

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

March 27, 1980

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

On the Orders of the Day

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

HON. W.E. SMISHEK (Regina North-East): — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to you and to the members of the legislature a group of 33 Grade 8 students from St. Gregory School located in my constituency. They are accompanied by their principal, Mr. Ted Zurowski, and their teacher, Judy Cooper. I extend a warm welcome to the students and express the hope their visit to the legislature this afternoon will be a rewarding experience and that it will help them with their social studies. I intend to meet the students at 3 p.m., to have discussion with them and answer any questions they may want to raise with me. Welcome to the legislature.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. D.W. CODY (Kinistino): — Mr. Speaker, it's a great pleasure today once again to introduce to you and members of the Assembly 32 students and 8 adults from the Fulda School. Fulda is very close to the town of Humboldt in the southern part of the Kinistino constituency. They've travelled here from Fulda today and are going to be with us in the legislature. I hope they have a good stay this afternoon. I know they will and I'm sure they will enjoy some of the deliberations that go on here. I understand they are going to do more things in the city of Regina today. I will be meeting with them a little later on. I do hope they have a tremendously good time and a fine trip home.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

HON. E.B. SHILLINGTON (Minister of Culture and Youth): — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to introduce to the Assembly 12 adults who are with the Independent Living for the Handicapped. They're in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. They're good to be here from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. I hope they enjoy their stay here and find the deliberations informative.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. D.G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Speaker, I, too, on behalf of the opposition would like to welcome the people here from the Independent Living for the Handicapped. It's very nice to see you here. I hope you enjoy yourselves and come again to hear the questions and deliberations in the legislature.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle) — I would like to introduce to you and to the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, some 50 students from Dr. George Ferguson School. They are accompanied by Audrey Haddad, Joan Quinlan and Mrs. Daroch. I hope I pronounced that right. I apologize if I haven't. We certainly welcome you to the Assembly. I have the opportunity

as well today to thank you for your courtesy and consideration when I had the pleasure of visiting the school and presenting the Celebrate Saskatchewan buttons. I thank you for your hospitality. I ask all members to join with me in welcoming them to the Assembly. I hope their afternoon is both informative and enjoyable.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MRS. J.H. DUNCAN (Maple Creek): — Mr. Speaker, it is indeed my pleasure to introduce to you and to the members of this Assembly 34 Grade 12 students who have journeyed from Gull Lake today to be with us. They are seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. They are accompanied by their chaperone teachers, Mr. Ralph Eliasson and Mr. Al Penner. I might mention, Mr. Speaker, that one of the students of this Grade 12 class, Nancy Jewett, has been invited to attend the national judo tryouts down east later on in June and should she make this team, she will be on her way to the Olympics in Moscow later on. I would ask the members to welcome these students.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to call your attention to the fact that we have four distinguished visitors in our midst today and to introduce them to the House — four members of the provincial parliament in Ontario. They are the MPP for Algoma, Mr. Bud Wildman, the MPP for Wentworth, Mr. Colin Issacs, the MPP for Toronto Downsview, Mr. Eduardo DiSanto, and the MPP for Ottawa Centre and Leader of the Ontario New Democratic Party, Michael Cassidy.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I know all members would wish to join with me in welcoming them and offering such instruction as we can in the proper conduct of a legislature to our guests from Ontario. While I'm on my feet, I would like also to introduce a couple of people who are hardly strangers to our House, the former speaker and member for Wadena, Mr. Fred Dewhurst, and the former member for Touchwood, Mr. Frank Meakes.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the opposition, I join the Premier in welcoming the former members of this legislature and also the members from Ontario. There were three members from this caucus along with members from the caucus opposite who had occasion to visit Ontario this past summer to study the use of their committees. We do hope there's some discussion going on between you people and our Saskatchewan government at this time. We like the way yours worked and I understand the NDP caucus in Ontario, to a large extent, had something to do with setting the way they work in Ontario.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Absence of Minister of Finance

MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek): — Question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, you may be aware that after today's auction on interest rates, the Bank of Canada established the all-time record of 15.49 per cent, for practical purposes 15.5 per cent. Mr. Premier, I'm sure you've noted that this week an announcement came from the Department of Finance indicating that the Minister of Finance would be absent on what was termed a good will mission to some financial centres. I'm sure the Premier has also noted that at this point in time we're in the middle of financial estimates, into the committee of finance in this Assembly. My question to the Premier is simply this. In the light of financial instability all over the world — not just confined to Canada, but everywhere — and in light of the fact that we're in the middle of committee of finance right now and the minister isn't really doing anything, (at least on the department's terminology, other than a goodwill mission), would the Premier not acknowledge that perhaps this is a most inappropriate time for the Minister of Finance to be absent from this Assembly where he can answer and account for financial policies on the part of his government?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — No, Mr. Speaker. We certainly don't have the expertise in answering financial questions which the Minister of Finance would have if he were here. But I don't think we've experienced any difficulty in answering any that have been put to us by members opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — Supplementary question to the Premier. The Premier can make light of a 15.5 per cent interest rate but I'm sure the mortgage holders and the people paying that rate won't. However, Mr. Premier, in the statement which came from the Department of Finance giving the explanation for the minister's absence, it was suggested he would be carrying out discussions in New York for future borrowing. It didn't say he was down there making the borrowings but that discussions were going to be held. Now, Mr. Premier, in light of the fact that one of our problems for this 15.5 per cent interest rate is simply that the American rate is presently higher than ours and that our problem is the Central Bank desperately needs to attract some foreign money. Mr. Premier, is it not inconsistent with what the overall national goals must be, that they even at this point in time are considering borrowing money in New York, particularly when gold is up and down in a very unstable fashion which ultimately makes all currencies unstable? So my supplementary is: is it not irresponsible in light of our overall national interests to even be talking to New York people at this point in time?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I answer that in two ways. First, if funds are borrowed in the United States, it will be in order to carry out the programs of the power utility and the telephone utility and other programs needed to maintain employment and economic activity in Saskatchewan. We do not regard as irresponsible providing jobs for Saskatchewan people and maintaining economic activity.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — My second answer is that the rationale of the Bank of Canada is that they must have these high interest rates in order to attract capital from the United States in order that our dollar does not plunge still lower. I comment not at all on whether or not that is a sound rationale but if it is (and it was the one urged by the Progressive Conservative Party when they were in the seats of power at Ottawa) then

clearly it is advisable for us to procure funds in the United States and bring them into Canada so the interest rate does not have to go still higher.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — Supplementary question to the Premier. As a bit of a preamble, could I ask the Premier and the Minister of Finance to get together on whether you want the rate higher or lower than the U.S. But anyway, Mr. Premier, in light of the fact that the Minister of Finance is off to Toronto and New York and wherever else on his financial good will mission, may I then ask you — have you perhaps considered the financial source which has been making loans to provinces at the lowest rate of all, that being the province of Alberta and the Alberta Heritage Fund? And might I ask the Premier, have you approached the province of Alberta? Have you asked them to quote you a rate? And in light of the fact that you're tripping off to Toronto and New York, would it perhaps not be advisable for the Premier, if he has not already done so, to have somebody of financial credibility . . . Well, now wait a minute, that's a tough one. I better withdraw that one. I'll withhold that one. Perhaps somebody associated with finance in this government could make a trip to Edmonton to discuss the possibility with the Premier of Alberta or someone else with regard to a potential loan to this province, if you have to go that route?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I will not comment on the thinly disguised job-seeking by the member for Thunder Creek even though he has impliedly offered his services for that purpose. We, I don't think, have approached the Government of Alberta. We understand, perhaps mistakenly, that the money they have set aside for lending to provincial governments from their heritage fund has been fully taken up by the pressing demands of provinces with Conservative governments and accordingly with inappropriate financial administration.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — In the light of the Premier's answer just now, the Premier suggests they are aware that funds are available to other provinces and he hasn't bothered to ask them yet whether it would be available. May I then ask the Premier, instead of going on hearsay and acknowledging that they have a lower rate for other provinces, could we therefore ask the Premier forthwith to make a phone call to Edmonton and ask if they would consider loaning money to you since they are loaning it at a cheaper rate than Toronto or New York, instead of relying on hearsay?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, there is I think a perception across Canada, a generally accepted perception everywhere, except I gather on the benches opposite, that there are two or three provinces which do not need financial assistance from other provinces that are able to finance on their own, who have budgetary surpluses and those two or three include the province of Alberta and the province of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Accordingly I think in the interest at least of preserving some money to be borrowed by Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island and New

Brunswick and Manitoba and other people who need money much more pressingly than we do, we ought not to attempt to take bread from their mouths when they are so clearly hungry.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — Supplementary question to the Premier. Do I understand the Premier correctly when he suggests that even though a lower rate of interest is presently being offered, may potentially be offered by the province of Alberta than he can get elsewhere that in the interests of Newfoundland, Quebec, etc. he is not going to explore the cheapest rate possible for the province of Saskatchewan? And in effect is the Premier not therefore acknowledging that at least in financial matters, you are not pursuing the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan?

MR. BLAKENEY: — The hon. member in asking his question was unable to contain his mirth and I, accordingly, I think, will not try to answer it in a serious vein except to say we will continue to pursue low interest rates. Last year we took pride in the fact that we borrowed our money cheaper (by more good luck perhaps than good management) than any other province in Canada and we will continue to pursue the lowest possible rates.

Withdrawal of Funding for Prince Rupert

MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Leader of the Opposition): — A question to the Minister of Agriculture. I'm sure the minister will agree that the port of Prince Rupert is a very important and necessary facility for western Canadians, particularly Saskatchewan types. I'm sure the minister is aware of the concern expressed by Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and other members of the consortium as it relates to the apparent flip-flop of the federal Minister of Transport in withdrawing funding for this particular facility. This could potentially cost the farmers of Saskatchewan \$25 million. Could you indicate to this House whether you have made any representation to the federal Minister of Transport to see that funding is not in fact withdrawn?

HON. G. MacMURCHY (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, I can report to the hon. member that I wrote to the hon. Minister of Transport at Ottawa three weeks ago. One of the items that I asked to discuss with him, as an immediate issue, was the port of Prince Rupert. Two issues were in our mind at that time: some clarity of that government's position with respect to the financing of the development there and secondly, of importance to Saskatchewan, the interchange agreement which did not provide for CP lines in Saskatchewan. The letter is already in his hands. My office has been trying to arrange a meeting with the minister to discuss Rupert and certainly, as a result of the most recent announcements, we have more need to meet with the minister to discuss that government's direction.

MR. BERNTSON: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, in light of yesterday's (or the day before, whatever it was) announcement of the federal Minister of Transportation and in light of the fact that nothing seems to have changed prior to May 22 last year, and in light of the fact that it seems the federal government is willing to dump millions and millions of dollars into Chrysler to bail out eastern Canada, will you not agree it is time we made strong representation on behalf of western Canada?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, I suspect the first letter to arrive at the hon. minister's desk from a transport minister in western Canada, was the letter that I sent.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — I must say to the hon. member and members of this Assembly that I'm very disappointed. I understand that the Minister of Transport has met with ministers of transport in Manitoba and Alberta and British Columbia, and has yet to respond to my letter, with respect to a reply and with respect to an opportunity to meet. When one considers Saskatchewan and its export of grain and the volume of export grain and how important that port of Rupert is. I'm sincerely disappointed that the federal minister has not seen fit to meet with me. However, I'm sure now he's getting organized, and we will soon have an opportunity to meet.

MR. BERNTSON: — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder in light of the fact that the federal Minister of Transport seems to be ignoring Saskatchewan, and I agree with the minister that it is a serious situation, what are you doing in particular? Apparently the other provinces can get along with him. What are you doing to increase or at least promote, some harmonious relationship between you and the federal minister?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Well, Mr. Speaker, maybe the old story that we have always said that the Liberals and the Conservatives are in bed together applies here.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — I want to say to the hon. member, if there was any government that was willing to co-operate in resolving the transportation problems of western Canada, it was the Government of Saskatchewan. There was no question; we were co-operative with the Hon. Otto Lang when he was minister; we were most co-operative with the Hon. Don Mazankowski when he was minister. I say that because Saskatchewan was first to offer the purchase of hopper cars, which was responded to by the federal government and the Government of Manitoba and the Government of Alberta. We want with all sincerity to continue that kind of co-operative approach with this new Liberal government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Community Pastures

MR. G.M. McLEOD (Meadow Lake): — Mr. Speaker, question to the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Minister, in view of the fact that your government has placed the provincial community pastures on the table for selection by Indian bands under the land entitlement selection process, is it now the policy of the Department of Agriculture to freeze all rejuvenation programs on the pastures that have been selected by Indian bands?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, I have no knowledge of any freezing of rejuvenation programs in the community pastures. I will take notice of the hon. member's question and confirm my statement, but to my knowledge I have no change in policy with respect to community pastures.

MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Speaker, I would ask the minister if he would also take notice of the

fact I've had many reports from community pasture patrons, that they've been told there would be no improvements done to their pastures while the land entitlement negotiations are going on.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, I can't respond to what people are saying I will check the policy for the hon. member and I will forward to the hon. member the policy. I don't think it's necessary to discuss it during question period. If he wants to ask another question after I respond, he can do so.

Pasture Allocation

MR. H.J. SWAN (Rosetown Elrose): — Question to the Minister of Agriculture. I've had a number of rather irate livestock men calling stating that they've had their pasture allocation cutback over the past three years to the point that they cannot really maintain a sufficiently large herd to warrant staying in the livestock industry. What is your department prepared to do to allow a reasonable pasture quota for these people?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, this is a very interesting question because just last night members of the caucus and I met with the lease committee of the Saskatchewan Stock Growers' Association. The lease committee of the Saskatchewan Stock Grower's Association was reporting to us with real concern because it relates to cattle numbers. But they were relating to us that there is room both in PFRA pastures and in provincial pastures for cattle. This surprised the caucus members and we're going to be doing a check on this. I think that in light of the statements that come from the Saskatchewan Stock Growers' Association, in light of the issue raised in your question I will say to the hon. member that I will check this very carefully and make a response because we want to do that to the stock growers' association as well as to this Assembly.

MR. SWAN: — A supplementary to the minister. Do you not agree that the \$15,000 total assessment figure that you use when you calculate the number of cattle allowed is an unrealistic figure? Mr. Minister, are you aware that in some of the high-assessed areas of the province like the one I represent, a person holding one section of land is being cut off from putting cattle in the pasture? Indeed it is a concern. I don't know who you met with or what they said but I can tell you it's a concern of the people in my constituency.

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, if you have a tight situation in your community pastures, you have to apply some rules to give as many people as possible an opportunity to make use of the community pasture. Therefore you have that assessment ceiling. If the situation has changed as the stock growers' committee was saying last night, then there's obviously an opportunity to reassess that ceiling policy.

Removal of Contaminated Soil

MR. G.S. MUIRHEAD (Arm River): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Environment. In light of the minister's statement on the CBC this morning that he estimated it would take 50 truckloads to remove 16,500 cubic meters of PCB (polychlorinated biphenyl) contaminated soil, I should like to ask the minister is he aware that if he estimation is correct, the trucks would have to hold 330 cubic meters each? Is the minister aware that the average dump truck holds no more than 10 cubic meters? This means in reality it would take 1,650 truck loads to complete this project. I should like to ask, where did the minister get his figures?

HON. G.R. BOWERMAN (Minister of the Environment): — Mr. Speaker, for a member of caucus who so violently opposes the metric system, he's well informed. I don't agree with what the member said, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Supplementary to the minister. I say to the minister, how can we take your previous statements as being credible in light of your statements this morning?

Nurses Wage Settlement in B.C.

MRS. J.H. DUNCAN (Maple creek): — A question to the Minister of Health, Mr. Speaker. In light of the B.C. nurses tentatively settling for a wage increase of 42 per cent over a 27 month spread, is your department concerned as to the effect this settlement in B.C. will have on the present negotiations with some nurses here in the province?

HON. H.H. ROLFES (Minister of Health): — Mr. Speaker, I will take notice of the question.

Empty Nursing Home Beds

MR. G.D. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Social Services. Mr. Minister, in view of the demand for nursing home beds in Saskatchewan, would you explain to me why there are three empty ones in the Lakeside home?

HON. M.J. KOSKIE (Minister of Social Services): — I hardly have been notified of that. Normally, I suppose you would expect that I check it every morning to determine that for you. All I can say is that if there is a need there, I would expect the list of applicants would be made known to the administrator and that the positions would be taken up.

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Speaker, the beds have been empty for some time. There's a waiting list of 30 people. Will you use your offices to see that these beds are filled immediately?

MR. KOSKIE: — The problem with the statistics of the hon. member is that it depends on whose statistics he is using. We could get into a full debate on whether or not there are 30 or there are 3 on the waiting list. Obviously the home itself has a committee for admissions, and any individual from that area wanting to enter into the facility certainly can go before the assessing committee and, on that basis, be admitted.

Treated Water Supply — North of Saskatoon

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — A question to the minister responsible for the water supply board. Mr. Minister, over the past few years you and I have had discussions over the water supply north of Saskatchewan. The press releases out of Saskatchewan indicate that Saskatoon is having trouble supplying sufficient water for the northern communities on the treated water line. Is your department presently negotiating to assist Saskatoon in increasing their capacity, or are you still considering building a water treatment plant of your own, as you indicated in Crown corporations?

HON. W.E. SMISHEK (Minister of Municipal Affairs (Urban)): — You ask the minister in charge of the municipal water supply board.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Not the water supply board, the corporation . . .

MR. SMISHEK: — You are talking about the corporation?

HON. G.R. BOWERMAN (Minister of the Environment): — Mr. Speaker, I believe the record will show that he was asking a question with respect to the municipal water assistance board, and for that reasons I was not paying attention to the member's question, and the hon. member can . . . (inaudible) . . . Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague and me and the government, I will take notice of the question.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Establishment of Western Electric Power Grid

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce to the House that Saskatchewan has today signed an agreement with the provinces of Alberta and Manitoba to conduct a further study into the establishing of a western electric power grid. My colleague, the Minister of Mineral Resources, has signed the agreement on behalf of the province of an official signing ceremony in Edmonton.

The possibility of establishing a western power grid was discussed at the western premiers' meeting in August, 1979. Saskatchewan indicated at that time that further study would be required to determine if there would be mutual economic and utility benefits of such a grid. A study is now being undertaken to assess the benefits of a power grid and to determine the engineering and utility aspects of production, transmission and delivery of the energy. The study will include an assessment of the benefits of a firm sale of hydro-electric energy by Manitoba to Alberta and Saskatchewan. The findings of the study will determine what benefits may accrue to the three provinces from a co-operative arrangement. I am encouraged by the spirit of good will that is being demonstrated by the three provinces in initiating this study. Our electrical power interconnections currently total four — three with Manitoba and one under construction with North Dakota — and the fifth is in the planning stages to provide an interconnection with the province of Alberta, Saskatchewan has had interconnections with the province of Manitoba since 1960.

This demonstrates in itself our interest both in working co-operatively with our neighboring provinces an in providing energy security for the customers we serve — the people of Saskatchewan.

On the basis of the study which is being undertaken, we will be better able to make responsible decisions concerning our energy future. The study will commence immediately, with designated officials of the three provinces constituting a steering committee, with my colleague the Minister of Mineral Resources sharing responsibility for carrying out this study with the Minister of Finance of Manitoba and the Minister of Utilities and Telephones in Alberta. It is anticipated that the committee will report its findings by September 30, 1980.

We look forward with optimism to continued co-operation between our provinces. We now await the findings of the feasibility study.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan): — I wish to congratulate the Premier and his government for joining with the leadership of Premier Lyon Of Manitoba in setting up these

adjoining grids and following the leadership of the premier. I would also urge the same co-operation of your government on such things as the Leader of the Opposition presented today — the Prince Rupert port which is so important to us; the energy fund which is part of our heritage fund; working with the other prairie premiers and joining together on this as well. Again I congratulate you on joining in this grid.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

CONDOLENCES

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I transgress on the time of the Assembly to state (I hope on behalf of the Assembly) that the people of Saskatchewan would like to express their condolences to Mrs. Isabella Hurley, wife of Saskatchewan and Canadian artist, Robert Hurley, who died March 24 at the age of 85.

People will recognize Mr. Hurley as almost a self-taught artist in the Saskatoon area, who came under the influence of another well-known Saskatchewan painter, Ernest Lindner. Noted for his use of brilliant colors in depicting prairie scenes, Mr. Hurley received recognition very quickly, winning numerous awards, and his paintings are now to be found in galleries in Canada, in the United States, and London, England.

In 1951 the Government of Saskatchewan presented four of the watercolors to Princess Elizabeth on behalf of the province. In 1958 the then Government of Saskatchewan made an arrangement with Mr. Hurley so he could devote his entire time to his paintings. He had to retire to Victoria in 1963 because of ill health.

Mr. Hurley's scenes of prairie landscapes, unbroken horizons, farmsteads and grain elevators express the beauty and romance in the commonplace.

Robert Hurley leaves us a legacy of pride in the natural and simple beauties of our province, in the strength and bond to the land he loved so well.

MR. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — On behalf of the opposition, Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with the Premier in extending condolences to Mrs. Hurley. Not only did Mr. Hurley bring pride, I think he brought joy to many people in Saskatchewan; not only joy in the work which he did, but also the satisfaction that Saskatchewan citizens got from the worldwide recognition to Mr. Hurley.

I think as well (and I have talked to many who have studied his paintings), you always get a response back about — oh yes, I can remember that from my youth. It brought back, as well as the joy many fond reminiscences of people who were able to view his paintings.

We join with the Premier in extending condolences.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE — HEALTH — VOTE 32

Items 9 and 10 agreed.

Item 11

MRS. J. DUNCAN (Maple Creek): — Mr. Minister, I would like to know the increase in the employees from 9 to 13. There is an increase of \$18,940 for other personal expenses. What types of promotions will be carried on this year?

MR. H.H. ROLFES (Minister of Health): — Three positions transferred from community health and one research officer added during the year. And the \$18,000 — there were 13 person-months transferred from community health services.

MR. ROLFES: — We are going to maintain the lifestyle program. I think you're familiar with that — the feeling good program. In that particular program we're going to emphasize physical fitness, mental health, nutrition and alcoholism.

MR. R.A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Chairman — no, I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, I wanted item 12.

Item 11 agreed.

Item 12

MR. LARTER: — Mr. Minister, I believe there was quite a bit of controversy, maybe a little agitation, over some of the lab service during the SGEA strike. I think there was some hardship. I think some of the hospitals and some of the doctors were only sending in what they had to. I believe this was the case from Estevan. There was an emergency service on and you weren't up to full capacity. I know you stated during the strike that you were handling emergency service, but I say to you that there were many doctors and hospitals that weren't sending in things that should have been sent in, because they weren't getting the reports back. I would like to know, now that you are over the T.C. Douglas Building, have you extended your facilities and do you have a contingency plan set up for such emergency?

MR. ROLFES: — First of all, I don't want to dwell on the fact that there may be a difference of opinion as to whether or not we dealt properly with lab services during the strike. I think all the urgent requests were taken care of. Certainly any time you have a strike you think there are going to be some difficulties. I don't deny that. But we have a study under way. It will be under way this year. There's some money in DGS (Department of Government Services) to look into the future expansion of the labs, and I would hope in two or three years we will have something under way as an expansion in the provincial lab.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Just one short question. Could you tell me under other expenses what might have been eliminated to have a cutback of around \$40,000?

ROGER: — Reduced equipment.

Item 12 agreed.

Item 13

MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Minister, how many out patients are looked after by psychiatric services through community clinics — clinics set up throughout the province?

MR. ROLFES: — I would direct the member to the health report, page 93. I think you will find the answers right there. They are reported in the annual report.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Of '77-'78?

MR. ROLFES: — No, '78-'79?

MRS. DUNCAN: — During the SGEA (Saskatchewan Government Employees' Association) strike there was great concern expressed over the lack of care given to many psychiatric patients. Do you really have some type of contingency plan where you can move other workers in to fulfil the needs in such a sensitive area of medicine?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, here again, I think we can argue about the difficulties that were experienced. There was certainly some concern expressed by certain people. I think one would have to expect that during a particular strike. I stand by what I said in the House at that time; emergency and essential psychiatric services were being provided throughout Saskatchewan. We did not feel and we still are of the same belief, that there were real difficulties experienced at that time. Everybody who needed emergency services and essential services, we think, was able to get them. We did make more use of private psychiatrists. There were more referrals made to private psychiatrists and that is certainly one of the back-up systems that we have. There were a number of referrals made to the Pasqua Hospital and the Plains Health Centre. We are convinced that the emergency essential services were being rendered more than reality really showed at that time. I guess that's about the only answer I can give you. We were pretty satisfied with the services which people were receiving during the strike, even though there were some difficulties.

Item 13 agreed.

Item 14

MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Minister, I am given to understand that nurses employed in the hospitals under 14, 15, 16 and 17 are hired by the government. For each scale of a nurse 1, nurse 2, nurse 3 and nurse 4 and the numbers in each hospitals, each institution and their present classification? You can supply me with that. O.K.?

Item 14 agreed.

Item 15

MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Minister, what is the rated bed capacity of this hospital?

MR. ROLFES: — 63

MRS. DUNCAN: — How many beds are funded?

MR. ROLFES: — Staffing complement for about 25 to 30.

Item 15 agreed.

Item 16

MRS. DUNCAN: — Bed capacity and funded beds at the time?

MR. ROLFES: — 48 and 38. Those aren't bad statistics are they?

Item 16 agreed.

Item 17

MRS. DUNCAN: — Could I have the statistics for this hospital too, as asked?

MR. ROLFES: — 60, 47 or 48.

Item 17 agreed.

Items 18 and 19 agreed.

Item 20

MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Minister, could you advise me as to how many inquiries or complaints you or MCIC (medical care insurance commission) has had, say from January to March 1, about direct billing practices?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I have to advise the member that we don't keep track of that. There are some that come in by letters, others that come in by telephone. I made the statement a few months ago that there really wasn't a weekend, from about the time I got appointed Minister of health until about January, that I didn't have people complain to me about direct billing. I must admit that since about January there haven't been very many. I get maybe one a week now, but certainly for the time from July to about January or the end of December, I was getting a number of calls.

But I was also getting a number of complaints from MLAs — particularly government MLAs — about concerns they were getting from their constituents on direct billing. But I can't give you the exact number of calls my office received or I received or the government MLAs have received.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Do you pass on these inquiries to the direct billing review committee of the SMA?

MR. ROLFES: — I think there are about three ways that that happens. Personally, when I do receive a phone call I make them aware that this committee does exist and it's up to them if they wish to phone the SMA and make that concern known. Generally speaking what I do, I think there's something we can do about the direct billing, is contact my associate deputy in charge of MCIC and he then might deal with it, or his staff may deal with it if they can resolve it, or else they may contact the committee.

I have informed the public when I've met with the press that this particular committee does exist. But I don't refer all of them, no. But I do if a person isn't satisfied either with the service of the doctor or feels the bill is way too high. I do remind them of the committee which exists.

MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek): — Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the minister what happened to a statement that was promised to this Assembly by the Attorney General. I think it was last Friday. Last Friday in question period the Attorney General, in response

to a question — I think it was actually a question that came from the member for Qu'Appelle . . . Anyway the subject of direct billing was coming up and the Attorney General asked us what we were going to do about it and a retort came from the member for Qu'Appelle, what are you going to do about it? And the Attorney General replied that the estimates of the Minister of Health would be up on Monday and that the Minister of Health would make a clear and definitive statement as to exactly what the government was going to do about direct billing.

Mr. Minister, that's on the Hansard record of last Friday. I was not in the House for the whole afternoon yesterday. I'm not aware of any definitive statement as to how your government intends to proceed with this troublesome matter in the future. Perhaps we could ask, what is your position on direct billing?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, had the member for Thunder Creek been in here . . . (inaudible) . . . No, I'm serious when I say that — on subvote 1. We did have some discussion on subvote 1. A question was directed to me from the member for Regina North-West. Somebody else (I forget who) from the opposition directed a question to me on direct billing. I made it very clear what I intend to do about direct billing. There are some options open to us. First and foremost, I hope that we can resolve the direct billing through our consultations with the MSA. I think we have been fairly successful in reducing drastically the direct billing we had six months ago. I am hopeful and optimistic that we can resolve it through consultation. Secondly, I had indicated that I have already written a letter to the new Minister of Health, the Hon. Monique Begin, asking for a meeting. One of the things I wanted to discuss with her was her stand on direct billing. I suppose I got my answer this morning or this afternoon when I read the latest Medical Post. On the front page was a statement by the Hon. Monique Begin who said that she was opposed to any deterrent fees, direct billing and opting out. These were her words. You can check with the Medical Post.

I will, in my discussions with other provincial health ministers and with the federal Minister of Health and Welfare, make it very clear that I believe direct billing infringes on the principles of medicare. We stated that in our brief to the Hall report.

If the hon. member would like to have a copy of the brief, I think it's an excellent brief. We made it very clear that we are opposed to direct billing. We do think it infringes on the rights of individuals to have access to medicare and to services offered by doctors through medicare, so we're opposed to it. We will do everything we can, in our discussion with the federal minister and with other provincial ministers, to try and get them to come in with us to work out some solution to this particular problem.

I have stated (and I'm on record many times) that if all of those fail, legislation must be considered and must be an alternative which this government must give serious consideration to. I think it's premature at this time to think of legislation, as I indicated, because the 1962 agreement gave doctors the right to direct bill and extra bill. I think we must do everything we can through our consultations and discussions with the medical profession to try and resolve our differences. That is where we're placing our emphasis and we're wasting, I would say, very little manpower at the present time to look at legislation alternatives. I think we have been successful. The rate is dropping rather drastically, I think, because we're less than 4 per cent now. I'm hoping that through improvements of our payment schedules, through our discussion and keeping the avenues open, we'll be able to resolve the problem.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, I don't pretend to be an expert in the field of health and

I'll leave it to people who are, I'll leave our basic positions on health to our critic. But in response to some of your remarks, I think there is a very appropriate comment that must be forthcoming. That relates to the integrity of your government and probably to the integrity of your party. You've talked about the basic precepts of medicare that you're in favor of. I don't think it's going to be disputed by very many people. But if you recall, Mr. Minister, your predecessors and I'm not sure whether they were the CCF or whether they'd become the NDP by then. As a matter of fact, I think they had become the NDP. In the doctors' strike, which I think was approximately 1962, very clearly mode 3 billing, or direct billing, was a very integral part of that settlement. It was an agreement between the government of the day — I believe Woodrow Wilson — and the medical profession.

Now, Mr. Minister, in your comments you went further than that; you said legislation must be considered. Now you went on to say it was premature, granted. But in other words you're saying that agreement, which goes back to 1962 and was one of the major bases for settlement of one of the most bitter disputes this province has ever seen . . . you're saying that when a group of people, whether it be doctors or anybody else, make an agreement with your government, with your political party, that's fine — that may be in there, but if you ever use it, then we're simply going to remove it.

Mr. Minister, I respectfully say to you today, that nobody likes the direct billing that is going on. Everybody wishes it could be avoided. The Ministers of Health knows that the doctors who are doing so are doing so in an accord which was reached with your government. When you start proposing legislation, even when you start hinting at it, Mr. Minister, I want to suggest to you that you're using that as a grossly unfair club. How can you possibly expect there to be a spirit of co-operation when in effect you are saying to the medical profession, you do it our way and don't you exercise that loophole that we gave you. You either do it our way or else, in effect, we'll expropriate you. Yesterday we heard a suggestion from the new member for Regina North-West (I believe it is, and I was in the Assembly for that question) when he asked you or almost proposed to you, maybe it's time to put our doctors on salaries.

Now, Mr. Minister, you made a deal with those doctors back in 1962 (now I'm subject to correction on that date) but there was a pact between the doctors and Woodrow Lloyd, a pact which should be lived up to.

Mr. Minister, I think it is also a fair assessment to say today that we have very severe problems. We have problems with the quality of doctors in this province today. I don't think very many people are going to argue the point that the quality of doctor in Saskatchewan in March of 1980 is in the same league with the quality of doctor in Saskatchewan in March of 1962 when that agreement was made. Mr. Minister, I don't think even you're going to dispute that one.

Mr. Minister, I want to say to you that this problem with the doctors is a very, very serious one because without your doctors all the medicare in the world isn't worth the powder to blow it up. I believe that threatening these doctors with legislation for exercising a right which they were given — an agreement that they reached with an NDP government, even though it was 18 years ago — is not nurturing any spirit of co-operation. Mr. Minister, you can have all the programs you want in the field of health, laudable though they may be. There are two things that any health program comes down to, that common sense tells you are the basic components — a doctor and a hospital. Take away either one of those and you haven't got anything in the field of health and there's nothing dramatic about that. That's basic common sense.

Mr. Minister, I take exception to you telling a group of people that if you proceed in a certain way, even though we agreed to it, we may — and I'll grant you, you use the word premature, that it would be premature — but even hinting at the fact that legislation may be forthcoming, I put to you is not doing our health programs any benefit.

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I'm not going to speak at any length. I have made my position very clear in this House; this is the position of the government. As I stated to the Hall committee, an agreement was signed in 1962. I do not take that agreement very lightly. Eighteen years, however, have passed. Times have changed. There were two things in that agreement that I think were basic to medicare as they were seen in Saskatchewan. One was, and I conceded that point to the member opposite, that there would be direct billing. Direct billing has taken place for the last 17 or 18 years. The other point made was that the principles of medicare would be protected and safeguarded.

One of those principles was accessibility to health services. That was also part of that contract. That was part of that understanding. In the last 17 or 18 years we feel very strongly that that principle was protected even though there was direct billing by some doctors who in principle could not accept the contract that was made. I don't argue with the member that one should take legislation very lightly and use it as a threat. All I'm saying to the member is I must protect that contract as much as I can; but on the other hand, as Minister of Health, I must also protect the principles of medicare. If one of those principles is impeded, then I have a duty to find a solution to that. I indicated to you that my solution right now is consultation, discussion, negotiation. That is what we are putting our emphasis on today.

I am not the only minister who has said to doctors — unless we resolve the extra billing or direct billing that we would consider legislation. I think the minister from Alberta was much, much stronger in his pronouncement of legislation than I have ever been. Maybe because I haven't been so strong, we have better results here. I will say to the member opposite that the relationship between the doctors of this province and the Department of Health and the minister is fairly good at this particular time. I think the SMA will bear that out. Certainly, we have our difficulties — no doubt about that. We have our differences. I think as long as we are at the table and still discussing and keeping the lines of communications open, I am hopeful that we can resolve the problem.

I can't let a statement go by that the member made because I think there is no evidence at all to bear out the statement he made — that the quality of doctors in this province today is not as good as it was 17 or 18 years ago. In many, many areas there have been great improvements made. We have made great improvements in many areas. I would simply say to the member that I am proud of the doctors we have in this province and the dedication they have toward the people they serve. I don't believe their qualifications have dropped. I would maintain that they have improved in the last 17 or 18 years.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, so often I have heard the expression used, primarily from members of the New Democratic Party, that medicare is under attack in this country. It's a great phrase of Tommy Douglas that medicare is under attack. Now you have made reference to the effect that it is your duty and that you are honor bound as Minister of Health to protect the accessibility to medicare. Now, Mr. Minister, on a

philosophical basis it sounds great and you can wave a flag and carry a torch. But something I've missed: tell me about somebody in Saskatchewan that medicare is not accessible to. Where is this accessibility factor you were making reference to? Who is denied the medicare you were talking about? I've never heard it defined and furthermore perhaps when we hear the phrase that medicare is being attacked, you could maybe inform us, without getting overly inflammatory, who is doing the attacking. Because I don't hear it — it's a pretty one-sided battle. I just don't know of anybody who is attacking medicare — if there is, I'd like you to tell us who is denied that accessibility. Then we'll move on to a couple of other things.

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I'd gladly do that for the member. I think if he looks at the statistics — when you have in some provinces 47 per cent of the doctors extra billing, when you have in some communities, not only in this province but in other provinces, all the doctors extra billing. I say the people of those communities do not have accessibility to medicare.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Where's that, Herm?

MR. ROLFES: — Well, in Ontario there are whole communities where all the doctors are extra billing, every one of them. We have in this province certain specialities where almost the entire group is extra billing . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'll give you specifics. The anesthetists for example in this province, almost all of them are extra billing. And I say to you when that happens the principle of accessibility is being eroded. When you have communities, for example Meadow Lake — I'll give you an example. All the doctors in Meadow Lake were (I'm not sure if they still are) extra billing. I am saying to the member when that happens the principle of accessibility for those people is being eroded.

When people say medicare is under attack, what they really mean is that some of the principles of medicare are no longer part of medicare. When you have a whole community of doctors extra billing, that's all right for people maybe in this legislature who can afford to pay the extra bills. But I can tell the member I had a senior citizens come to me who had a bill of \$35. She said to me, I can't afford to pay this. And I said to her, well look, I'll check with your doctor; I'll contact your doctor. She said, no I don't want you to do that. I said, well why not? Because, she said, I will need him in the future and I'm afraid he will not give me the kind of service I've been used to if I tell him I can't afford it. Those were her words. What I say to you is, for that particular individual who came to see me as Minister of Health, the principle of accessibility was not available. That is the point we are arguing about. That's the crux of the problem we presently have in medicare in Canada.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, I'm not really interested in your philosophy. I'm more interested in specifics and that's what I asked you to do. Now I want you to name one individual who has been refused medicare in Saskatchewan. I want to hear the name of one doctor who has refused to treat people because he thought they couldn't pay his direct billing. I'd like you to get a little bit specific. We hear dozens of them — name one. Let's hear them. Let's not hear this garbage philosophy. Let's have some names. Let's have some facts, because you keep referring to the lack of accessibility. Now let's hear some of it, because that's just a heck of a thing to say about our doctors. I don't believe it's happened. And I challenge you to name some cases and put some names on the table, or else withdraw it. Now somebody over there (I think it was the fellow with the red jacket) said dozens of them. Never mind dozens, let's hear one.

MR. ROLFES: — . . . (inaudible) . . . and the member knows that I will not name any doctors or individuals. Mr. Chairman, I have no intention of withdrawing the statement. I have given him facts of individuals who have come to me. I'm simply saying to the member that when direct billing or extra billing erodes the principle of accessibility, then I think we have a duty to take action in order to protect that particular principle. I am sure the member must have had some concerns from his constituent on the same topic. I don't believe that some of our senior citizens, and people on very low income, should have to go to a doctor and say, I know you extra bill but I can't afford it. Will you please give me some service? I don't think under our medicare system that was intended in 1962. It is fine, as I have said, for those of us who can afford it but I do believe it is demeaning, and many of the people I have met with have told me they don't think it is the business of a doctor to find out how much money they are making and whether or not they can afford to pay the extra cost.

I just don't believe that we expect our senior citizens and those people on low income to have to go through that process when those of us who are more fortunate financially can afford to pay the extra costs. I don't believe that is what people had in mind when they set up medicare and when they wrote down the principles of medicare. They didn't mean to set up two classes of people. Medicare was to be available to everyone without any response or consideration of income. We would have equal access to doctors, to hospitals and to our total medicare system.

MR. THATCHER: — Well, Mr. Minister, that is quite a turnaround. About five minutes ago I think you put a slur on every doctor in Saskatchewan by suggesting that they were not accessible. I challenged you to put forward one documented case where somebody was refused access to medicare in this province, to the doctor, and all we got was the usual rhetoric. I suggest to the minister that it is no wonder you are having difficulty getting the quality doctors and physicians we once enjoyed in this province, with that kind of an atmosphere.

Mr. Minister, let's just pursue this a little bit further. We have a very, very fine medical school at the University of Saskatchewan, in your home town of Saskatoon. It is ranked as one of the finest medical schools anywhere in North America. I would like you to ask your officials how many graduates they turn out in a year? How many graduates in the course of a year? Now, let's take the figures from the past three years. I would like you to tell me where those doctors are who have graduated from the University of Saskatchewan, which I think everybody in this Assembly will acknowledge is one of the finest medical schools in existence anywhere in the world.

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, again I want to inform the member we graduate about 60 undergraduates each year. I am told about 25 of those each year remain in our province. Others and we haven't got the specific figures go on to graduate speciality program within our own province; others go to a different province for their graduate program and then come back to Saskatchewan. I mentioned yesterday, for example, we were able to recruit a famous Canadian oncologist from Ontario, bringing him back to Saskatchewan.

Mr. Chairman, we have no shortage of doctors in this province; that is not the problem. We indicated yesterday the problem is distribution. I want to tell the member that I am somewhat alarmed; I think it is the third time that he has talked about the quality of our doctors. I wish he would put forward any evidence he has that the present doctors aren't as qualified as they were 17 or 18 years ago, or that our doctors don't stack up to the doctors or the other provinces. This is the third time he has said that and I wish he

would put some evidence forth or else quit slamming and slurring the doctors of this province. This is the third or fourth time he has made that statement in this House; I don't agree with him. He has given me no evidence whatever and yet he has the audacity to say that I slur the doctors of this province. I think our doctors can stack up to any doctors in Canada. They are well qualified, they are doing a good job and they are dedicated. I don't accept the statement made by the member that the doctors in this province are less qualified today than they were, let's say, 18 years ago. I don't buy it.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, it is a very interesting thing when we talked at various times over the years and recently and in these estimates, of an exodus of doctors from Saskatchewan at varying times and there are a variety of reasons, granted. But, Mr. Minister, do you not think that is a bit of a condemning figure which you just quoted? You say 60 doctors are graduated from the University of Saskatchewan every year (that figure I'm sure varies) and you suggest that about 25 out of those 60 remain in the province of Saskatchewan in a given year . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Well now, Mr. Minister, we know darn well that the figure is a lot lower than that, but let's accept your figure. Let's say that out of that, less than half the graduates who come out of the University of Saskatchewan (one of the finest medical schools anywhere) choose to stay in this province. Mr. Minister, that has got to be an indictment of medicare all by itself. That is for that given year because the next year you have something that ties them here for the first year (in fact, maybe it's two years) and then how many of them take off after their commitment to the government is done? And where do you get your doctors from? Mr. Minister, let's not kid ourselves. The basis of our doctors in this province is not from our own medical school — it's not from Saskatoon and we say categorically that Saskatoon is one of the very, very good schools in medicine and everything else in the world. But we can't hold our own medical graduates in this province. What bigger indictment is there of our Department of Health? What more proof is there? Now let's just be very specific on the comment that I made. I made the comment very clearly that the calibre, the quality of doctors in this province in March of 1980 is not on a par with what it was in March of 1962 when medicare came in. I don't recall talking about other provinces.

On the other hand, Mr. Minister, bringing up other provinces, perhaps I could pose a question to you. Are there any doctors practising in Saskatchewan who could not practise in other provinces because of their medical qualifications?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, yes it is true. There are doctors in this province who cannot practise in other provinces and it's similarly true that some doctors practising in other provinces would not be able to practise in Saskatchewan. But that doesn't mean — because they have some differences in residency clauses and we don't have reciprocal agreements 100 per cent throughout Canada — that they are less qualified. Some provinces say you have to have internship. If you don't have that in that particular province, you can't move to the other provinces. So the answer to you is yes but equally applies the other way.

MR. THATCHER: — Perhaps, Mr. Minister, you could elaborate. What sort of circumstances are they? Is it a case that Saskatchewan doesn't recognize credentials from UBC (University of British Columbia) medical school, a very fine medical school? Are you saying that Saskatchewan will not recognize an M.D. from the University of Alberta? I think we know that is not true. Are you suggesting that some provinces don't acknowledge the validity of an M.D. from the University of Saskatchewan? I don't think that's true. I think they do. Would you be a little bit more specific in what you're saying?

What doctors are practising in Saskatchewan who cannot practise elsewhere and why?

MR. ROLFES: — To give you a good example, I am told that our fifth year, the last year in the undergraduate program here in Saskatchewan, we count as a year for licensing internship. In Alberta, for example, the last year is not counted. You must take two years of internship before you are licensed. Therefore when our graduates come out of our school here, they can't immediately go to Alberta to be licensed because they haven't got the internship.

But does that mean they are less qualified? No, but those are specific provincial regulations I suppose and they don't equally apply through Canada. So they can't go back and forth immediately upon graduation.

MR. THATCHER: — Well, Mr. Minister, I think we are skirting it here and I think you know we are skirting it. We are not talking about recent graduates particularly, we are talking about practising physicians. If you want to take a time span of five years after, I don't care. The generally accepted view of what a practising physician is — one who has done his internship; one who is out and in the field practising . . .

I repeat my question. Are there any physicians in the province of Saskatchewan who have been practising in medicine (let's use five years for just a bench mark) who cannot practise elsewhere in Canada?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I will repeat my answer to the member. As I indicated before — the answer is yes. A doctor who has been practising in Saskatchewan, let's say for five years, a particular doctor, would not automatically be able to go to Alberta or British Columbia to practise. But the same thing applies to Alberta and B.C. Just because they have practised in Alberta or B.C. they wouldn't automatically be able to come to Saskatchewan to practise. The same thing applies.

We don't have, as I indicated to you before, complete reciprocity agreements in Canada when it comes to the practising of doctors in the provinces.

MR. THATCHER: — Let's go at it from the other direction, Mr. Minister. Since apparently we have doctors in this province who cannot practise elsewhere in Canada, would you tell us the circumstances? Tell me if there are practising doctors anywhere in Canada, any other province, who are not acceptable in Saskatchewan! Under what circumstances; what sort of doctors presently practising in good standing with their medical association, etc. — what circumstances would make a doctor practising anywhere else in Canada not acceptable to the licensing commission in this province?

MR. ROLFES: — There are some areas or some reasons that would prevent someone from another province from receiving automatic licensing in this province. If, for example, a doctor wants to come to this province to practise in an area of medicine where he has not been certified by the royal college — he may well have been practising in another province, but he's not certified by royal college — therefore he could not

practise in Saskatchewan automatically. Secondly, a doctor would need a rotating internship. He may have interned but he may not have interned in all the areas for which he might want to practise here in Saskatchewan and therefore he would not qualify.

For example, a doctor may have been practising in another province but he cannot prove that he is of good standing, or of good character — he may have an alcohol problem—if that were drawn to the attention here he probably would not receive licensing. I'm also told that in some of the provinces they have interim and provisional licensing. We don't have that in Saskatchewan. We have full licensing. And if they came with an interim or provisional licensing they might not be able to practise here in this province. So I've given you four reasons or circumstances under which they may not be able to come to Saskatchewan and be licensed in order to practise.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, perhaps I could ask you to explain a little further your reference to a doctor who has not been approved by the royal college, certified by the royal college. May I then ask you, Mr. Minister, are there any doctors practising in Saskatchewan who have not been certified by the royal college? Do we have any?

MR. ROLFES: — Yes.

MR. THATCHER: — Would you explain the circumstances under which this is possible and how many are there, Mr. Minister?

MR. ROLFES: — All the general practitioners, for example, are not certified by the royal college.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, perhaps you could elaborate on who the royal college is.

You're saying that all general practitioners are not licensed by the royal college but that physicians and surgeons are?

Mr. Minister, I could give you a question in the same vein that perhaps your officials could answer while you're answering my previous question. Are there any graduates of Canadian universities who have not been approved by the royal college presently practising in Saskatchewan?

MR. ROLFES: — There are three requirements that are necessary to be licensed. Firstly, you have to have a medical degree. Secondly, you must have a recognized internship and thirdly, you must pass a Canadian national exam. Then you will be licensed as a GP (general practitioner) and you can practise. Now you want to be certified by the royal college. There are some more things that must be done. You must take more education and you must write an exam under the royal college. Once you have done that and you've passed all of those, then they will certify you as a specialist. You then will be able to practise in that particular speciality. That is why I said before that GPs were not certified because they didn't take more education in their particular speciality and they didn't write the exam under the royal college.

Now, I've forgotten the other question that you had asked.

MR. THATCHER: — Are the graduates of Canadian medical schools such as the University of Saskatchewan, the University of Alberta, the University of British Columbia, etc., pretty well certified by this royal college as a part of their normal

academic program within the university from which they are graduating?

MR. ROLFES: — The answer is no. I divided it into two groups, the GPs and the royal college. The universities, I am told, have nothing to do with the royal college. If someone wishes to become a specialist and be certified as a specialist, he or she would go on to more education and write the exams for the royal college. If they are successful in those two areas, they would be certified by the royal college. It has nothing to do with any particular Canadian university. It is not associated directly with it.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, doctors who may choose to come to Canada from other countries such as the United States, Australia, Europe, etc., — how are they evaluated by your department or how are they licensed in Saskatchewan? Who does the licensing? Are they required to be examined by, shall we say, the Saskatchewan Medical Association or are they examined by the college of physicians and surgeons? How exactly do you proceed to license these people since we all agree that our standards in Canada are second to none? How do you evaluate these people who may choose to come here from other countries?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, the legislature has, under the medical profession, an act, which has given that authority to the college of physicians and surgeons to determine the qualifications and licensing of doctors. The training program that the doctors of the United States have is very similar to the training program we have in Canada. They have an exam called FLEX which is very similar to the exam we have, the LMCC. Those two are recognized as being about equal so one person who has passed the FLEX exam would, I suppose generally speaking, be looked upon very favorably by the college of physicians and surgeons and taking everything else into consideration would probably be licensed here in Saskatchewan. But I have nothing to do with that, neither does my department. That authority has been given by the legislature through The Medical Profession Act to the college of physicians and surgeons.

MR. THATCHER: — Just so I am completely sure on that, Mr. Speaker, you are saying any doctor coming from anywhere in the world, whether it be the U.S. or elsewhere, his academic and medical qualifications must be verified, checked and approved by the college of physicians and surgeons. Do I understand you to say any doctor coming to Saskatchewan, who the college of physicians and surgeons say is not qualified, has not the academic requirements, etc. — they can say, no way? Do I understand you correctly?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, the college of physicians and surgeons do the licensing of the doctors. They will determine what qualifications he or she has. Certainly I would suspect they would contact someone where the individual came from to get further written statements as to how well he or she had qualified.

The powers and the responsibilities and the limitations put on the college of physicians and surgeons are clearly stated with The Medical Profession Act. Again, that is determined here in this legislature.

We, as a department, certainly do not have anything to do with the licensing and determining of the qualifications of doctors. That is determined by the act. We don't make those stipulations in the Department of Health.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, I don't have The Medical Profession Act in front of me and even though it may come as a shock to you. I don't know it clause by clause either,

Mr. Minister, I would like to ask you what involvement the government has in the licensing of doctors by the college of physicians and surgeons? I would like to know what checks and balances the government has with the college of physicians and surgeons for licensing? I would like to ask you if there are any physicians, practising in the province of Saskatchewan, who have not written what is affectionately known as the LMCC exam? . . . and if it has been recognized as equal through FLEX — other than American?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, again the quick answers here. No we are not involved in the licensing of doctors except by laws that may be passed in the legislature here. There is an appeal procedure in the act for people who feel they have been disciplined or dealt with inappropriately. Yes, there are doctors who are practising and/or were practising in this province who have not written the LMCC but I want to indicate to the member that these people generally speaking have credentials which are recognized by very prestigious schools in Great Britain or by the general medical council of Great Britain.

I would like to give the member one example of this. I'm sure most members remember a few years ago we had a doctor in this province — one of the world's most famous gerontologists by the name of Brockelhurst. Dr. Brockelhurst did not write the LMCC and yet he was recognized. I think most countries and most provinces would be very pleased to have a man of that high calibre practising in their province. He was certainly very highly qualified and he did not have the LMCC.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Minister, isn't it true those doctors who have not written their LMCC cannot practise in British Columbia? Isn't it true they cannot practise in Alberta? Isn't it true they cannot practise in Manitoba? Isn't it true they cannot practise in Ontario? Isn't it true they cannot practise in Quebec? Isn't it true they cannot practise in New Brunswick? Isn't it true they cannot practise in Nova Scotia?

MR. ROLFES: — No, generally speaking that is not true. As I indicated to the member in a previous question, there are provinces which have interim or provisional licensing. I think this is to take care of some of these very things I was talking to you about. So in general terms, no it is not true what the member is saying.

MR. THATCHER: — Is it true, Mr. Minister, that there is only one other province that will allow physicians to practise without an LMCC other than Saskatchewan. Isn't that true? I invite you to consult with your officials on that.

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, again, in the previous question, and then, in my answer, I indicated to the member that the LMCC really has nothing to do with specialists. So you have in many, many other provinces, specialists who are practising who have not taken the LMCC. They don't need to take the LMCC. They were general practitioners; they are now specialists; they have been certified by the royal college and they are practising in the other provinces.

I am also told that there are many general practitioners in other provinces who have not taken the LMCC . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . all of them, pretty well. We don't know for certain but we think all of them are general practitioners who have not taken the LMCC.

It is true that in every other province except maybe one besides Saskatchewan, they

have changed the laws which state that new doctors coming in must write the LMCC . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . no, Saskatchewan doesn't and no one denies that. Saskatchewan doesn't and I'm not sure that we should, because I think that certainly there are cases where you would want to attract certain people because of their speciality. You like to get them into the province, and I'm not sure we should.

MR. THATCHER: — A little while ago, Mr. Minister, you suggested that I give examples of how the quality of our doctors may have deteriorated since 1962 to our present point in time. Mr. Minister, I haven't really had to provide any because you have been doing it for the last hour. You have acknowledged that less than one-half of our graduates of the University of Saskatchewan stay in Saskatchewan, and out of the figure — you say it is approximately 25 out of 60 — how many of those 25 stay here because of some government support program which requires them to spend a year or two here? But then, Mr. Minister, I think you have just demonstrated how our quality of doctors has diminished. You have acknowledged that there are doctors allowed to come into Saskatchewan who have to take an LMCC before they can practise in every province, except one; every other province requires them to take that examination. Mr. Minister, we both know that is a quality examination — to examine their qualifications, their academic qualifications and everything else about them.

It brings us back to the old point I mentioned about an hour ago. I didn't intend to be this long. You can put all the numbers in an estimate book that you want, and all the programs in effect; without the basic components of a health program being secure — that being the doctor in the hospital — everything else isn't worth the powder to blow it to hell.

Mr. Minister, I want to say to you that you have not safeguarded half the basic cornerstone to any medical care program, and that's the doctors. You have harassed them, you have threatened them . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . not you but many of your predecessors and also you. But over a period of 18 years many of our best doctors have left for other provinces and other countries. They say — look, I don't need this. Why should I? Let's face it, good doctors are in demand anywhere. Since we produce some of the best in the world out of this country and in Saskatchewan, they can go anywhere. Then they take the attitude — I don't need this stuff; I don't need this kind of harassment; why should I stay here? Everybody in this Assembly can probably give an example where a specialist in his/her area who was there maybe 10 or 15 years ago has moved on, maybe to another province, maybe to another country.

Some of them move on for personal reasons; some of them move on because of the attitude of this government to the doctors and the intimidation and the coercion, and the suggestion that came from the member for Regina North-West (I think I've got the right constituency) yesterday, when he suggested — look, put him on salary. That's what his suggestion amounted to, and I suggest you look at Hansard. Put our doctors on salary . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . that's a very good point. To the Minister of Labour, it does take a long, long time to sink in.

Mr. Minister, the thing that is indisputable is that there are doctors coming in to replace many of our good doctors, many of the doctors who have come out of the finest educational systems in the world who are moving elsewhere. There are doctors coming in to practise in this province who have not had their qualifications verified. I suggest to you, Mr. Minister, that it is not a requirement in this province for them to take a qualification examination . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I would suggest to you that

that comment right there, more than anything I could ever say in response typified the Minister of Labour, making a comment like that. What more could I say because the minister usually says it for himself. Good line, Mr. Minister, good line. Add it to so many of the good ones you have put over in your long career.

Anyway, to get back to the member for Buena Vista. I want to say, Mr. Minister, more than . . . you yourself have demonstrated what has happened to our doctors today — play by our rules, play the way we want you to play or we'll legislate it so you'll play, Mr. Minister, 18 years ago, the medical profession of Woodrow Lloyd reached an agreement. Now you want to change the rules. They say we don't need this coercion; we don't need this intimidation; we can go anywhere we want, in many cases. In this Assembly today you have verified that doctors are now practising in Saskatchewan who cannot practise elsewhere. That in itself is an indictment of our medicare program because . . . Well, Mr. Minister, I'm a little surprised that you find it funny when I say that the quality of our doctors has diminished and that there are doctors practising in Saskatchewan who you have indicated can't practise elsewhere in Canada. I am amazed you find that funny.

AN HON. MEMBER: — We've also got a Minister of Health who couldn't get elected in any other province.

MR. THATCHER: — My seatmate just indicated there's also a Minister of Health here who couldn't get elected in any other province.

Mr. Minister, it's no laughing matter. There are doctors practising here who cannot practise elsewhere. Any way you want to cut it, that has to be a deterioration in the quality of the medical profession. Cut it any way you want, Mr. Minister, without the medical profession and without the highest quality of doctors we can have in Saskatchewan there has to be a deterioration in your overall program. The basic components of any health program have to be the hospital and the doctor. You don't need to be an expert in that. You've got to have a little common sense to recognize that.

Mr. Minister, I make the indictment of you — you are allowing the quality of doctors, the overall, average quality of our doctors to diminish. When I made that statement an hour ago that it's diminished sharply since 1962, you bet I'll stand by that one. Come and run in Thunder Creek against me on that issue.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BERNTSON: — You indicated earlier, Mr. Minister, about 3 per cent of the payouts of MCIC were for direct billing. Is that right?

MR. ROLFES: — Three per cent of all extra billing.

MR. BERNTSON: — What percentage of payouts of MCIC are mode 3.

MR. ROLFES: — About 4 per cent.

MR. BERNTSON: — One other question on MCIC. Why is it that payments to people covered under MCIC made out of province or out of country take forever and a day to get there? I speak of one particular example, a pensioner in the Caron area who had to come up with \$5,000 to pay his doctor bills, hospital bills, etc. in Alaska. He had to borrow the money and it has been coming in dribs and drabs over the last several

months. It's costing him \$100 plus interest. I just wonder, isn't there some vehicle to get this turned around a little quicker?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, if the member has a specific case or has specific cases, we would certainly look at those. I want to say to the member, generally speaking what happens is they send us incomplete information. I think I heard about the one from Alaska or at least I heard some comment on it. We did not get all the information that we needed in order to process the claim. That is generally the reason for the turnaround. Otherwise, I think they handle them pretty efficiently in MCIC.

MR. BERNTSON: — I'm not quite sure — yes, I guess that's item 20, you can have item 20. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Item 20 agreed.

Item 21 to 23 agreed.

Item 24

MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South): — Mr. Minister, I notice an increase of \$742,000 in the grant to the Alcoholism Commission of Saskatchewan. My first question is, did the increase come from another area and build into that? If it did where did it come from? And, secondly I would like you to provide a table, provide to me or table it, where all that money is spent exactly — what research, what centres, whatever it's broken down to — the breakdown of the expenditures in that \$4.5 million.

MR. ROLFES: — The transfer of the funds from social services for per diem support for SAP recipients. Funding is now consolidated in the alcoholism commission and will be converted to a grant arrangement — that was \$380,200. And the answer to your second question is, yes we can do it but we'll need some time. We'll forward that to you.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Would you mind repeating where the \$380,000 came from, please?

MR. ROLFES: — Yes, social services. Was that sufficient? From social services for SAP recipients, a per diem support for SAP recipients. We have now consolidated it. It's going to be converted to a grant arrangement rather than per diem.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — That accounts for a little more than half. Is the other half just a normal increase because of inflation?

MR. ROLFES: — Yes, there's a new out-patient program for \$100,000. There is funding for Kindersley and Yorkton alcoholism societies of \$59,650. There are increased grants to other allied agencies — Angus Campbell Centre, Moose Jaw; Slim Forbes Centre, Lloydminster of \$60,000. There's a mid-year approval of Pacada, that Prince Albert one connected with St. Louis of \$89,000 — that's the out-patient centre in Prince Albert. The increased allotment for workers' compensation of \$5,000 and — that's basically it.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — O.K. just the final question on it then. When can I expect the breakdown of those expenditures?

MR. ROLFES: — Probably early next week.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Will you send it to my attention then?

MR. ROLFES: — Yes.

MR. ANDREW: — One question on item 24 to the minister. I understand the St. Louis centre is now being managed by one Don Faris.

MR. ROLFES: — Don Faris is the chairman of the board. It's run by an agreement between the board and the Pacada group — the Prince Albert alcohol and drug abuse. They're running it and they've signed a contract with the board.

Item 24 agreed.

Item 25

MR. BERNTSON: — There's a 36 million in round numbers increase in this vote. Can you indicate what percentage of that \$36 million, or real numbers — I don't care, is to allow for current negotiations with Saskatchewan Union of Nurses wage settlement?

MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Chairman, I have some difficulty in being specific with this because I think we have to be somewhat careful that the figures I do not give would prejudice our position at the bargaining table. I can tell the member there's about 11 per cent in there for ongoing programs and services, but I don't want to be specific as to what the . . . O.K.?

MR. BERNTSON: — O.K. I have one more question. It doesn't really belong here but if you let me ask it now we'll get through it in a hurry. I should have asked it back in MCIC — would you provide me with a current up-to-date fee schedule?

MR. ROLFES: — Yes.

Items 25 to 36 agreed.

MR. BERNTSON: — I would just like, on behalf of our health critic who had to leave a little early today, to thank the minister and his officials for the very precise way in which they answered the questions over the last few days. I'm sure that if this spirit of co-operation carries on in this House we will get through the estimates that follow with the same degree of expedience that was demonstrated in this one. Thank you very much . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . All right you've got her, get your guys in there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order please.

Department of Health Vote 32 agreed.

Supplementary — Health — Vote 32

Item 1

MR. BERNTSON: — What was that for — the \$4 million for MCIC supplementary? Did MCIC run out of money last year?

MR. ROLFES: — It went to doctors, for example.

Item 1 agreed.

Item 2

MR. BERNTSON: — Was this also a budgetary item in last year's budget, and is this a cost overrun? What's the story on this?

MR. ROLFES: — It's my understanding the projects (at Regina General, I believe) . . . The construction is going faster than we had anticipated. We needed the cash flow.

Item 2 agreed.

Supplementaries agreed.

Heritage Fund — Health — Vote 32

Item 1

MR. BERNTSON: — Why out of the heritage fund? Why not the normal route as in previous years?

MR. ROLFES: — It should be directed to the Minister of Finance. If my memory serves me right, this is not the first time this has happened for the University Hospital. We took moneys out of the heritage fund previously for the University Hospital. So this is not the first time this has happened.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, the University Hospital — if I remember correctly, the Kinsmen Telemiracle donated funds to buy special equipment for it. Do you have any idea what amount of special funds are given by organizations outside of the government for capital purchases in, for example, hospitals?

MR. ROLFES: — The only question the member directed to me so far in my estimates, I am not able to answer for you. We don't have those. You would have to direct that, I think, to the chairman of the board of the University Hospital. We don't know.

Mr. Chairman, I think this is the last subvote. I do want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for his kind remarks and I think, although it's not a record as far as health estimates are concerned, I think the co-operation of the opposition certainly helped us in getting through our estimates in fair time. I want to thank them for it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Heritage Fund — Health — vote 32 agreed.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE — LABOUR — VOTE 20

MR. CHAIRMAN: — I'll ask the minister to introduce his support staff please.

HON. G.T. SNYDER (Minister of Labour): — I'm sure most members of the Assembly are acquainted with the members of my staff who are with me. On my left, the deputy

minister, Mr. Don McMillan and on my right, Bob Sass, the director of occupational health and safety and associate deputy minister. Behind me, Craig Dotson, the executive director of the development branch, and Pat More sitting to his left, and behind the rail, Mr. Bert Shesby, director of safety services and Ken Werner along with him. That's the staff we have in the immediate vicinity, Mr. Chairman.

Item 1

MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern): — Mr. Speaker, this is the first year you have a new deputy before us. We'll start out with an easy question or two. Would you mind telling us his qualifications for the position.

MR. SNYDER: — I think I have a curriculum vitae here that will serve the purpose very nicely. McMillan, Donald G., attended Caswell Public School; Bedford Road Collegiate in Saskatoon; graduate — University of Saskatchewan, '71 Bachelor of Arts degree; studied law — Dalhousie Law School, Halifax, Nova Scotia; March 15, 1977 to June, 1979 — director of communications secretary at Government of Saskatchewan; April 1976 to March 1977 — clerk of the Executive Council and registrar of regulations; June 1974 to March 1977 — chief electoral officer for the Province of Saskatchewan; September 1971 to June 1974 — special assistant to Executive Council; and back in September 1970 to July 1971 — research officer, Department of Economics and Political Science, University of Saskatchewan. Like all the other people of the department — one of the very well qualified and capable people we have in the department.

MR. KATZMAN: — You said attended Dalhousie. Did he graduate?

Would the minister like to try that all over again and put it on the record. You light has not been on.

MR. SNYDER: — For the purposes of the transcript, no, Mr. McMillan is not a graduate law person.

MR. KATZMAN: — I will compliment him on the good high school he went to, as the Attorney General and I attended that one as well. Mr. Minister, you've been quite visible in the newspapers concerning the strike situation that we went through last fall, one of the quotes suggests: "Snyder plans strike law change." Would you like to elaborate on that statement? Are you suggesting that you are going to be bringing legislation forward as seems to be indicated in this news clipping?

MR. SNYDER: — Well, I think probably any remark I make at this point will be a repetition of remarks that I've made to all of the electronic media and the newspapers from one time to another. I think you will know that approximately a year ago, this House considered a piece of legislation known as The Construction Industry Labour Relations Act, Section 19 of The Construction Industry Labour Relations Act lays out in quiet a precise way the terms and conditions under which a strike shall be validated, and it will be an unfair labor practice to take part in a strike unless these conditions are met. I believe it's quite clear in its meaning, and I believe it says without question that a majority of those people casting their ballot must vote in favor of a strike in order for it to be valid strike. It means, obviously, 50 per cent plus one of those who actually cast their vote.

The Trade Union Act, according to the court of appeal, and I understand that decision is

to be appealed to the supreme court, seemed to say that 11(2)(d) meant something significantly different than section 19 of that other piece of legislation that I have responsibility for. So, accordingly, I think you would have to agree that to have two particular statutes both dealing with the legal mechanism for having a strike vote declared valid — it would not be appropriate for us to have two sets of circumstances dealing with the approximate same case, where the meaning was so significantly different. My indication has been that obviously I can't be in the untenable position of having two statutes dealing with virtually the same set of circumstances, one seeming to mean one thing and one seeming to mean another. So my position quite consistently has been that the event the Supreme Court of Canada does not overturn the court of appeal judgment you'll have to be looking at a legislative amendment to make the two acts coincide one with the other, the provisions of section 19 and 11(2)(d) of The Trade Union Act. I think by necessity they must confer the same meaning one with the other.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, I think we can get into a long debate on this particular issue. Tonight at 10 o'clock we'd still be on item 1 on this one issue, but you know we have another one of those educated people who's suggesting he'll tell us all he knows. Well, he has trouble in his department; he doesn't have to interfere in this one. Mr. Minister, I assume that you've talked to the SGEA people concerning their problem, and other unions on this exact problem, seeking their advice which I think is only due and proper. I've done the same, and it's interesting to note that in seeking information from the steelworkers' union the information I have received is that they are not unhappy with it being 50 per cent of the total membership plus one, as the court has ruled. You referred to the other act which is correct. It's 50 per cent of those that vote plus one, and I agree with you there. But there's also in the labour act another clause that says that to get certified or to go into a union, 50 per cent of those involved plus one must sign cards and then you have a vote to commence . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Minister, I may be incorrect. I accept maybe that's a new change. Is there not, Mr. Minister, in the case I refer to, a place in the act which indicates 50 per cent plus one for certain things? There's a little confusion within the act itself. If you're suggesting that maybe the act should say 50 per cent of those who vote plus one, are you also suggesting in the other portions of the act, where it says 50 per cent of the membership plus one, that it should drop back and be similar — making them comparable through the act?

MR. SNYDER: — I don't believe there's any inconsistency at all. I think perhaps the member misunderstands. If a trade union attempts to organize 100 workers who working a particular establishment, if that trade union organization is able to show by card support that 25 of a 100 have shown an interest and signed cards saying we support the United Steel Workers or retail, wholesale or whoever, then the labor relations board is under an obligation to conduct the vote among all members. If only 80 of them vote and 41 vote in the affirmative, then that judgment is made on behalf of the rest who did not take the pains to vote.

So, it's not inconsistent with the manner in which we describe the strike vote and the manner in which it should be taken — 50 per cent plus one of those who actually vote. There's is no way possible under our democratic process to force people to vote if they don't wish to.

MR. KATZMAN: — From what you've just said, Mr. Minister, I assume what you're suggesting is if the supreme court agrees with Judge Johnson's decision, you will consider bringing in legislation which will bring the vote in line with 50 per cent of

those who vote plus one. I assume that's what you're telling me, if that's what your preference is at this time.

MR. SNYDER: — Yes, I think that's what we believe The Trade Union Act said back in 1972 when it was overhauled and rewritten. I believe that's the same provision which you stood in your place and voted for something like a year ago on section 19 of The Construction Industry Labour Relations Act which was voted on and approved by this legislature something less than a year ago.

MR. KATZMAN: — The minister is correct in his last statement. But, Mr. Minister . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . if we can keep the hecklers out we might just get the job done tonight. Otherwise, we could go for a lengthy period of time. I've got some comments for you when you decide to bring your bill up on the blues. We'll discuss your ability then and your knowledge of the labor act. You've proved you have no ability, member for Moose Jaw.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, now. Let's get back to the estimates here. Item agreed?

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, I think what a lot of people are concerned with, within the SGEA particularly, is the accusations (nobody knows, and that includes myself, if they are right or wrong) that some people were not allowed to vote who wished to vote. Coming from the trade union movement myself, I think it's important all members be made sure they are allowed to vote. There is an indication from some people that if they did not stay for the speech portion, they did not get their ballot. And there is an indication that those who arrived late missing the speech, were told they didn't get a vote (Now as I say this is gossip, for lack of a better word to put on it.) Is your department aware of any of these particular problems? Are any of them justified from what investigation your department may have done?

MR. SNYDER: — I don't believe it falls within our purview to conduct investigations with respect to the manner in which the SGEA conducted their strike vote. I did have a number of telephone calls directed to my office from members of the SGEA who indicated concern and anger because of the fact, they maintained, they had been denied the right to vote in that vote which was conducted at a meeting, because they . . . well, for whatever reason, I think I needn't elaborate. Yes, I did have some calls directed to my office, probably in the order of a dozen, from members who were upset about the fact, they alleged, they were not given the appropriate opportunity to vote.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, I had several calls so I guess we're both receiving calls with the same concern. My concern is that your department is responsible to make sure the labor code in this province is upheld and all are given full rights and full chance to do their democratic thing and cast their ballots or if they so wish, to abstain. That is their choice — as happens in a provincial or federal election. You never get 100 per cent of the people voting and that is one of the arguments they use to say to us — well very few members in the Legislative Assembly or the federal House are there with 50 per cent of the total eligible voters plus one.

Their argument is obviously sound but I think the other point is there is a time period made available to all voters in a provincial, federal or civic election to allow them to get to the polls and vote with no strings attached — like you must sit through a meeting before you get your ballot. I am not suggesting we infringe on a union's right but it is interesting to note they used that comparison. Using the same comparison, it should then be obvious The Trade Union Act should protect the individual who wishes to come

and cast his ballot and leave without being required to sit an hour or two through a meeting. We have ballots for those who are unable to get to a vote during a provincial election — hospital ballots we call them — because they are incapacitated and not able to get there and therefore they get their vote. We also have other ways people are protected.

Unfortunately to my knowledge, in the SGEA strike, the same rights were not given. We didn't make sure they were all protected for the SGEA membership. Now, the minister and I have had discussions re a bill, at one time, re the supervising of votes to make sure that everything was done and nobody could challenge anybody for doing anything wrong; to make sure it was all above board. My concern is that it is unfortunate all kinds of accusations developed around the SGEA strike. My concern is that we should not go through another one of these strikes in the province where the accusations exist and there is no third party, who is not involved, to say — I was the referee, those things did not happen. Everything was run legitimately and properly.

That is one of the major concerns I have out of the SGEA strike — all the accusations. Do you not think — if there were a major strike or a strike where one of the parties would say to you, would you have one of your officials come down and stand with the vote to make sure it is done properly — that you could oblige them?

That second part of the question — is it possible, if you have to change the legislation to suit what you have stated earlier, there will be some way of writing in a guarantee for the man who has to be on his job site and can't make the meeting, the man who is on the road (as you know, SGEA employees can be all over the province, but not where their local is) that he somehow is allowed to vote. We must protect the right of all individuals to be given every possible opportunity to vote. In an election, we allow them four hours off work and so forth, and we have to find a method to make sure everybody is given the most opportunity so it is a fair election. Are you considering any of these options I spoke about?

MR. SNYDER: — Well, I think the member makes a point. I'm not sure that I agree with everything he says in terms of government-supervised strike votes. I think if you take that step, you ought to be reconciled to provide for voting procedures when the members of the trade union organization determine that they shall vote on a strike. I suppose it would naturally follow that if the board of directors of IPSCO (Interprovincial Steel and Pipe Corporation) determine for one reason or another to shut down the plant and lock out 1,000 employees. I think the member, in order to be consistent, would have to agree that IPSCO should have a supervised vote of the board of directors — supervised by somebody from the Department of Labour. I think that if you're going to be consistent you've got to assume that a set of rules that you place on one group of people should apply equally to another.

I don't know who would be required to be supervised in the event a retail store (we'll say, for lack of a better example, the Sherwood Co-op of Regina) for whatever reason, decided to shut down and lock out its employees. The net effect would be the same as if the employees decided to withdraw their services. Accordingly, I find myself in a little bit of trouble in respect to the member's suggestion that there should be a government-supervised strike vote in one set of circumstances but not the other.

I think if there are indiscretions or errors of omission with respect to voting procedures and if members of a trade union organization believe they have been treated unjustly, the remedy rests with that group of employees. They have an obligation to see to it that

their act is cleaned up rather than have the heavy hand of government descend upon them. There rests the solution to the problem rather than imposing a set of circumstances on one of the principals to a collective agreement and not having it apply in an equal way to the other.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Minister, you brought up an interesting point. It rests with the employees if they figure that has happened. If my memory serves me correctly, The Trade Union Act in this province does not normally allow a union to be sued for actions which are illegal, for lack of a better word I guess, because they are, I'm told, not a legal entity. Yet you referred to the management in your rebuttal to me. They are liable for their actions from what I understand.

I do understand that at one time there was a union official (and over the supper hour if you would like — I don't want to put the name on the record — I will give you the name of the individual I'm referring to) who had to pay a fine — awarded by the courts and his union for making recommendations to his union which were improper. Now as I say, I will give you the name of the individual later so you can check it out yourself. Are you suggesting to me — the suggestion we seem to be coming around to is the trade union is not responsible; management is. We have a bit of a problem here with your argument versus mine, because at least management can be taken to court and be prosecuted. Other than the one case I know of, and it was because of bad information the union manager and executive gave to the union members, there has never been a prosecution. And I'm concerned that we don't have equality.

MR. SNYDER: — I think the member misses what is a very major and a very principal part of The Trade Union Act and that is a section that lays down quite precisely the unfair labor practices for both employers and employees in the event there's a violation of The Trade Union Act. If there is intimidation on the part of either party, then they are subject to whatever action is taken by the labour relations board and they are subject to the penalties provided. I sent my people away to refer to section 19. I don't know whether you've read closely section 19 of The Construction Industry Labour Relations Act but I think perhaps it sets out more precisely the provision you seem to be searching for with respect to strike votes. It says among other things that it's an unfair labor practice to declare, authorize or take part in a strike unless:

- (a) a strike vote is taken (by secret ballot) among all of the members of the trade union who are eligible to vote and who are or will be directly affected by the result of the collective bargaining in respect of which the vote is taken, and (b) the majority of those persons voting under clause (a) in favor of a strike.

I think that precisely outlines the procedures that you and I voted for when The Construction Industry Labour Relations Act was passed. Perhaps if you'd have a look at it, it more clearly lays out the procedures that I think cover some of the objectives that you may be drawing attention to.

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Chairman, do you want to call 5 o'clock?

MR. CHAIRMAN: — It now being 5 o'clock, I do leave the chair until 7 o'clock this evening.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.