did the Women's Secretariat take on during the last fiscal year and how did they proceed to educate the public on these issues?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Again, one of the Bills that's been passed since we've been in government is The Occupational Health and Safety Act changes. And one of the parts of this was an addition of harassment as an area that's covered in the workplace.

So there was quite a bit of educational work that needed to be done in this area because a lot of people seemed to consider harassment as just normal workplace practice. So there was considerable educational work done there — materials, workshop kits, employer's handbook — so that employers could understand when they were dealing with a situation that was no longer acceptable and what kind of measures they could take in their workplace to make sure that that didn't happen again.

There was information to Crown corporations, non-government organizations, community organizations, and the private sector, through workshops and speeches, on a range of other issues including employment equity, pay equity, workers with family responsibilities, sexual harassment, the changing role of the family, and how the role of the Women's Secretariat could help facilitate some of those discussions and educational work within various workplaces.

There was also training regarding The Victims of Domestic Violence Act and community consultations also that went on regarding that. There's also some work that's done in terms of liaison with out-of-province visitors and delegations that are interested in these particular topics and visit with us for the purpose of exchanging information.

Mr. Toth: — Madam Minister, would Women's Secretariat get involved or try to inform individuals as to avenues they could follow if they've got a complaint, re employer?

And what I'm coming to here is a call that I received last week about a number of individuals working in a business that are endeavouring to get their overtime acknowledged and overtime finance . . . or their overtime funds that comes to them. And they've gone to the Labour Relations Board, and it just seems to be an avenue where they're getting mixed views of how they approach the problem of applying for and getting the Labour Relations Board to deal with the employer, make sure the employer indeed follows up and certainly carries out his responsibilities.

Does Women's Secretariat get involved or try to inform women

as to the avenues they should pursue if they're having difficulty in dealing with an employer and they find that other areas of government don't necessarily . . . that are supposed to be responsible don't necessarily meet that need?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — What would indicate to the Women's Secretariat that they might get involved in an issue is whether it's determined to be systemic in nature. And a systemic problem being one that happens again and again and again as opposed to something that happens maybe once or twice. When something happens over and over again, it then suggests a problem with the system that continues to create that problem.

So they might then, if that problem was happening mostly to women and happening over and over again, it then might become an issue that they would look at. But if it's just an instance of it happening, whether that was to a woman or a man, that would not necessarily be the driving factor. And certainly it would then be dealt with in the department that deals with those kinds of issues and that would be the labour standards area of the Department of Labour.

Mr. Toth: — I guess the reason I raise it, because it just was brought to my attention, just to some of the comments, and the fact that it is women that are really fighting for this right now and I thought maybe the department, Women's Secretariat, might be an avenue that they could pursue if they still . . . but you're indicating that it isn't.

I understand another objective is to consult and coordinate with government and community groups on issues which affect women. I wonder if you could provide a list of government departments and agencies the Women's Secretariat has consulted, indicating the issues discussed, the action determined from the consultations, and progress to date on those actions.

(1645)

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — It's virtually every department of government actually, but the main ones that there would be quite an ongoing working relationship would be Justice, Social Services, Education, Health, Indian and Metis Affairs, Finance, Labour, sometimes with municipal services, things like housing needs, and various other departments — even Economic Development — as needed.

But a lot of the departments now work together through kind of policy focus teams which are working on particular policy areas. For example, the child action plan steering committee, where there's people who come together from many departments to decide how to have the greatest impact on children's well-being. Or for example, the interdepartmental committee on family violence, which again takes all the things that might be done, whether in Education, Justice, a range of departments, and brings those together in a more strategic policy focus rather than each department doing their own thing.

Mr. Toth: — The fourth objective I believe is to encourage

women's participation in decisions that affect them. How does the Women's Secretariat act on this objective? And maybe you could provide the Assembly with some information on how the Women's Secretariat met these objectives and goals for the upcoming year.

And in particular, I'm not sure if the Women's Secretariat is involved in educating women regarding the breast screening program. I know last year, I believe it was about a year ago now, there was a questionnaire sent out asking, inviting, women to get involved in a research program. And my wife . . . there was information came out in our area. My wife certainly applied for it. And she just commented the other day that she hasn't heard anything since and she's wondering if the thing has just kind of died.

I'm just wondering if the Women's Secretariat has . . . this is one of their areas where they participate, encourage women to become involved in decisions that affect them, and certainly in programs and initiatives that may affect their lives.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — There are, I guess, two kinds of approaches that are taken to this. One is very specific kind of approaches, for example, working with Indian and Metis Affairs, treaty women, aboriginal councils. And this is on board-staff handbooks which really serve as instructional materials to assist people in becoming effective members of boards and thereby effective participants in decision making.

The other kinds of things that are done are to monitor some of the results of the equity programs across government, to determine that in fact women are being considered seriously for boards, commissions, agencies, jobs, and to encourage women to, in various workshops and what not, to take that step and to run for office, whether that be municipal, provincial, education boards, health boards — generally to provide those kind of supports that will give people the skill in being part of a decision-making team that will then lead to taking other opportunities as they come up.

Mr. Toth: — Madam Minister, there's a number of questions that I'd just like to bring to your attention — and maybe I'll raise them all at once and see if you can address them all individually — regarding women and some of the things that . . . legislation that's come down even at the federal level.

How did Women's Secretariat act on behalf of custodial parents, mainly women, in regard to the Thibodeau case? Was there any involvement by the Women's Secretariat?

How did Women's Secretariat act on behalf of women with regard to the stalking legislation?

And was there any action on behalf of women in regard to drunkenness defence which is now being amended in Ottawa?

What do you see as being the 10 key issues that the Women's Secretariat is currently dealing with or working toward?

What gains have been made in respect to child care and what gains have been made in respect to battered women?

I know there's a number of questions, but I thought if I raised them all maybe you can address them all individually, rather than up and down addressing these questions that are fairly direct.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Okay, sorry to take so long in getting back to you here. In the Thibodeau case, that is primarily federal jurisdiction; but there was a federal-provincial working committee of senior officials that got together on making a joint submission to the federal government on that particular case.

And the same would be true on the issue of the drunken defence. There is a federal-provincial seniors official group that made presentation to the federal government on that matter.

In terms of the tax treatment of child support, again I'll mention that this is a federal issue. But the research and the federal consultations indicate that child support awards are often inconsistent, inadequate, and unpredictable, and that creates financial disadvantages for children following family breakdown, and also leads to increased litigation and enforcement problems.

The Family Law Committee has tabled its report which includes recommendation on tax treatment, as well as proposed child support guidelines to establish adequate, consistent, and equitable child support. Because right now the settlements tend to be all over the map. And I think both from the point of view of the parent receiving support and the parent doing the supporting, there needs to be a little more rigour into this process.

So the federal government is now considering the implications and we will support changes to the tax law that do not further disadvantage or impoverish children who are relying on support from a non-custodial parent.

On the other issue of the stalking legislation, the Government of Saskatchewan supported amending the Criminal Code by adding a new stalking offence. Saskatchewan Justice proposed a change to the Criminal Code at the uniform law conference in 1992 to cover stalking situations.

There is a need for this type of legislation to protect women and children from being repeatedly followed and threatened by embittered spouses and boyfriends. And it really does seem to be an increasing problem.

The stalking legislation will enable police to intervene and lay serious charges against anyone whose pattern of harassment poses a credible threat of harm. And the improvement is that they will not have to wait until a violent crime of rape or murder is committed before taking action.

As far as the gains in child care, there was a child care review and what we've done is to bring child care policy more in

keeping with . . . of sort of a change, I think, from people in how they want child care delivered. But one of the particular areas has been supports to teen child care, which is having quite a good spin-off benefit as far as teen parents deciding to stay in school and going on to employment and further education, rather than becoming dependent.

The issue of battered women, Faye Rafter here chairs the interdepartmental committee, and we continue to do work on a wide range of fronts on this issue. Some of the specific results have been the domestic violence Act. And as well, a lot of public education is done on this matter.

So this is an area that we just have to keep working away at, but there is quite a good organizational capacity now to both discuss the issue, and make decisions and take action to improve the protection of women.

Mr. Toth: — Madam Minister, if a lady feels . . . or an individual would come to your office — and I guess it would be physically impossible many times to really come to the office — to seek the support of the Women's Secretariat, who would they contact?

Say a person is in a battered situation, or say an individual is having some problems with child care, is there contact persons or individuals or agencies that contact could be made whereby these individuals would have an opportunity to talk to somebody within the department or within Women's Secretariat to discuss their problems, and seek some guidance as to where they should be going?

I'm not exactly sure that a lot of women are in a situation where they necessarily always want to be running to the police; who may feel that they would just like to raise their concerns with, say, a law enforcement official, as they try to work out some . . . an understanding, especially if it's in a marital relationship. I think most women or most individuals — men or women — want to try and develop, and sometimes they need someone just to talk to, to try and find out avenues that they could work through rather than just proceeding into the legal realm.

And what I'm wondering, who would a person contact and how would they go about it?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Actually we could provide your office with some wallet cards that have been made up that direct women to the various services that support them in a range of problem areas. And if you're interested, we could get some of those over to your office.

In the rural areas, the other method for accessing is through the rural stress line. And in the urban areas, there's mobile crisis lines and what not.

The Women's Secretariat is more of a policy body, an education body, and working on really developing systemic solutions to problems affecting women. It's not a direct, on-the-ground service agency.

There's many women's organizations out in the community who provide those kinds of services. And we try to provide supports to them by making sure that adequate resources are directed their way and by providing information on their services through mechanisms such as the wallet card.

Mr. Toth: — Madam Minister, did you . . . I'd asked you about 10 key issues that Women's Secretariat is currently dealing with and working toward. I just don't remember if you got them all listed before, while we were talking about you were doing some work regarding child care, battered women, and stalking legislation. Are there any others that you're presently involved in?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — We continue to concern ourselves with the wage gap affecting women. As you know, women in Saskatchewan make 76 cents on the dollar that is made by men in Saskatchewan. So we continue to identify ways to close that wage gap.

Some of those ways involve education. Some involve equal pay for work of equal value. There's a range of strategies, but we continue to look at how we can close that wage gap so that women have an equal ability to support their households. The analysis of this is quite an extensive task because there are so many different ways of approaching it and so many factors that affect it, but we continue to do that.

Employment equity continues to be a pressing issue and that covers a whole range of issues from education equity to entry positions to promotional practices, labour standards that affect families and children; how to make more family-friendly workplaces, that would be a continuing concern; how to increase training and employment of women in trades and technology and non-traditional work areas; the development of indicators so we can more carefully monitor the status of women in Saskatchewan; whether in fact the policies that we introduce are having the intended effect; to look more closely at the economic situation of women over 55, particularly in regards of our discussions in federal-provincial talks on income security.

To deal more closely with SIMAS (Saskatchewan Indian and Metis Affairs Secretariat) and aboriginal women's organizations to deal with the particular and serious problems facing aboriginal women throughout Saskatchewan; to continue to work on the strategy for family violence in a partnership with appropriate departments; to continue to work on issues affecting particularly rural women, work in family options and other factors that affect them in a particular way; and to continue to do work in the areas of new policies that have been implemented in labour standards, occupational health and safety, etc., to make sure that these are implemented as intended. And I think that must be ten anyway. I don't know.

(1700)

Mr. Toth: — It almost seems like we could just keep adding it on and on and on. Madam Minister, I've got a few questions

here regarding the globals that you sent over, and we did ask for some information regarding ministerial travel, and I don't see any information regarding that, whether there was any ministerial travel. We'd like a detail of the travel in terms of who travelled, the destination, purposes of the trip, who was accompanied on each trip, what was accomplished by the trips, the reasons for each traveller other than the minister, total cost of ministerial travel for the year, the cost for each trip, and the costs of each individual who travelled.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — There was one trip in the fiscal year under consideration. There was one trip to meet with the chair of the women's advisory committee on the status of women. And while I was meeting with her on their year-end report as well as the future of that particular body, I also took advantage of being in the neighbourhood to visit the Lloydminster Interval Home to see how services were being delivered in an area not in Regina or Saskatoon, to see how they would be delivered in a different area of the province. So essentially that was it — one trip.

Mr. Toth: — What was the cost of that one trip?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — A hundred and sixty dollars.

Mr. Toth: — On your globals, we've got personnel report, and then you have in-scope permanent, in-scope temporary casual labour service. It also mentions travel expenses down underneath. And there's a total of in-province, 5,000; out-of-province, 5,600 — for a total of ten seven. Was that just people from the . . . individuals from the department? Did that include ministerial . . . or what's the \$10,000? What does that consume?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Yes, these would be travel by senior officials. One trip to Ottawa for a meeting of federal-provincial-territorial senior officials responsible for the status of women; another one in Toronto for an intergovernmental meeting on pay equity initiatives; another one in Ottawa, the federal-provincial territorial senior Status of Women officials meeting; in Banff, Alberta, a conference of the Canadian Association Against Sexual Harassment in Higher Education; and in Banff, Alberta, the Canadian Association Against Sexual Harassment in Higher Education. That would have been a different staff person that attended that same conference.

Mr. Toth: — Could you just send over a breakdown of the individuals who have gone and the costs that would have been associated on the individual trips? And you can just send that over in writing following our deliberations. That's fine, Madam Minister.

Madam Minister, was Women's Secretariat involved in any legal actions directed by the department? And if you were, can you give us the reasons for and the circumstances for any suits?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — No, there were none.

Mr. Toth: — Madam Minister, in your personnel report I note

in-scope permanent employees have risen by 1.9 employees with a wage increase of over 74,000. Can you explain who these new employees are and why they were hired?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — That amount covers two persons, both hired to work in the sexual harassment area. And they're both education and extension coordinators.

Mr. Toth: — I also note that there was a decline in the in-scope temporary. Is this related to the fact that one of those individuals been then moved into in-scope permanent? Or are we talking about two new individuals working in the in-scope permanent, and the in-scope temporary employees fired? Or is that what happened in that regard?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — There was a half-time temporary that was eliminated in the budget.

Mr. Toth: — So while you eliminated one, you added two more on permanent then. True?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — That had to do with shifting priorities, not with any other particular.

Mr. Toth: — Because it would seem to me, Madam Minister, while it was cut in the budget, at the same time you increased the budget on the permanent side. So I'm not exactly sure if there were any real savings.

Out-of-scope permanent employees went down by 1.3 for wage savings of nearly 100,000 over last year. Clearly, just going by the wage amount, this must represent a senior position. Has this position been abolished, or is it just temporarily filled?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — If you're referring to a senior position that hasn't been filled, that's where there's been some cost savings. But aside from that, we're not clear what it is you're referring to.

Mr. Toth: — I also note that you have a new contract employee working at the rate of 79,359. I wonder if you could detail this position in terms of name, job term, job description, benefits, office location, and normal place of residence for the person.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — That refers to the secondment of Faye Rafter, and we answered those questions in a previous session.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.