

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
First Session — Nineteenth Legislature

May 1, 1979

EVENING SESSION

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
VOTE 36

MR. CHAIRMAN: — We're on Social Services estimates this evening, page 93, vote 36. We will be starting with item 1 but I will ask the minister to introduce his support staff before we start please.

HON. H.H. ROLFES (Minister of Social Services): — Mr. Chairman, it's certainly my pleasure to introduce my staff tonight. Sitting immediately to my right is the deputy minister, Frank Bogdasavich; assistant deputy minister, Richard Fontanie; also assistant deputy minister immediately in front of Frank is Don Cameron; director of income security, Alf Zimmerman, directly ahead of me; Paul Bujaczek, budget officer, over here and the handsome guy over there is Vic Wiebe, director of special services; director of corrections, Terry Thompson; and Merran Twigg, planning and evaluation. The rest will be introduced if we need them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Order.

ITEM 1

MRS. J. DUNCAN (Maple Creek): — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister. Here we have a department requesting in the neighborhood of \$220,000,000 for expenditures in the 1979-80 period. That's an increase of \$23,000,000, plus. That's a lot of money. It is a department with 2,288 permanent employees.

Now social services plays a vital role in any community, in any province, in any country in the free world but this particular department has come in for much criticism of late, a lot of it justified and warranted. Various charges have been made, Mr. Minister, including the insensitivity to the actual needs of the people that you serve, the arbitrary decisions that are made with no appeal recourse. One of the charges made is that no one actually is responsible for a decision. You can't get down to one person that will say yes, we're going to do this or no, we're going to do that. Many of the guidelines, if there are any guidelines are very, very vague. A lot of the programs are hastily put together with little or no thought. It seems to me that a lot of the programs appear to be put together just to get a certain group of people off your backs. So you can pat yourselves on the back and say, well, yes we are doing something.

One of the biggest criticisms of late has been that your department in their wisdom have chosen to ignore a lot of the appeals and presentations put forward to you by the various special interest groups. A lot of them have claimed that they have presented briefs to you which you have totally ignored. They have requested attendance with you for meetings. They have been denied them. The Riches report is critical. I don't know if you got past page 6 . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . but the Riches report does point out to certain serious problems within the department. I think really a person should have a look at it and take some of the criticisms to heart because no department, no matter how well run, is perfect, that's for sure.

What I'd like to know is what direction are we taking and what are our aims and what are our objectives? Programs that we have, are they adequate for the needs? Are they

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inadequate? These are questions I would like to have answered. The explosion of social programs during the 60's and 70's were thought to be able to solve all the social problems we have. But, really when you assess them they have done little. Our war on poverty has done little — poverty is as prevalent as ever. The unemployable, even with the training programs we have, for the large part have remained unemployable. I feel that we as a government, I don't want to be critical just of our government, I think every provincial government is having a hard time assessing the needs and answering the needs of the people that come to see us. Perhaps in some areas we are trying to strive too fast and other areas we are not keeping up. Surely there is a fair amount of discontentment among the population.

It seems to me that the attitude today is just to sort of sluff-off these groups without really listening to them. As a Progressive Conservative I feel that the government has a definite area of responsibility. I think health is our responsibility as politicians in legislature. I think that care of the aged, the handicapped and the infirm is our responsibility; education is our responsibility. The members on this side of the House don't feel that investment in high-risk projects, high-risk areas is a government responsibility. Taking tax dollars away from necessary programs is not our idea of being a responsible government. Using taxation in the private sector as a means of providing for the basic needs of the people is, we feel, being responsible.

There has been a lot of programs cut since March 31 in a rather underhanded way, I think, and it seems that there were no evaluations done with a lot of them. There was no input into their contributions to whatever special group they were providing a service for.

Without any further preamble, I would like to know, Mr. Minister, who evaluates the various programs that your department runs and are they monitored on a monthly basis, a yearly basis, tri-monthly, or what?

HON. H.H. ROLFES (Minister of Social Services): — Mr. Chairman, I simply want to thank the member for her remarks. I must admit that when one analyses the marks, she did not put forward any of her own suggestions as to where we should go and I am not going to be overly critical about that . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes that could be, Bob, but I won't bother to get into that right now.

Mr. Chairman, I don't think there is any doubt at all that social services should carry a very vital role in today's society. I think the question that has to be asked is, how rapidly can one expand the social services that one wants to offer in comparison to other provinces in Canada and other areas in North America?

Secondly, I must ask whether one takes cognizance of the fact that a certain attitude has been created by people and by certain political parties in Canada. I don't think there is any doubt at all that the criticism that has been levelled by opposition parties (I'm not speaking just about opposition parties in Saskatchewan, but I'm speaking about opposition parties throughout Canada and that includes our own party) — except in this particular area, I think our party has not been critical — has been constantly on the media and before the people that we have too many civil servants; we have too much interference in our private lives and too many social services programs has made, I think, government rather sensitive to expanding programs in this area. I don't think there is any doubt at all on that.

If officials of all political parties are constantly going to go out and tell their

constituents, yes, you're right. There are too many civil servants, we don't need all those social workers. They're sitting in their offices having tea when they should be out visiting with people. If we're constantly going to criticize governments throughout this country for trying to provide services and consequently having the staff to deliver those services and we, for our own personal, selfish reasons go out, knowing full well that that is not true, but do it because it's to our own personal advantage, then I think, yes, you will see (as governments have done across this country, particularly the federal government) a cutback very, very drastically in health services, in health financing and in social services and social financing.

One of the things, Mr. Chairman, that I was very disappointed in the last two or three years in attending federal — provincial conferences was the almost overbearing consciousness that many social services ministers had about the public view that we just couldn't afford to expand in the social services area. When, for example, for three or four years, we had discussions on a total review of the income security program on the social services areas, this was one of the things, I think, that stopped many governments from supporting what I thought was a very worthwhile project put forward by the federal government and it was supported by certain provincial governments.

We know, of course, that came to a stalemate. We did not proceed with the income security programs. We did not proceed with the new social services act. Consequently, I think, we took a backward step. We're going to continue to provide the patchwork of programs across Canada that will not guarantee people a basic income related to their needs with, Mr. Speaker, (and I want to underline this) an absolute necessity or requirement for people to go and work.

The member for Maple Creek (Mrs. Duncan) I thought brought in a very good point the other day in question period when she asked me the question of what I was going to do about bringing about the request that was made by the SCCCA (Saskatchewan Council for Crippled Children and Adults) in Saskatchewan. I'm in full support of their request for real money for real work or real work for real money. I agree with them.

We've got to give people incentive to go out and work but until we get a national policy agreed upon by all the provinces, it simply is not going to work. I think it is incumbent upon, not just governments but opposition people too, to put forward their suggestions in the best interests of the low income people and those people who are disadvantaged. So yes, I agree that social services should play a very vital role. I think if you compare our budget and increases in the area of social services in Saskatchewan as compared to the other provinces, over the last eight or nine years, you will find we did well. We've done well here in Saskatchewan as compared to increases in the budget. I might only refer to certain programs, like the home care program which is coming on stream, the SIP program (Saskatchewan Income Plan), the Family Income Plan and our day care program, just to name a few, we're still taking the lead in certain areas.

Our family income program is now being copied, I believe, by one or two other provinces; at least they're having a serious look at it. Our day care program, I think, really does meet, very effectively, the financial need of those people who are in low and middle income brackets.

The member for Maple Creek (Mrs. Duncan) says that we've come in for criticism lately and much of that criticism has been justified. Much of the criticism we have received lately has been because we as a department and a government have decided that in

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these days of restraint, brought by politicians upon themselves, it was felt by the opposition members across this country, wherever they were, that it was to their benefit to criticize government for too many civil servants and too much spending. We were on the doorstep in the last election. We heard this and we heard it before and we took cognizance of it.

I'm simply saying to the members that we can't have it both ways as politicians. We can't on the one hand, say that we want to expand programs, that we want to increase civil servants (and I think it's unfair to say you're going to have a whole slew of programs and then not have the civil servants to deliver the program) and then on the other hand criticize the very governments who want to deliver those. I don't think we can have both. I think we now have to live with a very successful program brought about by politicians to, as I say, satisfy their own selfish needs.

When we sat down to prioritize our own programs, we had to look at cost benefits. We did analyses of various programs, and said, there are some programs we feel maybe five years ago were very worthwhile. Today, other things have come about. I'm not sure when the ombudsman came into being in Saskatchewan but it was maybe four or five years ago. There were many needs before that, when we didn't have an ombudsman to go to, so the values change, and I think we have to look at it on a yearly basis and maybe on a biannual basis.

We have to look at our programs and see which ones we can maybe cut out, which ones, for example, we can combine with other agencies so that they can be delivered by maybe one agency rather than two.

Therefore you can cut administrative costs, you can cut rentals, you can cut staff, the cost of staff, and so on, and thereby cut down the cost of your program.

I think, Mr. Chairman, that it behoves a minister to have a look at what the costs of the programs are that not only his own department delivers but other agents deliver on behalf of the department. If we find, for example, we've got half-a-dozen agencies delivering programs and one or two are considerably higher than others, then, I think, we have to have a look. What are they delivering that is so much better than some of the others? Or what are they not doing that others are doing to make their programs more efficient? I think it's up to us to try and point out to them that look, agency A is delivering basically the same kind of program, but for considerably less than what you are doing.

Naturally, if you cut off these people, they will criticize. They will say for example, that there wasn't sufficient consultation even though you may have had consultations for a year and you may have warned them a year ago saying, look, you're out of line. You've got to get your administrative costs into line. You have to be more efficient. You have to serve more clients. And if it doesn't come about, yes, sometimes arbitrary decisions have to be made and those are tough to make. But then, as the minister, I have to accept those criticisms.

Mr. Speaker, I do not accept and will not accept her suggestion that we will not accept responsibility for our decisions or that no one is prepared to make any decisions. You can't have it both ways. You can't tell me that on the one hand, we make arbitrary decisions and in the same breath, tell me that no one is prepared to take responsibility for making decisions. Either we make them or we don't make them. I'm saying we make them. Yes, sometimes we're wrong, but we'll make them. I don't think anybody can accuse me of being afraid of making decisions. I'll make decisions. I'll certainly consult

and I can't recall, Mr. Chairman, that I ever really turned anybody down for a meeting. I may not have been able to meet with all of the groups personally, but I have suggested to them, try some of my officials first. It's impossible for the minister to meet with every group. You just can't do that. There are too many. If their meeting with the officials wasn't satisfactory, I've often then met with the group myself.

I'm not sure what the member (maybe she can expand on it) means when she says that we ignore appeals made. Maybe she is referring, for example, to some agencies that have made special appeals to the minister and that those were ignored. All I can say is that I try to answer every letter that comes into my office, not personally of course, but I insist to my staff that every letter is acknowledged and that all briefs should be acknowledged. My officials will tell you that I put a lot of pressure on them to try and answer as promptly as we can. But again, Mr. Chairman, if we're going to cut back in staff or hold the staff and deliver additional programs, then I think there will be more time required for us to acknowledge briefs and to try and meet with people. If you deliver more programs and you don't increase the staff, you can only ask for so much. In this particular area of dealing with personal problems and dealing very intimately with people, I think that teachers on the other side will tell you that you burn out very rapidly. You've got to watch yourself and very carefully or else you do burn out. I think it is a fact that across this country and including this province many of our social workers, because they are so dedicated, burn themselves out. They leave the area of social services and go into another area because it's too rough on them. They simply cannot stand up to the pressure. They leave.

I think there are a lot of teachers who do exactly the same thing, but not because they don't like teaching. They leave the teaching profession because there is a lot of pressure on them.

All I'm saying to the member for Maple Creek is that I am very proud of the work that my staff is doing. I know there is some criticism at times but they can't respond as quickly as people would like. Generally speaking, I will stack my staff up against any social service department in Canada. I think they are a dedicated group of people. They work hard. We've got a large geographical area to cover which is another disadvantage. I think on the whole they do a pretty good job.

I'm not going to get into the detail of the Riches report. As I said, I've not had a chance to study it. One of the things that the Riches report does indicate very clearly to me is that they would have been much more successful in their report had they chosen another province like Manitoba or Ontario or some of the Maritime provinces where the programs were really cut back. There, for example, the increases weren't 3 per cent, 4 per cent and maybe 5 per cent. When you've had percentage increases, for example, in social services in this province in 1976 of 12.1; 1977-78, 9.6; and 1979-80, 12.1, it's very difficult to criticize the department for not spending more. When you compare those with other provinces where the average has been 3 per cent, 4 per cent and 5 per cent, I think we stack up very well.

The member says where is the Department of Social Services going? Are the programs adequate? My opinion, Mr. Speaker, is no. The programs are not adequate. The programs are not adequate right across this country. I have to agree with you that as far as poverty is concerned we have accomplished very little. But, having said that, the poverty would be immensely worse had we not had the social programs across this country that we have had over the last number of years. They would be immensely worse. Certainly 25 to 30 per cent of our people live in poverty in Canada. That's a

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disgrace! But, Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House cannot be accused of being partners to those people who refuse to put in programs and support programs that would have guaranteed people right across this country a basic annually guaranteed income. With the social service programs to accompany that plus, Mr. Chairman, with the proviso that where there is work and where there is capability of the individual to work they must work. That is what we wanted as a province; that is what some of the other provinces wanted, but we could not come to an agreement. That cannot be laid at our doorstep. You've got to go to other provincial governments and lay it at theirs.

Mr. Chairman, where do I want to go as Minister of Social Services and where would I like to see my department go? I'll tell you one of the things I would like to see if there's a new government in Ottawa and there will be, either Liberal or Tory, hopefully NDP and we would really accomplish something. Mr. Chairman, that's a longshot for the NDP, but those things can happen.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to see us in this country come to some agreement on an income security program and a new social service program. Secondly, Mr. Chairman, in my own province, I would like to see a much heavier emphasis on prevention. My first speech in the House in 1971 was on prevention. I firmly believe every dollar you spend on prevention is a dollar that will pay you great dividends in the future. Therefore, I would like us to see if we can implement much more of The Family Services Act, the provisos in the Family Services Act. Those will cost dollars, many millions of dollars, but we as politicians must be prepared to take the criticism that may be levied at us for spending those dollars. I hope the Opposition will be with us when we are able to convince the Minister of Finance (Mr. Smishek) and Treasury Board that's the direction we should go. I hope the Opposition will support me in this.

I do believe there was an article just recently in the Star Phoenix which says that 50 per cent of the families in Calgary ended up in divorce last year. That's a disgrace, Mr. Chairman, but we're not far behind. We're not far behind and I think we should do something, either through our school system or through the Department of Social Services, although I personally believe it should be done through our school system. We should be providing more professional help to those families, particularly those young families who have financial problems, alcohol problems, emotional problems. We could help them at an early stage with their children and spend a few dollars in hiring these people, whether it's done at the provincial level or at the local school board level. I would like to see it at the local level, but I think we've got to make some hard decisions in this area and we've got to make sure that we do not, Mr. Chairman, I would hope that we do not live by those hard restraints we have seen in some of the other provinces, that we here in Saskatchewan will once again blaze the trails in this particular area as we have done in many others and provide those professional services to those young people, who I think are out there begging for them. I think, in the long run, it would pay us a lot of dividends. I will stop there and let the member respond to that, if she wishes.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Minister, I agree with a fair amount of what you have to say. I think, some of the suggestions that you make came from the members opposite.

We have always been in favor of locally controlled programs, locally initiated programs without — for lack of a better word — interference from the government. I disagree with one of the statements you made, that the discontentment is caused by opposition politicians trying to score a point or two. I think you only have to go to a smaller centre

out of the city, and the abuses within the social service system become more apparent than in a city. This is where a lot of the discontentment comes. A person sees the inequalities of the system and the people, who we refer to as professional social service recipients, know the ins and outs, and like I say the abuses show up in a small town.

You talk about employment and that and yet the member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Lane), not too long ago in the House, suggested to you that Saskatchewan, being a rich province now, is on the verge of an industrial or resource boom — we are going to get people from across Canada. He suggested to you that these people have a job before they come; these people would not be eligible for social assistance just because they happen to arrive on our doorstep and I agree with that suggestion. From what you said, you rather agree with this, in principle, too.

I think, in Saskatchewan, we have blazed the trail. You say that we have introduced many, many programs and yet you say that you are criticized. You try to keep your employee number down. Well, I don't think that you can adequately present programs unless you have the people to staff them. Surely you want to have as much local input as possible. But if you are trying to keep a ceiling on expanding the civil servants in your department, the programs that you would like to see are doomed to failure and doomed to not work if you haven't got the people — the technical people and the professional people — to give guidance.

You didn't answer the first question I had. Who evaluates the various programs? who evaluated citizens' advisory and those types that were cut out recently?

MR. ROLFES: — I will answer your question very shortly. I just want to make a very brief statement on abuses. I know that there are abuses in the Department of Social Services but let me . . . you know there is a good saying in the Bible, he who is without sin, let him cast the first stone. I would just like to say to the people in this House that I think there are many people in our society who have money in their wallets that belongs rightfully to the federal government. I think this is the right time of the year to make that statement because we are all working out our income tax. I think there are many dollars that we have in our wallets that rightfully belong to the federal government or provincial government.

What I am simply saying is that many of these people, many of the people who abuse the social services system are the disadvantaged people, the poor people. I am not saying that that's right that they should abuse it. What I am saying to the member opposite, and I have made this request many times in the House, if each and everyone in this House was diligent about reporting abuses that occur in social services to my department and then got one or two other people in the province to do the same thing, we could cut out the abuses very, very quickly without adding hundreds of staff to our department to monitor these abuses. I don't think that we can, we can't police the abuses unless we want to hire hundreds and hundreds of more staff. So, I am simply saying to the member I don't think these abuses should occur. These people are just as human as you and I and they will take advantage of the system if they can.

What I am simply saying is if people in society who are aware of these abuses would report them (they don't have to give their names); simply report the individuals that they think may be abusing the system and we will check them out. If, for example, they are abusing the system I can assure you that action will be taken.

I want to make a statement on staff. I do know, Mr. Chairman, governments do not

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implement programs, even though they may be very worthwhile programs, because they will require many more staff. Because the feeling out there in the country is that there are too many bureaucrats already, too many civil servants and . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . see I told you, agreed? We go out in the boondocks and we state that. There are 18,000 people, there are 21,000 people — way more than in any of the other provinces; even though these . . . we all know these figures are exaggerated. I think it does have an impact not only on the people, the residents of Saskatchewan, but it has an impact on elected officials. I just want to say that I think it's too bad that we have as a government, as governments in Canada, taken the line that we need restraint and that we need to cutback on civil servants.

I just refer, for example, to your national leader. I mean he is going to cut \$60,000 and maybe that is the right way to go. I don't know, but I can tell you one thing. If he does he won't be able to deliver the kinds of programs and he won't be able to meet the demands of the people of Canada. He won't be able to do that. He is either going to cut the programs or he is going to say to people, you can't have the kind of service you have been used to. If for example, there is a family out there who will need some health programs or some health assistance or some social service assistance, they simply cannot deliver those.

We have not had the increase in staff in our own department that I would like to have seen, what I think we need to effectively go about and deliver the kinds of programs. I think we can't have it both ways.

I want to say to the member that in the evaluation of programs, it is done internally by our own officials, by the directors of the programs and the staff they have in their particular areas. Sometimes we take it upon ourselves to agree with the agency to invite outside consultants. For example with SCAPO (Saskatchewan Council of Anti-Poverty Organization) there was an outside consultant who came in from Manitoba, I believe. Was it? It was Carleton University and some recommendations were made. So when you ask who is evaluating it, my officials certainly are evaluating it, sometimes on a weekly basis and sometimes on a monthly basis.

Certainly there are many meetings held between the agency and the officials. It depends on each particular project that we may be concerned with. For an example, we were concerned with SCAPO for a couple of years and there was a lot of consultation with the people of SCAPO, outside officials, my own officials and myself, and a lot of hours were spent. Switchboard, I think was one we had drawn to their attention that we were somewhat concerned. There are many others for example and we do hold consultations with them. Sometimes it is with the deputy minister, sometimes with the assistant deputy, sometimes with myself and sometimes with people who may not be assistant deputy, but directors of programs.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Minister, this umbrella organization you keep talking about. When did your department decide to form such a group and who is involved in it?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, the department has not made a decision as to who will be the umbrella group. We have not made a decision when the umbrella group will be initiated and neither should we, Mr. Chairman. We have to hold discussions with various agencies and organizations that are out in Saskatchewan and which represent disadvantaged and poor peoples' groups. My understanding is that a number of them are now meeting. They are exploring the situation. Many of them were not happy with what they had. They want to make sure that they get a real grass roots organization. I

indicated to the member the other day that may take some time. I am not going to push these organizations into forming one. I want it to be pointed out to the member that my understanding is (and I could be wrong and my officials may tell me this) there is not one other province (maybe there is one) that finances a provincial organization for disadvantaged groups — an umbrella organization. Is there one? No, I think there's only the federal government organization — the National Association of Poverty Organizations. That's the one funded by the federal government. I don't believe that there's any other province that funds a poor peoples' umbrella group. We were the only ones that were doing it. So, what I'm simply saying is that even though we don't fund any and we will (we're hoping to fund someone), it wouldn't prevent them from forming an organization. They're doing it in other provinces. We simply, a few years ago, decided that we would fund one; so we will assist them in organizing it but it is not going to be rushed into.

MRS. DUNCAN: — To date, what organizations have participated in the top level?

MR. ROLFES: — Would the member like to continue with another question while we look up the list? I don't think we have the whole list, but I think we can give you seven, eight or nine organizations that are involved, I believe. But if you want to continue with another question, we'll get the answer for you then?

MRS. DUNCAN: — What is the turnover of social workers within your department in a year?

MR. ROLFES: — About 3 per cent.

MRS. DUNCAN: — How many social workers have been released from your department within the last year?

MR. ROLFES: — You mean asked or given their pink slips? You're referring to degreed social workers, are you?

MRS. DUNCAN: — And non-degreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order, please. The ones that are not participating in the debate, if they would just quietly whisper, we could carry on much better with the questions and answers.

MR. ROLFES: — I'll answer the question of the groups that are involved in the discussions on the umbrella group. There are two missing. We can't think of the two but I can give you about seven, I believe: the Cornwall tutoring group (that's a Regina group, I believe); the Saskatchewan Co-ordinating Council on Social Planning (I believe that that one must have about 35 groups; that's a big group); the John Howard Society; the Community Switchboard; Operation Mustardseed; Outreach; Welfare Rights.

Yes, I would . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well I didn't say that. I said I would consider it.

Your answer to your other question is one.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Are there any plans in the near future of amalgamating the social services in the DNS (Department of Northern Saskatchewan) with the social services in the South?

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MR. ROLFES: — I wish you had directed that question to the Premier when his estimates were on. That's a difficult one for me to answer. I think the whole concept of DNS is certainly under constant scrutiny to see how effective it has been and whether or not we should reintegrate some of the services back with the line department. I think you are aware that last year we did take under our jurisdiction corrections in the North. Is that correct? We have taken over partial jurisdiction over corrections in the North so I think some of that is going on but I wouldn't hold your breath on integrating the social services at this particular time.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Minister, I would like to talk on services to the aged right now. I would like to compliment you on your home care package which you have proposed. I think, that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of woe and I think perhaps this is one of the directions in which we're headed in the right way, for once.

During a speech a while ago I quoted some figures as to the cost of home care — nursing home care for Saskatchewan citizens as compared to Alberta — and though I don't like to compare our programs to other provinces, this is one that perhaps does have some merit. Now, after I gave my figures, you disputed them in the paper the next day. Could you give me the average cost of nursing home care for the three levels in Saskatchewan?

MR. ROLFES: — Level 1, \$376; level 2, \$570, and level 3, \$931. It must be remembered that we do pay a subsidy for level 2 — it's \$156 and for level 3, \$464. In addition to that I think it is worthwhile to mention that approximately, I believe, 50 per cent or 52 per cent of the people of the senior citizens who are in special care homes are completely covered by SAP (Saskatchewan Assistance Plan). The others certainly are people, who, because of their financial situation, have to bear the rest of the costs through the old age security guaranteed income supplement and the Saskatchewan Income Plan.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Could you give me the lowest price in the province as compared to the highest price? Pioneer Village level 3 is \$1,086 which, I think, is probably one of the higher ones we've got.

MR. ROLFES: — I think you're right. We haven't got the highest and lowest here, but we can get that for you. There's no problem in getting that. I think you're right in saying that Pioneer Village is one of the highest; it's over a thousand and there probably are some levels that would be about \$300 and the reason for that of course depends on when it was filled. The reason why Alberta's are considerably cheaper is because Alberta pays all the capital costs whereas we only pay 20 per cent of the capital cost. Certainly that has a great bearing on the monthly charge and I don't deny that at all.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Well, I think, Mr. Minister, that perhaps here in Saskatchewan we tend to discriminate against the aged once they reach certain levels. In Alberta the cost to stay in a nursing home is equal regardless of what level they are and in Alberta I believe they pick up the capital cost of the building which is why they're able to give it so low. Has any consideration been given to implementing a plan such as Alberta's? I realize that it would be costly but most of these people who are now going into nursing homes or who have gone in within the last ten years or so are by no means wealthy people. They sold their land or their businesses or their homes when the value was nowhere near what it is today. I don't think it is really fair that one person pays \$300 and some and another person has to pay \$900 and some. Have you done any studies as to the way Alberta does their nursing home care?

MR. ROLFES: — Yes, a couple of things. First of all, yes, in the estimates of the Minister of Health, he had indicated there would be public discussions on this particular problem this year. We hope to have something in our budget for next year. But I do want to make a correction on what the member is saying that somebody is paying \$376 and the other one \$931. No one pays \$931. You must subtract the subsidy of \$464 so it would work out to on the average for level 1 of \$376 that the individual will pay; level 2, it's \$414 and for level 3, it's \$467. Now having said that, Mr. Chairman, you must also subtract from that the OAS (Old Age Security), GIS (Guarantee Income Services) and SIP (Saskatchewan Income Plan). I don't know, what does that amount to now? What would that be \$300 and some, \$306? Somewhere around \$306 or \$310. I think somewhere in that particular area.

So if you subtract the \$310 let's say from \$376, no one in level 1 (if they had no other means of income) would pay more than \$76 a month. If they had no other means, we'd pick it up on staff. In level 2, the difference would be about \$104 and level 3, it would be \$157. If they have means to pay it, then I'm not so sure if someone is 85 or 86 or 87 years old, if they are worth, let's say, \$100,000, shouldn't pay; why shouldn't that be used for their upkeep? Why should that be turned over to their children? I'm not so sure part of that should not go for their upkeep when, for example, the federal government and the provincial government are already providing the \$800 a month. Why shouldn't an individual then pay the additional \$100 and some a month? That's a thing we have to come to grips with this particular year.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Well, I don't disagree with everything you've said but what I'm saying is these people have saved and done whatever. They're very proud people and all of a sudden they're reduced to a nothing. You don't understand that. Why should they be forced to use up their savings, say within the first three years they go into a home, and be left with nothing? No pride, no purpose, no nothing. Why is there a difference in the level? Why can't you just do it like Alberta where the three levels are charged the same (\$153 a month, by the way)?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I guess it's a philosophical decision. Why, for example, does the Alberta government charge medicare premiums? We don't. Why, for example, does the Alberta government charge people to go into hospitals? We don't. Why doesn't the Alberta government provide drugs at a very low price like we do? It's a political decision that has been made.

What I'm saying to you is that even if someone paid \$200 a month for 12 months, that's \$2,400 a year. It would take that person 10 years to spend \$24,000. It would take them 10 years! The average age of a person going into a nursing home today is 83. If someone has \$24,000 and pays \$200 a month, that person would be 93 years old before he would pay \$24,000 towards his care. In the meantime, the government has paid somewhere in the neighborhood of \$70,000 - \$80,000 for their care. (It may be more than that. It may be about \$100,000 towards their care).

Why do people save their money? I'll admit that most of our parents saved money so that they could turn it over to their kids. That's true; my parents were exactly the same way.

But what I'm simply saying to you is that I think that there's nothing wrong in asking people to pay for part of their care with money they have saved during their lifetime. I would hope that that's why they saved it.

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I think that's something, as I said before, we have to come to grips with: whether or not we want to give more aid to them. My own personal feeling, for example, would be that we would ask every individual in a nursing home to pay the OAS (Old Age Security), GIS (Guaranteed Income Supplement), and the SIP (Saskatchewan Income Plan) that they have, minus a comfort allowance.

The problem with that proposition of course is that the government becomes the last dollar insurer and then you have to have a line-by-line budget analysis and you take away the autonomy that nursing homes presently have. That's a real disadvantage of the proposal they have, for example, in Alberta where they do have a line-by-line budget scrutiny of each nursing home. We would require many more civil servants to do that. We have 129 nursing homes and if you were to do a line-by-line budget of all of those, you would require a lot more staff to do it.

What I'm saying is that the Minister of Health (Mr. Tchorzewski) has already committed the government to having a look at this problem and I'm saying to you that we hope to have something in our budget for next year. I can't promise that, but we hope there will be something there.

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — Mr. Chairman, the minister just indicated the discussions that will be held this year in all levels and I recall the commitment that was made by the Minister of Health (Mr. Tchorzewski) in his estimates, but my question to you tonight is, have you given some consideration to immediately lend some kind of assistance to those patients who have lived in the level III care and nursing home for many years (some of them 10 and 15 years) who should be today in level IV or receiving level V health care but should not be moved from the nursing home care atmosphere to a hospital care atmosphere as I mentioned in the health estimates, have you since that time discussed or given any consideration to providing assistance to keeping them in that nursing care home under level IV status for the remaining days of their lives which in some cases isn't very many days? Now, I realize you are going to have the discussions; I realize you're investigating. I realize the Minister of Health (Mr. Tchorzewski) has made the commitment. I am asking you again as I asked the Minister of Health, to look at it today, immediately, where that type of care, level IV care, can be provided in a nursing care home. Have you thought about it and will you think about it?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, first of all, the member and I have had a discussion on this before. I think the member is aware that, in addition to the subsidies that I have talked about, we do provide nursing homes with \$300 a month up to a maximum of 10 per cent of their level III residents, so that is in addition. I know what you are saying. I have some real sympathy for that particular position, but I also want to be very frank with you. Yes, I have thought of it; I think a lot about that particular problem, but I think I would be dishonest in saying that something will be forthcoming in the very near future on that particular problem. If the people are financially not able to bear the burden, they will be taken care of through SAP (Saskatchewan Assistance Plan). As I indicated, 52 per cent presently, if they don't have the financial means to pay, have it paid through SAP. As I indicated to the member, I think you've got to wait until those public discussions are held and wait until next year's budget.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Minister, I should have mentioned that I was aware of the subsidy you are presently making and it's a help to some of these nursing homes. It's certainly better than nothing, and I would suggest to you that the cases I am referring to are isolated cases. They are not prevalent in the nursing care homes. In the case of one

that I am referring to where there are 114 patients, there's only five. Now, granted, you are providing \$300 on 10 per cent of the beds but that still doesn't provide that hospital care required to look after those four or five patients who have probably less than 30 days to live. This is the point that I am making. It isn't going to be an expensive move at this point in time and it isn't every nursing home in the province that could even qualify for it, and I am aware of that. I am referring to those very few isolated cases where a special consideration be made now to look after them.

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I know what the member is referring to. As I indicated to him I have a lot of empathy for that situation. I think I would be dishonest with you if I said that something will be forthcoming very shortly. I indicated that we will have public discussions on it and I think we simply have to await next year's budget. Hopefully, we will have something for next year's budget.

MR. G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley): — I am interested to hear the minister's comments about being a historic trailblazer. I think in view of this that maybe we should suggest to the Premier that he shuffle his cabinet a bit. You might be a very valuable acquisition in northern Saskatchewan, blazing these trails for uranium and power lines and roads. Perhaps you are in for a promotion, Mr. Minister, on your record of being a great trailblazer. We heard some talk about Speaker. I don't know if that is in the offing for him or not but he did mention his trailblazing ability and I didn't think I should let that pass.

You have a little note at the bottom of your estimates that explains that there has been some changing in the structure from 1978-79. Would you just elaborate on that a little more, please?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I just want to ask the member. I am not quite sure what you are talking about. Are you talking about reorganizing the organization in the estimates or reorganization in my department?

MR. TAYLOR: — Just a little more explanation on the bottom of page 93, where the asterisk is. What are you talking about?

MR. ROLFES: — I just want to comment on trailblazing. Mr. Chairman, I am so in love with this department that anything other than social services I would consider as a demotion, because you deal so intimately with people's lives in this department.

Mr. Chairman, I think what you are referring to is the reorganization in my department where we have tried to bring together some complementary programs. For example, Core Services Branch and Community Services Division were brought together; Senior Citizens and Home Care Branches were brought together. I think that is what you are referring to. That is what we did and therefore you will find the estimates somewhat different this year.

I think, for example, Home Care and Senior Citizens — bringing those two together I think made a lot of sense. So that is what we have done this year and I think it has helped to make our department a little more efficient in delivering our programs.

MR. TAYLOR: — Fine, I understand now what you are meaning by those. The other few terms in looking through your reports, I would like you to clarify for me. I will list all three of them and you can give me a definition.

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You talk about temporary positions; you talk about casual positions and you talk about part-time employment. Could you define for me the difference between these?

MR. ROLFES: — Yes, a full-time employee, working full time for a maximum of one year. Beyond one year they have to become permanent. They must become permanent or be given a pink slip.

Casual is a maximum of 26 days in a two-month period. Part-time is up to 90 per cent in any given month. For example, we could have a steno come in for three days at any particular time during the month when we might have a heavy workload. We might bring in a number of stenos to get the workload done in a given period of time. Those are the definitions.

MR. TAYLOR: — You mention one other category in some of your literature — day labor — is that day by day?

MR. ROLFES: — I'm told that does not pertain to our department apparently.

MR. TAYLOR: — They are in your public accounts of 1977-78.

MR. ROLFES: — Day labor pertains to those people who work in parks, etc. that would be provincial parks, I guess.

MR. TAYLOR: — How can it be provincial parks when it is Lakeside Home in Wolseley?

MR. ROLFES: — Our officials don't know. You have got us stumped on that one but they will check it out. They just don't seem to be able to come to grips with it right now.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — By the way, it's not just Lakeside Home on day labor; they all have day labor, I notice. Community Training Residence, Riverside Home in Battleford, they all have it.

AN HON. MEMBER: — What page are you referring to?

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Public Accounts on 364 and 365. To carry on with the question the member for Indian Head-Wolseley (Mr. Taylor) asked you. Which are the temporary and the casual and the part-time and the day labors, if you find the answer to that — out of scope employees?

MR. ROLFES: — Did you really mean out of scope?

MR. TAYLOR: — Just what are you getting at with either in or out? Isn't out of scope somebody that's in a management position? Surely you are not bringing in a casual management, are you?

MR. ROLFES: — Let me try and give you an example. If I had a vacancy in my department in an out of scope position, hired a temporary person to fill that position, what would you call that person?

MR. ROUSSEAU: — On that point, are the temporary and the casual and the part-time listed in your 2,288 employees shown in the estimates? As well, how many temporary, casual and part-time employees are there?

MR. ROLFES: — The 2,288 are permanent positions. Man years in the non-permanent are 317.02 — that was '79-'80, '78-'79 332.70.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — '79-'80?

MR. ROLFES: — 317.02.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — That was '79-'80. Well, what was the 332.70?

MR. ROLFES: — '78-'79.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — The member for Maple Creek (Mrs. Duncan) is detained for about five minutes so I'm going to meanwhile ask you for the salaries of the executives. If you want to make a list of them and provide them tomorrow or whenever . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . well, there's 2,288 and I don't really know where I'd start so I'm going to suggest to you that you give them to me, say, over \$30,000. How does that sound? Would that be as easy as anything, in all departments, in all items? O.K. I'm going to kill some time, or do you have some questions? Go ahead.

MR. L.W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — We're going to kill it; we'll kill it in class. Mr. Minister, I'm aware you are under a lot of pressure in many sectors of the province at this point in time to review your level III and level IV care nursing home policy. Mr. Minister, I think the first thing I want to do is make it clear to you that I understand that problem that you have. It must be difficult to know just what direction to go because we're looking at growing and growing numbers of level III and level IV patients and requirements for more and more of those nursing care facilities. The problem of having those patients in hospitals is very difficult on the people that work in hospitals because they went into that profession of nursing not to look after level III - IV nursing care homes but to be nurses in hospitals.

The member for Morse (Mr. Gross) may happen to doubt that I have all this down pat. I would just inform that member I was talking to one of the more senior administrators of hospitals today and I do have some information that I think will be to the advantage of your minister and subsequently to the advantage to the people of Saskatchewan. It's to be hoped the member for Morse (Mr. Gross) will never be in the position that the minister is now. Anyway, Mr. Minister, the suggestions I have been receiving from people that have to deal with those problems, like administrators of hospitals, is that we should be looking at possibly incorporating level III and IV nursing care homes (and I and II for that matter as well), with the hospital units in order that we could have a more efficient system and put that under the same administration, with the same maintenance people within that building and a lot of staff that could overlap, part-time staff in particular. I think that might be a reasonable solution. You could look at areas, in particular, that have small hospitals, 10 and 15 bed hospitals in rural Saskatchewan. Rather than putting in a new facility for looking after the level III and IV nursing care problem, you could be incorporating that with that small hospital.

Now, you just take as an example in my constituency (of course which I am most familiar with), the people in Whitewood have a hospital and they want a nursing care home. Wapella doesn't have a hospital but they want a nursing care home. The reason for that is that they say, well our people don't want to go to Whitewood and they don't want to go to Moosomin. This is where their family ties are; this is where they have grown up and lived their lives and this is where they want to retire, whether it is in level III or IV

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nursing care homes or whether it is in hospitals, because there isn't sufficient room in the existing facilities.

So, those are the problems and those are the problems that you have and I sympathize with you, Mr. Minister. It is very difficult to go into a small town that has no hospital and there is a hospital on either side of it and say, well we are going to put a nursing care facility in here. I know it doesn't seem practical. I know it is a dilemma because it is a regional thing that the people themselves perceive and it is very difficult to overcome that and say, well I don't care where you lived and how long you have lived there, you have to move to Moosomin or you have to move up the line west of Whitewood. It is a difficult thing.

In the case of Moosomin and maybe in other centres, if we could ever get the agreement from the neighboring towns like Whitewood in this case, if we could take the hospital in Moosomin and turn that whole hospital which is a 50-bed hospital into a level III and IV nursing care home and build a new hospital in that area to serve that whole area, it would include Whitewood and Wapella and the whole surrounding area.

I see the Minister of Health (Mr. Tchorzewski) shaking his head and I suppose the administrator who I was talking to today has it figured accurately and he says, this will never ever come to pass even though it is a good idea, because he says I understand the Minister of Health is not really in favor of that idea. If he isn't, that is fine, Mr. Minister. It still leaves you with the problem of providing adequate level III and IV nursing care facilities.

You can say, well we want to promote more in-home care and that is all well and good except in the cases where the children of these level III and IV patients who are their parents, are not adequately trained to look after them. They have to be somewhere. They can't be in the hospital and there is no level III and IV care facility, so what do you do? You have to have those facilities. The other reason that we have to have those facilities is there are many cases where we've got individuals who have no family in the area whatsoever. No family in the province for that matter — an 80 or 90 year old man or woman and nowhere to go, waiting in line at the nursing care home and having to be placed in hospital. I think that you are aware of the problem. I have suggested to you what I think might work. That is to incorporate them with the existing hospitals wherever you can. To make it more efficient, hopefully you can do it for less cost. That is a suggestion which has been put to me more than once, in fact about three times now, by different people in different parts of the province. So, possibly it does have some merit.

Mr. Minister, I would just like you to comment on that proposal. Whether or not you can agree is immaterial. I would just like to hear your comments.

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I think the member does make some comments which merit some discussion and some thought. It's not a new suggestion since we have already done it. We're doing it in several areas in the province. So I'm not going to say that the idea isn't one that one should consider. I do want to draw it to the member's attention that in this province we have about 71 or 72 beds per thousand senior citizens. That is the highest probably in North America. In the particular area you are referring to I think we have about 70 or 71 beds per thousand. When you talk to other ministers of other provinces they are saying that once they reach 60 beds per thousand they are going to stop building nursing beds. So in your particular area we are already higher than what the other provinces are shooting for. The idea of making use of local

hospitals in rural Saskatchewan I think has a lot of merit. I would not outwardly reject that particular proposal. We have considered it and I have O.K.'d in certain areas some of those beds.

I do think, Mr. Chairman, and I have made this statement before and I just want to make it again, we've got to be very, very careful that we don't and 10 years from now saddle many local rural municipalities and towns with the heavy burden of paying for a capital expenditure that was made when there was no real need for it. I think you've got to project 20, 30 and 40 years into the future. I think many of the people who come in to see me — and it's a great idea to have a building and they like to have it, but once you point out to them the financial commitment that they are going to be making they are saying, gee we never thought of that. We never thought it would be that much; that it would be 40 or 50 years into the future.

I think the idea has some merit. We're certainly looking into it, but I would like to see us put our emphasis on a good comprehensive home care program to keep the people in their own communities and in their homes just as long as we can and then, move them into a nursing home or a local hospital when the need is required. I would like to have the emphasis on the nursing home rather than the hospital because I think there is a difference between level III and level IV care and acute care. O.K.?

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Minister, I just have a question that doesn't make too much sense with the answer you gave me awhile ago. You indicated in '79-'80, your temporary staff would be 317.02 man-years whereas the '78-'79 was 332.70, a difference of about 15.68 man-years. And yet your '79-'80 estimate is considerably more money. Is there a reason for that?

MR. ROLFES: — Would you rephrase that? Are you saying that there is more money in our . . . I'm not sure that you phrased it quite correctly?

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well, first of all, all of your personal services are employees, is it not? Or is there something else included in that on your estimates?

MR. ROLFES: — Much of that, I think, Mr. Chairman, is for salary increases. There's only a difference, (unless we're on the wrong one) for other personal services, we had \$183,890 and last year, we had \$144,630. That's a difference of \$39,000.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — I added them all up. Not only item 1. If you take them right through, there's a difference of about \$300,000 as I can see it. But I've done this in very quick calculations. I may be out in my calculations. My question is, first of all, it is all employees, I take it?

MR. ROLFES: — They're all honoraria that we pay, for example, to advisory boards, day care advisory boards, senior citizen advisory boards, regional advisory boards. We have ten regional advisory boards and they're all in there.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Yes, but I presume they were in both estimates, the '78-'79 and the '79-'80. I think, Mr. Minister, I won't dwell on the point but the question I asked (and it's not that serious) is it because of inflation that the increase is some \$200,000 to \$300,000 and yet you indicated that you have 15 man years less in your 1979-80 estimate, so I take it that it's inflation or increase in labor.

MR. ROLFES: — That's what it is.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Minister, I have had a few letters of complaints as to the reduction in nursing hours, and I think we discussed this before. I have phoned various homes throughout the province, and the problem isn't just the fact that the nursing care is reduced as what's required by the Housing and Special Care Homes Act. The problem is with what you refer to as heavy level III's who really are level IV's and shouldn't be in a nursing home; but we have a lot of them in rural nursing homes. The administrators and the matrons say that the level I's have to, out of necessity, practically be ignored. Many days the nursing staff doesn't even have time to stop and say hello because of the pressures put on them by the heavy level III's and level II's. Now, if you have a provision in the Housing and Special Homes Care Act for a specified number of nursing hours per patient, why isn't it being enforced?

MR. ROLFES: — First of all, a brief explanation. The member is saying that level I people are not getting very much nursing care and that's a fact because they only require 20 minutes of nursing care a day. I mean that's what level I is about. Level II I think is 45 minutes. Level III is two hours a day. I think I indicated to the member some time ago that our regulations are under review. The SA are on that particular committee; the special care homes are on that committee, and I think the senior citizens council are on that committee. We have about 13, 14 or 15 groups that are on that committee to review our regulations. I hope to have something by the fall to bring our regulations up to date to make them more specific as to what is required.

Some of our nursing homes, for example, provide physiotherapists. Now, our regulations don't say that in the medical requirements that physiotherapy should be included or has to be included. Some nursing homes provide it; others don't, and I think people look at it and say, hey, how come this nursing home provides a physiotherapist but the other home doesn't. Does it mean that someone is not abiding by the regulations? No, it simply means that one nursing home is providing more than what is actually required. I think most of our nursing homes come very close to abiding by the regulations. If there are some that don't, we have certainly tried to encourage them to do so. We are really waiting until we have the report of this committee so that we can get our regulations up-to-date, revise them and bring forward some of the things that have been recommended to us by a number of groups, particularly, special care home groups, in the last two or three years.

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Minister, I was just doing a little calculation on the switching of staff within your department and probably it necessitates moving people around. I'm not questioning that at all. In some of the figures I have been working with, I see in the Battleford home you have put quite a few people in there. I guess you have some expansion there in levels III and IV. I see you have a number of people going into the home care field which is a new program and it is understandable. However, in looking through your general various subvotes I see that in other areas you have dropped by about 49 employees, if my figures are accurate. I wonder if that is indicating a cutback in services? I am not blaming you or your department but I think it is something all of us should be aware of and certainly you people when you are the government.

I notice that you have had to add 25 positions in the various correctional portions of your services and I think that indicates rather a serious problem. I feel it is too bad that we are having to take from other services to people who are probably in need. If we are reducing manpower then we must be cutting back on service. Having to put 25 bodies into correctional services — I think this is a serious situation for our society. I want you to get me straight. I'm not blaming you or your department. I just want to draw it to the

attention of all members present.

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I completely agree with what the member has said. It is certainly a concern of mine too. As I indicated at the beginning, it is difficult in this day and age to convince people that you need the staff to deliver the programs. We want and I want home care. All right, if you want home care then you have to increase the staff. If it is policy that we are not going to increase the overall staff of the government, then you have to give and take. We have to find the staff wherever we can and still be able to implement a home care program.

I could have dug back into previous speeches made by members of the Liberal Party and by members of your party, as to how we have too many civil servants and it registered. It registered with certain people who make decisions. In part, you've been effective. You feel you've been effective and I have to bear the brunt of that effectiveness. For that, we've got to give you credit. But I'm saying, consequently, in certain areas, the people in Saskatchewan who are the receivers of the services are going to suffer. I agree with that. There is no doubt.

Corrections — as you well know, we had a disturbance or a riot a few years ago. I guess it was two years ago. Judge Moore recommended we increase staff, that we try to put more emphasis on dealing with individuals. I agree with you. I regret that. I am not a guy who believes in rehabilitation. I mean, I believe in it but if I have my preference, I'd put my dollars on prevention because I think every dollar spent on prevention will cost me at least \$25 or \$30 on rehabilitation and I'm not nearly as successful.

But I can't have it both ways. If I had my druthers, I'd put them in the other area. But having said that, I think I find myself (as all the other ministers of social services in Canada find themselves) in a very difficult time where people will not give us more staff, where the public out there have been convinced we have too many civil servants. I think that's a fact and we are suffering the brunt of that, I think, right now.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Minister, I'd like to ask you a few questions on the program funded by your department called Contemporary Women's Program. It's been in existence for four years and they do work on a per client basis. They deal with single parents, unmarried mothers, divorced women, battered women — a rehabilitation type program. I believe they are doing quite a valuable service in reorienting these women to enter the work force. Yet four years ago, when this program was implemented, they were being paid on a per client basis of \$200. I believe this year they submitted a budget and requested an increase to \$300. Your department approved an increase to \$216. How did you arrive at \$216 per client ratio?

MR. ROLFES: — I think all I can answer for that one is there are only so many bucks available. We made the decision that all those agencies and organizations we were funding who were delivering the service for us would get a basic 8 per cent increase. So if they were getting \$200, 8 per cent of \$200 is \$216. As I said to the member for Indian Head-Wolseley I've got to live with the bucks that I have. If I had given a 50 per cent increase, what they were asking for, that would mean they would have to cut out some other organization. It still is under review. I have to agree with the member, I think they are performing a valuable function. But these are some of the tough decisions one has to make.

Before I forget, I do want to also suggest that that is one agency, another example of an

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agency that was receiving funds from the federal government, and the axe came down.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Well, Mr. Minister, here is a program that will help reduce costs to your department if they can get women off welfare, yet when they were getting the \$200 per client that included transportation and babysitting fees. Now you raised it to \$216 but you exclude babysitting and transportation. They have to pay for that themselves, so why bother giving them an increase of anything? Why not just tell them, sorry. Is this your way of squeezing them out?

MR. ROLFES: — There is a slight difference, the babysitting has not been approved yet. It has not been rejected but not has been approved. We have just received the information . . . My officials tell me the information that they had required has just arrived a few days ago. They have not made a decision as to whether to approve it or not.

I just want to say to the member, I don't disagree with you that maybe they deserved a much larger increase. But the thing is that there are literally hundreds and hundreds of organizations that somebody thinks are performing a very valuable service. You can't satisfy them all and you simply have to draw up some priorities. You have to say, O.K. we're going to fund these and we'll take the criticism for not funding the others or we will yes, give them a 50 per cent increase and cut the others off or we'll give them a moderate increase and maybe keep them all going to provide a function. But those are certainly decisions that one has to make when dollars are rather limited.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Well, you have been stating all along that you feel that a preventive approach is much better. Wouldn't you agree that a program such as this works as a preventive measure? This is a group where women can turn to women in need without going through the whole welfare syndrome. Here is a program that can direct them right into the work force or direct them into other avenues of becoming self supporting. Don't you think something like this would be better than maybe something else you've got?

MR. ROLFES: — Tell me what? I know you're saying that's my decision; that's my responsibility. What I am simply saying is that if you mention one to me there is another person who will object, who will say no, I think this is more important. I've indicated to you where I stand on prevention, where my priorities are. If I had the dollars I would put most of them in prevention, but there are some programs in existence right now you simply can't cut off entirely even though they are rehabilitative. You can't cut them off. You've got to continue with them because they do involve people at this particular time. You simply can't cut them off. It takes some time to shift from rehabilitative programs to preventative programs.

I am hoping I can convince the government to put more bucks in the area of prevention for next year's budget. Certainly these agencies — the ones you have been referring to that do serve a preventative service — will be the ones, as far as I am concerned, that will receive the emphasis.

MRS. DUNCAN: — I could give you an example. It seems to me last year there were eight fraud convictions involving in the neighborhood of \$26,000. That more than adequately would have covered the budget of this group.

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I know the member was facetious in making this statement so I am not going to spend that much time on it. I think she well knows that sure, there are some fraud cases. It is not up to my department to decide whether or not

charges will be laid. That is the Attorney General's department. I have indicated before I don't care if it's people on welfare who are guilty of fraud or whether it's people on income tax. If they're guilty they ought to be fined. That's the position I take on it. So what? You say there were eight people involving \$26,000. That money goes back to general revenue. I don't condone the people who commit fraud. As I indicated before, those who abuse the system, if we can catch them certainly will be punished. That's my position. I don't care if they are people on welfare or if they're people committing crimes against The Income Tax Act.

I do want to reiterate again to the member that we have lost, I think, in the neighborhood of \$6 million to \$9 million of cutbacks by the federal government. We had to make these up and somehow, I got a 12.1 or 12.3 per cent increase thanks to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Smishek) and I was able to make up most of those. But in some areas, we simply couldn't and we had to make a decision so that the increases wouldn't be more than 8 per cent in most of these instances.

MRS. DUNCAN: — With reference to day care centres, Mr. Minister, could you tell me how many parents receiving social assistance have children in day care centres at this time?

MR. ROLFES: — We just don't have that information. We could get it for you, but it would take a lot of work. We don't distinguish between someone getting SAP (Saskatchewan Assistance Plan) and also, whether or not they get the subsidy. But my officials tell me we could dig it out, but it would take a lot of work.

We don't have that information. It's a lot of man-hours of work if you want it. We just don't keep that kind of information.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Well, you should!

MR. ROLFES: — Well, demand it and I will provide it if you don't care about the man-hours involved, fine. If it's important, I suppose I can ask my officials to dig it out.

MRS. DUNCAN: — How many single mothers divorced or unmarried mothers have been cut off of welfare in the last year and told that they should be able to go out and get a job?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, here again, single parent families are treated no differently, in general terms, than any other person coming for social assistance. How many are cut off, I can't tell you that. I don't know whether a social worker cut off a single parent.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Herman, would you tell us even if you did know?

MR. ROLFES: — Oh, come on. Be fair.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Could you tell me what criteria your social workers use in determining who is eligible for welfare and who isn't? I have a list of single mothers who are not hardly educated, who really can't get a job. You say, well put your children in day care and go out and find a job. This is what they are being told. If there is no room in day care because some of the day care is being taken up by children whose parents are on social aid, where is the justice in it?

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MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, all I am saying, I said to the member, is that basically there is no difference in the way a single parent is treated from any other person who has to prove to the department they are in need of financial assistance. I can give the member the steps, as I have done in years past, as to what people have to do in order to qualify for welfare:

1. All employable applicants are required to be registered with Canada employment centres, prior to submitting an application for SAP (Saskatchewan Assistance Plan). In other words you must be registered with CEC;
2. All applicants are required to submit a list of recent jobs search contacts;
3. Generally speaking, no assistance is issued to an employable person in the absence of evidence that he or she has pursued every avenue of employment for which they are capable. And where assistance is granted there must be a continued effort made to seek employment.

Now as it pertains to single parent families it is not automatic that just because they have children they should be eligible for public assistance. For example, someone, a mother who may have to children let's say aged seven and eight, who are attending school, there may be justifiable reason for asking that mother if she is trained and is capable of getting a job, to hold a job.

AN HON. MEMBER: — If there is a job.

MR. ROLFES: — Yes, if there is a job, certainly . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I realize that.

If you have a young mother, let's say 18 or 19 years of age, who has a young child and she is trained and capable of obtaining a job and there are day care facilities provided, I don't think it is asking too much for her to consider putting her child in a day care and looking for a job and accepting it if the job is available.

Those are basically the criteria that we use.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Minister, this is why I asked you how many people receiving social assistance had children in day care centres because this is one of the complaints. For a person who is supposedly employable the facilities are not there and they are caught betwixt and between.

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I stand corrected on that but I do not believe that my department would insist that these people take a job if no babysitting facilities are available. I just do not believe that.

If the member can give me cases where this has happened I will certainly look into it. I'm not saying it didn't happen, but that's not a general policy.

I think it would be a pretty hard-nosed social worker who would say to a single-parent mother, look, regardless of whether there are babysitting facilities, you get out and get a job. I just don't believe that. If there is, I would like to know and I will give you my personal assurance that I would look into it.

MR. LARTER: — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, when the psychiatric hospital at Weyburn was closed quite a number of years ago, the patients were placed in many homes

throughout Saskatchewan, but particularly in the Weyburn-Estevan area.

Many of these patients have been out for quite a number of years. Some of them were elderly and some of them have reached the level III and IV stages. The people who are looking after some of these former patients are getting something like \$405 clear (it's either \$405 or \$445). The argument against them not getting as much money as in the nursing home where there is level III care is that in the nursing home they are required to look after these patients 24 hours a day.

I would suggest, Mr. Minister, that some of these people who are boarding in these homes have reached the stage where they require constant attention, feeding and dressing in the morning. This is becoming quite a concern for some of the people who are looking after these boarding houses. Could I have some comments on what is going to happen? Are there going to be increases on this level? They're not too concerned with the levels I and II where they can look after themselves and dress, but only this one level where they now have to look after them 24 hours a day.

They feel they should be getting up to two-thirds of what the government is paying in the nursing home.

MR. ROLFES: — Yes, I must admit I've had a number of requests for increases from these people. Again, I may agree with the member that there should have been a more substantial increase. We again used the guideline of an 8 per cent increase and they're receiving, I think, \$437 a month. I think I would have to agree with you, for many of these people it's a very, very heavy burden. But it must be remembered that they do not have the overhead costs a nursing home has. The capital costs are simply not there. They don't have the professional staff a nursing home has so I think some of them certainly do fairly well financially. But having said that, maybe if you take into consideration the many hours of hard work they put in, the return isn't that great. I could say to the member that in some way I have some real empathy for the problem you have related to me but again it's a matter of how much you can afford to pay. We use the rule 8 per cent and that's what they receive, the same as the other organizations.

MR. LARTER: — Just one comment, Mr. Minister. I wonder if, when you consider the fact that these people, where it's a couple looking after these boarders cannot, 365 days a year, they cannot leave home. One of them always has to be there. And there was a \$25 increase on the other levels — I'm not just sure if there was only a \$25 increase on the level IV. But I wonder if you would take a serious look at possibly increasing this level and even if you don't make it two-thirds, if you make it a better proportion — and taking into consideration the overhead, I agree with you on that. But if you would take a close look at it.

MR. ROLFES: — First of all, I just want to draw the member's attention that level IV is not mine, it's the Minister of Health's (Mr. Tchorzewski). I will discuss it with him. Level III is mine and I've indicated it was \$437. You did indicate we, a year or two ago, put in respite care or respite leave for the people so that they are now able to take holidays — two-week holidays. They weren't able to do that. We now have provided some relief. It was at their request, I think two years ago or three years ago, that they asked us to put it in and we did so that's some relief at least. But I think you're making a good point. I will ask my officials, in fact I'll ask them right now, to give that a little higher priority in next year's budget because I do think that that is an area where we should give a higher emphasis.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Minister, I'd like to direct my attention to youth and youth programs, youth-oriented programs. I think here is a case where, as you say, you're caught between the devil and the deep blue sea with your expenditures. Certainly there have been a lot of programs in the last few years directed towards seniors and their needs and now we're being charged as legislators with somehow shifting our priorities from the young to the old. Perhaps it is difficult to come to a good balance but it has been charged of late that all our resources are being directed into the aged at the expense of the youth. I am sure you would agree somewhat with the rise in teen-age crime and teen-age suicides, drug and alcohol abuse, these are all problems of modern day. Some of them are becoming rampant, such as suicides are happening at younger age each year; children are drinking at a younger age each year; child abuse is on the upswing and just violence in general is on the upswing. What type of programs do you have to counteract this? I know we have family counselling and things like that but don't you think this is an area that has to have a really hard, hard look and in-depth study on the needs of the youth of today?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, again I have to agree with the member, I think she's in an area that I would like to see a lot more emphasis put on. I do want to direct attention to the member though that in 1970-71 there was \$3.1 million spent in this particular area. We are now spending \$8.6 million if you include northern Saskatchewan; \$8 million if you don't. So there has been a drastic increase over the last eight or nine years. Also in 1971 there were over 3,200 children in care of the minister. I think we are down now to about 2,400. So again, there has been a substantial decrease in that particular area.

We have had a study done, an internal study, on this whole area of family support services and child care. Included in that were Department of Health, Department of Social Services, Department of the Attorney General and, I believe, the judiciary and the police were involved in the study. We now have (Do we have it now or is it going before cabinet?) a proposal before government which concentrates in three particular areas: (1) security (these are not in that priority) — those children who must be kept in institutions for one reason or another, (2) community based programs, and (3) support for families in order that they may keep their own children.

Now I think we recognize if I were to put them in priority, I would put support for families in order to keep their own children. Then I'd place emphasis on for families who cannot keep their children so we can assist foster parents and have a strong foster parents program and thirdly, I'd put emphasis on security — those children who for one reason or another must be kept in institutions. That proposal is before government. I don't know when government will make some decision on it but I'm hoping I will have something possibly before fall that we can start implementing that particular proposal.

There are a couple of things, I think, I should mention and I think the member is aware of that the Attorney General and myself announced, I think, last winter, a unified family court. We also have a child protection registry in this province. We are moving in that area. I think our major emphasis will be if we can get the government's support on this particular proposal.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Well Mr. Minister, if you spent \$3.1 million in the 1970-71 period and increase that to \$8.6 million this year, with all the problems that have arisen in the last years, obviously where you are spending the money is not doing much good. Then I would suggest to you, I think the time has come where a social worker has to be attached to schools. Surely, that is a costly program. Like you said, we have to decide

where our priorities lie, right? Has that been given any consideration?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I can certainly speak to that. If you look back to my maiden speech in 1971, that was my recommendation. I'm just simply saying, if you look at my maiden speech in 1971, that is what I recommended to the government at that particular time. I really do believe (I suppose maybe I'm biased because my background is education) if we want to be effective, the most effective way and the cheapest way of doing it is to do it through the school system because they see the children early. They see the families early, particularly now that we have kindergarten. They come into contact with many of these families at the age of four and one-half when the parents do come to the schools for orientation programs and if we can then detect the problem immediately start working with the families, give them some professional help. Yes, I think we can accomplish a lot more. I hope the members opposite will support the government if we do come through with a proposal to have social workers attached to the school system. I will go to work on the Minister of Education in that regard. I know I have your full support on that.

MRS. DUNCAN: — I would just like to say, Mr. Minister, that one of the charges made is that programs are too hastily put together and I think we're at this point right now. Programs that were formulated in the last 4 or 5 years are now not adequate to the needs of today. Like you said you've had to disband some of them; cut off services. I think, perhaps, as politicians we have to think of the long-term and truly assess the outcomes and requirements. When you consider there was 660 abortions in Saskatchewan among teenagers last year, I think the priority has to be for social counselling.

By social counselling I don't mean going as a family. A lot of children won't go to their parents nowadays and they have to have the option in the school system of having someone they can talk to, someone who is qualified to counsel and direct them. I hope that you can put pressure on the members opposite to bring this into force.

MR. TAYLOR: — You said a few minutes ago, Mr. Minister, you were looking at people who were receiving assistance and you gave some criteria. You said they had to be registered with CEC. They had to be on a recent job search looking for different jobs. I wonder, could you give me a guideline how many jobs they have to be looking for? Was that one, or is that half a dozen? What's your criteria here?

MR. ROLFES: — That is a very difficult one to answer very specifically because it depends on many things. First of all, it will depend on the individual. If he is a very low skilled individual for example, there are very few skills that would enable him to get a job, we may not press quite as hard. If for example, he has had a very bad work record, let's say he is emotionally disturbed, had an alcohol problem, all right, you have to take that into consideration. If, for example, he is in an area where there are very few jobs he may have to leave his family and move some distance to obtain a job. I think that must be taken into consideration.

Some people we insist have weekly contacts with CEC. Others, I suppose, we are more lenient. Some, I think, we would ask to see two or three times a week. If they are highly skilled and there may be jobs available, I think we put more pressure on them. So I can't answer; I'm not trying to evade the question. I am simply saying that these are individual assessments that a social worker has to make at that particular time with the individual who is applying for assistance.

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MR. TAYLOR: — In the examples you have given me of people with very few marketable skills or people with mental disorders or alcohol problems, do you try to get these people on some sort of rehabilitative program or do you try to give these people some skills training?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I am glad you have asked that question. It gives me an opportunity to brag about my favorite program. We call it for short, ESP (Employment Support Program). We think we have been very, very successful with this program and I want to recognize the person back there who is mainly responsible for it, the man with the beard, Toby Stewart. I say that, Mr. Chairman, because I think he is very dedicated to the program and he works very hard at trying to match the program to the people so that we are successful. I think a year or so ago we could brag in this House and say 80 per cent of the people who had gone through ESP had never returned to public assistance. I think that is a pretty darned good record.

Now I assume that will probably have gone down somewhat because of the restraints that have been put on us because of the federal government restrictions on unemployment insurance and other areas. We know also the unemployment in this country has gone up. There are other people moving into this province looking for jobs. The competition is getting keener and I think our record probably will not be quite as good. But we have, through special ARDA (Agricultural Rehabilitation and Development Agreement) and our Employment Support Program, spent about \$4.3 million. I am not sure of the exact number but I think last year we matched somewhere in the neighborhood of 600 or 700 clients through ESP. We have been very successful in that particular area, I think.

Many of them have very few skills and they acquire enough skills so that they can get part-time jobs; others find full-time jobs; some require carpentry skills; others require skills, for example in gardening. Others simply do work for local governments to help them to beautify the communities and things of that nature.

I think we have been fairly successful in that area. I would like to see us do more but you only have so many dollars but again, in this particular area, really what we should have is more staff. The fellow over there I think is a little overworked and I think he should have more staff. It is one area into which we have put a fair amount of effort.

The other one is VRDP (Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons) which is a federal/provincial agreement. This includes health, continuing education and social services for \$5.362 million, providing for about 1,110 clients. So if you add them all together, I think, we have been fairly successful in this area. We should not forget, also, the programs that we have in continuing education of retraining people. The programs that we have, the NRIM (Non-registered Indian and Metis program), add them all together and I think you will have somewhat over 2,000 people that were helped last year in this particular area.

MR. TAYLOR: — I make reference to some information you gave out last year in your estimates and you point out that social assistance is given to people where there has been desertion of spouse. I wonder how many recipients there are in that category at this time?

MR. ROLFES: — The number of cases for deserted spouse as of February 1979, was

683.

MR. TAYLOR: — Now many of those cases would have cropped up in the last year?

MR. ROLFES: — You mean in total?

MR. TAYLOR: — How many would come in the last year?

MR. ROLFES: — I can't give you that exact figure because there is a study on that right now. We haven't kept track of those who have come on a yearly basis. My department says there is an internal study going on — women on welfare, I believe — and we might be able to give you that figure next year, I hope.

MR. TAYLOR: — Will you table that study?

MR. ROLFES: — We have nothing to hide on that particular study. I think that it is in the public interest to do so. My understanding is that the time limit could be anywhere from three months to three years. I think it would be interesting to see just how long they are on. Yes, I think I can give you the assurance that we can table that for you.

MR. TAYLOR: — Another area I am interested in is transient cases — you give support for transient cases. How many of what you categorize as transient cases, are receiving assistance at this time?

MR. ROLFES: — Do you want to submit another question while my officials are looking for it? We will get that for you very shortly.

MR. TAYLOR: — Another question concerns the physically and mentally disabled. It point outs, as you said last year, that improvement within one year was your criteria. I was wondering how many are on assistance who have been on that more than a year? Now somebody may require you to do a bit of digging, I can keep asking questions and you can keep digging for them.

MR. ROLFES: — I have just a brief comment to the member. Some of these are going to require a lot of manpower. The physically and mentally handicapped — we don't keep track as to how long they're on, and that's going to take some time to carve those out. My officials say that we just don't keep track of that. Now, if we were completely computerized, I suppose we could do it. But, we are moving in that direction and in a year or two we might be able to give you those answers once we've got them in the computer.

MR. TAYLOR: — You're meaning to tell me that your department doesn't know how long people have been on social assistance? You don't keep any record of this? Well, why not?

MR. ROLFES: — How many staff are you willing to give me to do that? What I am telling you is that it would require a large number of staff to keep track of each individual who is on public assistance. You know that would take a lot of staff to do that, and we simply haven't done it.

MR. TAYLOR: — Do you not give a cheque out to these people at the end of the month? Can you not register who got that cheque this month? Who got it last month? Don't you know where your money is going?

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MR. ROLFES: — I just want to tell the member that if we have to do that, we have to go through each of the files to see how long the person has been on. We just do not keep track of that, and I'm not absolutely certain what the advantage would be to do it manually. Once you become computerized, there's no problem; you simply shove it into the computer and you've got it. But to do it manually certainly would require a lot more staff. I don't really know why we would want to do it if it costs us a lot more to do it.

MR. TAYLOR: — I'm not meaning to put you to a lot of work to dig up something now, but I fail to understand. If I was running a company, I would keep track of how many pay cheques those people were getting. You're telling me that you put a person on social aid and he's on there for eternity because you have no idea how long he's been on.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Just forget it.

MR. ROLFES: — If the member would ask us individual names, we could tell you. We could go back and simply search it out. We could certainly tell you for example, how long Joe Blow has been on public assistance. All right, we could tell you; we could go back and check. We could easily find out. But, if you are asking us right now how many people, for example, are mentally disabled and physically disabled or how many have been on for two years and one year and six months, no, we don't have that information. We don't have it. We're working on it to get it computerized. Once we shift over to the computer we will have that information. Then you can simply shove the program into the computer and it will give you the up-to-date data. To do it manually I think would require a lot of extra people to keep that up to date. We just simply haven't done that.

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Minister, I can't understand how you are keeping your records there. I'm sure if I asked any department of government how long somebody had worked for that department they could tell me very quickly. I'm not interested in Joe Blow; I asked you about the mentally and the physically disabled — how many were on longer than a year. You know that in my questioning if you can't supply the answer right now, that's fine; I'll accept it at a later time. I think these are statistics that you should know.

MR. ROLFES: — I think the member, in this particular question, is being unreasonable. I think he's being unreasonable in asking me to provide him with that particular information at this time. I told you that if you ask the government how long has Joe Blow worked for the government they could dig out that information. But if you ask them how long has each secretary worked in the government — you give me how many steno IV's have worked for the government for one year or six months or whatever it may be, they do not have that record. They could work it out for you, yes. I told you we could. We could dig back and work it out. It would take a lot of manpower to do it. I told you that we're working to try to get it computerized so that we can put it on the computer and have that information. I think you're being certainly unreasonable to expect us to know here and now for each individual and to have that information as to whether he has been on for three months or six months or on one year or three years. If you asked us about any specific individual we could dig up that information for you.

On the transients . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . in May, 1978, Regina . . . Do you want each month?

MR. TAYLOR: — I asked for right now.

MR. ROLFES: — O.K., right now. The latest month that we have is November, 1978. The

figures were: Regina, 561; Moose Jaw 2, Saskatoon, 447; Yorkton, 9; North Battleford, 16; Weyburn, 12; Swift Current 54; Melfort, 48; Qu'Appelle, 1.

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Minister, I understand in your department that people get an established amount of welfare and then there's a category entitled special needs, the special needs payment. Would you explain a little bit about that?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, the major components of special needs include such things as transportation, homemaking services, laundry, day care, household equipment, incidental education, repairs, fees for service, and then there's sort of a miscellaneous category. Those are the basic areas which are included under special needs.

MR. TAYLOR: — In the area of household equipment, what would probably be one of your bigger expenditures? Give me an example.

MR. ROLFES: — Furniture, stove, fridge, appliances, a bed, chesterfield, things in that area.

MR. TAYLOR: — In the field of repairs, would that be for the redecoration and renovation of homes? Would you get into that?

MR. ROLFES: — Yes, that could be for repair of furniture, repair of eavestroughs, repair of steps, repair of sidewalks, repair of windows and I suppose painting is.

MR. TAYLOR: — Can you give me the maximum amount paid in each of those categories to a recipient? The maximum amount in equipment in the last year? The maximum amount in repairs? I don't have to have it right now, if you can't supply it.

MR. ROLFES: — Could you rephrase your question, please? We have an argument here as to what you meant.

MR. TAYLOR: — I'll have to be a little plainer then. The maximum amount that was paid to a recipient last year in those two categories: (a) in household repairs and in equipment and if you don't have it right now you can supply it to me but . . .

MR. ROLFES: — We don't have it right now, we'll have to get it.

MR. TAYLOR: — I'm noticing some payments in the year ending March 31, 1978 in the North Battleford area in particular; there's a number of these areas under grants for employment support programs. Some pretty hefty figures. The Battlefords Employment and Rehabilitation Program Society - \$95,000. How many people would benefit under a program like that? Take that one for an example.

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, if I could just revert briefly to the previous question - it's just for information that the member may want to know. Anything over \$500 under the special needs category must be approved by the federal government. That's a cost-shared agreement with the feds and the provinces, O.K. So anything that would be over \$500, we have to get approval from the federal government on. Now, in that particular question, we don't have the specific numbers here — we could get those for you but they tell me they think it's somewhere in the neighborhood of 64 people.

MR. TAYLOR: — Now, the other thing then . . . why I ask this question, and I have a couple

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of more I'd like to ask on this, is of those 64 people (when you're looking this up and finding this) how many of these people are still recipients? You know, are they back on the recipient roll or did they find employment and move off? Because if they did that that would justify the program but if we're putting in the programs and there's still a majority of them being maintained on the recipient roll, then one wonders a bit about the expenditure of the program.

MR. ROLFES: — Approximately 50 would be off. Approximately 50 would be off but we would — I think we can — can we find out specifically? But to give you just a rough guess it would be about 50 people — hey you guys, I can barely hear myself here. Approximately 50 would be off but we can get you the specific numbers on that I would say. That's the 80 per cent I was referring to before, on the ESP (Employment Support Program)?

MR. TAYLOR: — I'm not going to belabor you on a number of these. You've given me an example of one, but there's a couple here that intrigue me and I'd like an explanation of them. One is called the Regina Writing Services Society which received \$5,576. What's that for? What were they writing?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, this was a handicapped individual who had opened up a business and was acting as a consultant to other handicapped people.

MR. TAYLOR: — I asked what they were writing?

MR. ROLFES: — Proposals for business, proposals to the handicapped people on how to get into business.

MR. TAYLOR: — The last one, then, Mr. Minister, that intrigues me — and I don't know if it has anything to do with your campaign. It was \$3,935 to the Missing Link Society. Would you please explain that one?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, if I remember that one correctly I was very suspicious of certain people in the PC party . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . no, no, no. That was a different grant. I'll have to check here.

Mr. Chairman, this is one where I would really like to have the individual from the opposition meet the individual who did the study because she's got a top notch job right now. It was a lady who had a very bad experience in her family with her husband and her children. It happened that someone had told her, why don't you apply for an ESP grant to do a particular study of the gaps of programs and services for senior citizens in the Saskatoon area, particularly in the city of Saskatoon? She did the study and got so wrapped up in the study that she developed her confidence and applied for a job after the study and is doing a really top-notch job at the present time. She is no longer on public assistance. I just met her the other day. This is one of the success stories of ESP (Employment Support Program).

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Minister, I would like to ask you a few questions about the Meadow Lake correctional facility. What types of inmates are going to be housed in this facility?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, first of all, the Meadow Lake camp will hold a capacity of 25 individuals. Generally speaking those people who have a serious offence against other individuals would not be eligible; inmates who have an escape record are not eligible. It's basically people who commit small crimes and who would not be a danger

to society if they walked away from the camp. It will be those individuals with small crimes who generally are sentenced to 90 days or less. They may be sentenced to a longer term than that but, generally speaking, it's of a short-term sentencing.

The reason, of course, why we would like to have a camp is so that the individuals can remain close to home and not have to be sent away, let's say to Prince Albert. They can, also, perform some very valuable work for the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources.

MR. GARNER: — Are you stating then that this will be 90 days or under or two years and under?

MR. ROLFES: — The majority of them will be those who are serving 90 days and less. It may well be someone who may be serving a two-year term or two years less one day but who are not considered to be dangerous to the community or to the public. As I indicated to you if they have committed a serious crime against other individuals, like personal assault, they would not go to that particular camp. They would go to Prince Albert.

MR. GARNER: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. That does help reassure me a little bit. I am very concerned about this as we have discussed this before. What type of work are you planning for these inmates to do in the parks?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, they develop new campsites, clear roadways, build barbeques and fireplaces. They make cross-country ski trails and they prepare other recreational resources for the people who use the park. These are the kinds of things that they will do. I think most of the people are familiar; we've had these for a number of years. I think we've had them for 20 years. We've had one at Buffalo Pound. We've had one at Kenosee; we've had one at Qu'Appelle and Judge Ben Moore, by the way, recommended these fairly highly. And I think, for those people who will not be a danger to society or to other individuals, that is the right direction to go.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Hear, hear!

MR. GARNER: — O.K. Mr. Minister, what was your cost to your department in the construction of this facility?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I think the member knows that; how many trailers are there? I think there's six trailers there. I can't give you the cost of the trailers because Government Services does the purchasing of the trailers. It goes in there. We could get that information for you through Government Services if you wish. We haven't got it here. O.K. we'll get that and the cost of the six staff.

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Minister, just one or two other quick questions. We're going along well. What type of recreation is provided or training programs for these inmates in this correctional camp?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, my understanding is that their basic activity is work. There's very little organized recreation. They do some ice fishing and they play some broomball, but basically that's about it. The work is basically their training program. No, that's basically their program — work.

MR. GARNER: — O.K. Mr. Minister, whose idea was this? Was this your idea, your

department, or did someone else recommend to build this camp within the park boundaries?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, as I have already indicated, we've had camps in the provincial parks for the last 17 years. We've had camps in provincial parks for about the last 17 years. The Department of Tourism, and Renewable Resources indicated to us that their priority was the Meadow Lake Park. We wanted it in a park and the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources indicated their priority would be the Meadow Lake Park. I believe I'm correct in that — yes. Therefore, we then with tourism and ourselves, agreed on the location in the park.

MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Minister, then you're saying that the Department of TRR (Tourism and Renewable Resources) wanted this camp up north and did they also want it built within the park boundaries, is that what you're saying?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, yes, it was their recommendation but one that I whole-heartedly support and the government supports. Judge Ben Moore recommended this also in his report. If you check, he said there should be more camps like this and he referred to that, I believe, in his report. I think also the corrections proposal for Saskatchewan done in 1973, '74, '75 recommended that this should be done. By the way, it's not unique. If the individuals opposite think this is unique to Saskatchewan, by the way, I think Alberta has it, Ontario has it, I'm not sure if B.C. has it, also within their parks. I'm not sure what the member is driving at but you know, there is a need for minimal correctional facilities up in that area so that you can cut down the cost of transporting people all the way from Meadow Lake up to Prince Albert.

Secondly, I think it's important that you keep the people from that area in that area closely associated with their families and I think that makes a lot of sense to me and we should spread these throughout the province. What I'm simply saying is that if we need further facilities, I certainly would not hesitate to recommend to government that we establish additional facilities like that rather than go into capital intensive programs of heavy security. I think that's the wrong way to go and I fully endorse those people who support these kinds of programs.

MR. GARNER: — Well, Mr. Minister, I agree with you partially that there is a need for these camps (and as you have stated and you will be in Hansard) for prisoners serving the 90 days or less. I can agree with you completely on that. I think that part is a good idea. I still don't happen to think it has to be built within the provincial park boundaries. It could be built outside of the park boundaries. What does concern me, Mr. Minister, is people that are serving a term of two years or less. Now, you've said to the House that they most likely would not be put in there. You didn't say that.

MR. ROLFES: — I said to the member that most of the people, most of the people who will be in there will be serving terms of 90 days and less. I don't care if they've been sentenced to two years less a day, as long as they are not inmates who have escaped from prison, number two, that they are not individuals who are a danger to society. If they have committed a serious personal assault on an individual they should not be sentenced to such a camp. They should be sentenced, as I indicated to you, to a correctional centre such as Prince Albert. I indicated that to you before.

MR. GARNER: — No you didn't, Mr. Minister. My concern is that the individuals we have who are put in prisons, or who can receive a term of two years or less, can be

manslaughterers, rapists or armed robbers. You're saying that the majority won't be. Mr. Minister, it only takes one. It only takes one individual.

Earlier on you were stating that you want to put money on prevention. That's fine. This correctional camp with these smaller criminals, that's fine. But, Mr. Minister, I ask you to be very closely in communication with this, that we have no hardliners in there. Mr. Minister, I promise you this — if something happens in one of those parks, I'll hang it on your shoulders!

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Speaker, I will not let that go by. A threat like that is an idiotic threat and I get very angry when people make those kinds of threats! Certainly I can't guarantee you! Neither can I guarantee that any individual opposite will not go out and commit a serious crime. That is an idiotic statement to make and hang around my neck. I simply will not accept that. I gave you assurance in this House tonight that people who are a threat to society will not be put in those camps. Don't hang around my neck something that I didn't say. I gave you my assurance. If somebody commits a crime in those camps and it has been determined prior to that that he was no threat to society, surely a reasonable person would not hang that on my neck. How can I predict that? It's simply impossible to do that! But, if I try my best and give you every assurance that those people who have committed serious personal assaults on individuals will not be sentenced to these camps, that should be sufficient.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Minister, is your department responsible for the alcohol rehabilitation centre in St. Louis — the new one in St. Louis — or is that some other department?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, that is the responsibility of the Minister of Health under the Alcoholism Commission.

MR. ANDREW: — How long has your department financed or assisted in the financing of the Danny Fisher Centre in the town of Kindersley?

MR. ROLFES: — Approximately two years.

Mr. Chairman, I want to indicate to the member that in my statement this afternoon I was wrong in the statement I made. I indicated to him this afternoon that I wasn't sure of the history of the Danny Fisher Centre. I had indicated there that I thought the federal government originally had funded it. My officials tell me I was wrong on that. I think if you check Hansard I said that I wasn't sure. That's why I hesitate to comment this afternoon. I think it was about two years that we had funded it.

MR. ANDREW: — How much money did you fund into that program in the last two years?

MR. ROLFES: — I think \$15,800 — a total of about \$27,200.

MR. ANDREW: — Did you in your department consider that the program being advanced by the Danny Fisher Centre was a good program, was beneficial to the assisting of the rehabilitation of alcoholism in the Kindersley area?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I think it's very important to understand the funding was

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done through the Employment Support Program which, as most people know, is a 26-week program which can be renewed. Usually we don't renew it more than twice. I think the Danny Fisher personnel were very much aware of this. I am not going to comment as to whether or not it's a valuable service. That I think must be directed to the Minister of Health who is responsible for the alcoholism commission not myself.

MR. ANDREW: — Any money that is being funded and especially funding of \$15,000 or more your department is going to have some enquiries or concerns as to whether or not this is a proper expenditure of money from the budget of your department. In the past did you consider that to be a wise expenditure of money? Were you getting value for the dollar you were spending on that program?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I think again it has to be clearly understood that the ESP money was start up money for renovations on the centre, that people there clearly knew this is what it was, that we would not do any long-term funding and that they would have to look to another source to justify the program. I am not going to make a judgment here tonight as to whether or not they have a good program. That's not for me to judge.

If I was responsible for the alcohol commission I would answer the question for you, but that is not my responsibility. That's the responsibility of the Minister of Health (Mr. Tchorzewski).

MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Minister, you are still indicating to me over a two-year period you expended some \$27,000 on this program. Now, surely you must have done some investigation on this program to determine that after the first year you must have decided hey, this is a good program, we'll put more money into it. Now, surely you must have come to some conclusion as to the merits of that program, or surely you wouldn't advance any more money.

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, again, our money did not go for program. Our money went for start up and for renovation, mainly for renovation. There was some money for secretarial, I believe, but for program we provided no money. If the Department of Health judges that this is a good program, we will be prepared to refer clients to it and pay a fee for service, but again, as I say, it's not for me as Minister of Social Services to judge whether it is a good alcoholic rehabilitation program. That is the judgement of the Minister of Health.

MR. ANDREW: — Now, are you telling me, Mr. Minister, that you are going to expend \$27,000 out of the budget of your department simply on the advice of the Minister of Health? Does the Department of Health advise you or recommend to you that you should expend that money on your department? And, if so, why is the money coming from your department and not from the Department of Health?

MR. ROLFES: — It's very easily explained why, because it's a work program. I just explained to the member for Indian Head-Wolseley our employment support program. It was to provide work for those people who would be potential social service recipients and/or those who are on welfare. It's a work program and I think somewhere along the line, they must have had discussions with the alcohol commission and someone must have thought it had some merit. But, as I say, that is not for me as Minister of Social Services to decide. If they find some local funding or if they put on a program and we deem it a worthwhile program, we will consider fee for service, but we will not carry the program from my department. That is the responsibility of another department.

MR. ANDREW: — What you are telling me then, Mr. Minister, is that you weren't so concerned about the alcohol program or assisting in the rehabilitation of alcohol problem in the Kindersley area so much as a make-work program. Is that basically what your funding of that project was about?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, it was the community of Kindersley that had decided that alcohol rehabilitation was a priority in their community. I'm not saying, good or bad. They then confronted our department to see if they could get some money as far as renovations were concerned. We said yes. We have some money as far as renovation is concerned in our employment support program. They agreed to it. We provided some money as far as renovations were concerned and it is now out of my hands. It's in someone else's hand as to whether or not someone is going to fund that program. That is not within my jurisdiction.

MR. ANDREW: — The final question I have, Mr. Minister, and the thing that concerns me most about this total program is you are spending \$27,000 in that program to remodel the building as well as pay for some secretarial help, etc. Now, the money is cut off, whether it's by your department or by the Department of Health, whoever it is by and the building is going to close down. Is that a proper expenditure of money — to crack that money into that program and then simply close the building down?

MR. ROLFES: — Is the member for Kindersley (Mr. Andrew) suggesting that when a community decides that it has a priority such as alcohol rehabilitation and they have a building and wish some help from my department so that they could have the building renovated that it should be refused? It's clearly indicated to them that we will not fund alcohol rehabilitation from my department, is he suggesting that I should say no to them so that they couldn't even get the program off running? That's not my responsibility. Once they decide they have a priority then it's up to them to find out where to find the money, not for me. All they asked me and our department to do is provide them with a work program to renovate the building. It's up to them to find the money from another department that funds alcohol rehabilitation.

Surely, I think that they would have done some consultation with the Alcoholism Commission before they started renovating a particular building.

MR. ANDREW: — A final question on that, Mr. Minister. The final point that I have to make on that is that your seat mate, responsible for the Liquor Board, builds a brand new fancy self-serve liquor store — \$250,000, I guess. You, in your wisdom, see or the Minister of Health sees that the program isn't valid for rehabilitation of the alcohol program. All I am saying is you go to the town of Kindersley and explain to the people in Kindersley where your priorities rest when you can build a new liquor store geared to increase the sale of liquor and turn around and cutback on a program used to try to educate the schools on the abuses of alcohol and to try to rehabilitate some of the people who are having a problem with drinking. As a government, Mr. Minister, see if you can justify that to the people of Kindersley.

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I know of course the member has already gone to the town council of Kindersley and has convinced them that the member for Biggar should cutout the establishment of a new liquor store in Kindersley. I know he has already convinced them. I will check with the minister tomorrow to see if his signature is on a letter convincing the minister of the liquor commission not to establish a new liquor store in Kindersley . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You do that. I'll see that the decision is reversed if that's what you want.

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MR. ANDREW: — If you are prepared, prior to the building of that liquor store, to tell the people of Kindersley that we're going to build a new liquor store but we're going to have to cut the Danny Fisher Centre then I would clearly, in front of that newspaper of any place else, try to stop the construction of that liquor store if it meant the saving of that rehabilitation centre.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I simply want to say that I will check with the minister in charge of the liquor commission to see if we can cancel the establishment of a new liquor store in Kindersley. I know we will have the endorsement of the member for Kindersley to do this. We will check with city council in Kindersley tomorrow morning to see if they go along with the member for Kindersley that that should not be built. I will see where the member stands on that particular issue.

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Minister, before we get too excited here, have you agreed to give the top salaries — the top three salaries in each one of the classifications? You will provide that? That's agreed?

MR. ROLFES: — Yes.

MRS. DUNCAN: — While you are getting those salaries, Mr. Minister, I notice in the Planning and Evaluation Branch you have a lot of chiefs and a lot of directors. I would like the salaries for the three chiefs and the two directors; the 1978-79 estimates and actuals; 1979-80 estimates; their qualifications, length of employment and duties, please? Before we proceed with the vote, Mr. Chairman.

This expected resource boom that's going to hit our province is going to draw a lot of people from across Canada seeking a lot of the short-term jobs that will be created. Mr. Minister, I would suggest to you that seeing we have 2,327 fully employable people on social assistance at this time, can you give any assurance that these people will be given first chance at the jobs; especially the people who are fully employable on social assistance in the South? Give us assurance that they will be given first chance to move up North and take these jobs. You said earlier that you felt anybody who is employable should be required to take a job. I thoroughly agree with you on that.

Another thing some officials from the Canada Farm Labor Pool said they are very hard pressed to get Saskatchewan people to take the courses they offer. Seeing there was an increase of 752 fully employable people on assistance since last August, perhaps you could check with those people and perhaps direct them to take the Canada Farm Labor Pool courses available. The need for farm labor is great. A lot of them are very highly paid, full-time, year-round jobs.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Would Saskatchewan be in the trouble it's in if Herman Rolfes were alive

AN HON. MEMBER: — No.

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, first of all I can't give any assurance to the member that those people who get first cracks at the jobs. I think they will have to compete in the labor market. Secondly, if she's referring to the expansion in the North, I think it would be wrong on my part to say to the people in the South that they have to compete with

people in the North. I think maybe the first option should be given to the people in the North for northern jobs. Now I think . . . (inaudible interjection) . Yes, I was listening. I was. If you wouldn't have yelled so much I would have heard even more. I'm simply saying to the member opposite I think they must compete in the labor market.

As far as the farm labor pool is concerned, in a federal press release, I think it was mentioned that in all cases a local director of the Department of Social Services sits on the province's local agricultural manpower board. We have a very close working relationship with the federal department on this and certainly I think wherever our people can qualify or be upgraded to work on the farms, they should. But I want to make it very clear (I think those members opposite who are in the farming business know that it's really important) that today you just can't put any unskilled person on a \$70,000 combine or a \$50,000 tractor. The farmers out there simply aren't going to take that chance. They want somebody who has some skill, who has some training and who has some experience. I agree with the member; we'll do everything we can to try to work our people into the farm pools and work very closely with the federal government on this.

Item 1 agreed.

Items 2 to 7 agreed.

ITEM 8

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Minister, you assured me the other day, if you can recall, that if the Lakeside Home was 70 beds it would remain at 70 beds, and I appreciate that and I'll hold you to that. That's not a threat. You know, we've just got an understanding; but, the thing that I am concerned about again is with the number of employees. If it took 48 employees in 1978-79 to run that 70 beds, then I don't think you are being very fair in cutting back here this year. You know there's a situation of two permanent jobs that I'm concerned about, and I speak for the people of that town and the employees of that Lakeside Home. I would urge you, Mr. Minister, at this time, seeing you are kind enough to keep it at 70 beds, let's revise this and keep it at the number of employees that there previously was.

MR. ROLFES: — Just a very brief comment, Mr. Chairman, I can assure the member that the 47 staff still meets the requirements as per the regulations. It still meets the requirements.

MR. TAYLOR: — No, one moment here. Did you change your regulations? Why was it 48 in the previous year? You were maintaining the same number of beds. Why are you cutting back one?

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MR. ROLFES: — I guess we were somewhat overstaffed in that particular nursing home.

MR. TAYLOR: — So, I'm to go and tell them that they have been overstaffed all along. Is that your answer?

AN HON. MEMBER: — They know that.

Items 8 to 28 agreed.

ITEM 29

MRS. DUNCAN: — One question here, Mr. Minister. I understand that when the day care program was instigated, it was started with five day care developmental workers or officers or whatever. How many are there today? Here again, Mr. Minister, you were talking about your burnt-out cases on that. Here is a case where their work loads have increased substantially. For an effective day care program they need some direction. I think this is an area you should take a look at where possibly and probably you do need an increase in staff.

MR. ROLFES: — Agreed and I expect that if my staff increased by 100 or so next year I will receive no objection on the opposition.

Item 29 agreed.

Items 30 to 34 agreed.

Department of Social Services — Vote 36 agreed.

Supplementaries agreed.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 10:20 p.m.