

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**April 15, 1981**

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**HON. MR. BROCKELBANK:** — I want to take the opportunity today to introduce a very important group of students, situated in the Speaker's gallery, from Estey School in Saskatoon. Their school is located in the constituency of Saskatoon Westmount, which I have the honor to represent. These 36 students from Estey School are in grades 7 and 8, and they are accompanied today by Mr. Froese and Mrs. Lacalli. I know all members will join with me in welcoming these students from Estey School. We hope they have an informative and interesting day in the Legislative Assembly and a safe trip back to Saskatoon Westmount.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BYERS:** — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce to you, and through you to the members of this Assembly, a class of 44 grade 4 students from the Wadena Elementary School. They are seated in the west gallery. They are accompanied here today by their teachers, Mrs. Yablonski, Mrs. McDonald, Mr. Glennie, and escort, Mrs. Carbro, from the local school board, and their bus driver, Mr. Haggard. The grade 4 class from Wadena Elementary School makes an annual visit to this legislature and I am very pleased to welcome them here today. They had a very busy schedule, visiting the university art gallery and the Museum of Natural History, and they will visit the RCM Police museum. I hope their visit here today is informational and educational and that they will continue the tradition of making an annual visit to this Assembly. I ask all members to join me in welcoming this group from the Wadena Elementary School.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. KOWALCHUK:** — Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pleasure that I rise to introduce to this legislature, through you and to you, a group of 34 students from the Ituna High School. They are here with their teachers, Mr. Bill Hudema and Donna Leontovicj. Their bus driver is a former school teacher, doing a double job today, Mr. Jim Radwanski. I know they have had a busy day so far and they're going to be a lot busier as the day goes on. I will be meeting with them later on in the rotunda for pictures and also for a brief discussion. I am sure that all members of this House, as well as I, want to make them welcome here. We wish them a very good afternoon. We hope it will benefit them in the future to see how this House operates during question period and later on as well. So, Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to welcome this group of students.

Mr. Hudema has consistently over the past many years brought one of the classes from Ituna to this legislature to see how it performs and how it works for the people of Saskatchewan. So on behalf of all of us here, I welcome the students from Ituna, who are seated in the west gallery.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. KAEDING:** — Mr. Speaker, I also want, and ask you to join with me, to greet a group of students from Saltcoats and Bredenbury schools in my constituency. Bredenbury is the area which may soon become the potash capital of Saskatchewan. This school has been consistent in bringing students to the legislature every year for, I believe, as long as I've been here, and we're very happy to have them come. They've also had, I understand, a busy morning touring some spots of interest in the city. I want to meet with them as soon as question period is over for drinks and pictures, and probably a little discussion. I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that all members of the legislature will join with me in welcoming the students.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CHAPMAN:** — Mr. Speaker, it also gives me pleasure to welcome a group of students here this afternoon through you to the Assembly. They are 25 grade 8 and 9 students from the Scottsburn School located in my home city of Estevan, and a school in the Estevan rural division, No. 62. They are here today in the Speaker's gallery on the east side, and are accompanied by their principal, Mr. George Gelmich, their teacher, Mr. Rick Crawford, a parent and relative of my family, Mrs. Gladys Lindgren, and their most able bus driver, Lynn Hildahl. I would also like to note that Mr. Gelmich, as well as being the principal, is a principal leader in our community of Estevan as one of the senior aldermen on our city council. I am pleased that in their educational activities, they chose to visit the Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan, and that I have the opportunity to welcome them here this afternoon. I trust that you will have an informative afternoon in the legislature, an enjoyable visit to Regina, and a safe journey home. I ask all members of the Assembly to join with me in welcoming them to the Assembly.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**HON. MR. MacMURCHY:** — Mr. Speaker, through you and to all members of the Assembly, I extend a very warm welcome to members of the delegation that are here from the National Farmers' Union, led by their president, Mr. Ted Strain. Mr. Speaker, I think they are scattered throughout the Assembly, probably most of them in the east gallery, and I suspect they have difficulty being in the Assembly because of the large number of students, and the students are always welcome.

May I say, Mr. Speaker, in welcoming them here to the Assembly that it has been a full day, or half-day for the National Farmers' Union representatives. They were in the Assembly when I arrived this morning, for as farmers they beat up the politicians. I arrived at about the usual time of 8:40 a.m. and I met some already walking around looking for members and cabinet ministers. But it's a big day for them, and I think an important day. I think there are those of us in the Assembly who may disagree with some of the policies of the National Farmers' Union, but no one can disagree with the commitment to and sincerity of their policies, so far as those members are concerned. I think that they have done an outstanding job in bringing to the attention of not just western Canada, but nationally, the issue of the crowrate. I think we all should appreciate their efforts. I think we all appreciate their effort today and we welcome them to the Assembly. I've had an opportunity to meet with them as part of a cabinet delegation, as well as meeting a group of them in my office. I found it most rewarding. If

all members have not had this opportunity, I would suggest that they seek out the opportunity before the National Farmers' Union representatives leave for home this evening. Thank you very much.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BERNTSON:** — Mr. Speaker, I would just like to join with the Minister of Agriculture in welcoming the delegation of NFU people here to the Assembly this afternoon. I can't quarrel with the minister. I felt some of the intensity with which the NFU pursues its objectives, and I think they are to be commended for it. I know some of our caucus members have met with some of the NFU delegation, and at 4 o'clock this afternoon there is another meeting with the bulk of our caucus. We look forward to meeting you then.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

## QUESTIONS

### Suspension of Wilderness Camp Employees

**MR. HARDY:** — My question is to the Minister of Labor. Last week I brought to your attention an apparent violation of The Labor Standards Act in regard to two employees in the correctional camp at Hudson Bay. It has now expanded to four employees. I understand three more camps have withdrawn their services. This would involve approximately 20 to 30 more employees. When I asked the question last week, whether you would look into it you said, "Certainly the labor standards officers of the department will be in touch with these employees in an attempt to evaluate and determine whether there has been a violation. And if there has been a violation, appropriate action will be taken." My question is: what action have you taken and what have you done to alleviate this situation?

**HON. MR. SNYDER:** — I can report to the hon. member and members of the House that the labor standards officers of the Department of Labor have been in touch. They have initiated an audit of the books of the Department of Social Services in order to determine if there has indeed been a violation of The Labor Standards Act, in an attempt to effect a judgment with respect to the amount of moneys owing, if such moneys are owing, to those people. The labor standards officers began their investigation. I understand they are examining and doing an audit of the books, not only of the group from that particular camp, but of the other correction camps as well. I expect that probably early next week they will have completed their audit, and I will be in possession of a report at that time.

Additionally, while I am on my feet, I should tell the hon. member that an attempt was made during the weekend to put a conciliation officer in touch with the parties in an attempt to reconcile some of the difficulties. As early as, I believe, 1 p.m. Monday, Sig Walters met with the parties, the Saskatchewan Government Employees' Association and the public service commission. The meeting lasted the better part of the day. My understanding is that the industrial relations officer, Mr. Walters, has given an indication of his preparedness to meet with the parties if he can be of any help in assisting to resolve the problem.

Once again I say the labor standards officers are in the process at this time of doing an audit of the books. They will be in a position some time next week to provide a complete

report.

**MR. HARDY:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, you are aware that there are four child care centres around the province, two community training residences, having very similar contracts. As you fully realize, the public service commission has been doing the negotiations on behalf of social services. It is my understanding it has been very oblivious of the existing contract and of the rights and claims of these employees. Do you not feel that it is time your department acted on behalf of these employees and for the rights of these employees? Do you not now consider it time that these employees were reinstated, the four who were dismissed because they didn't work the overtime, and that you should now be considering unfair labor practices?

**HON. MR. SNYDER:** — Well, I don't know how often I have to draw it to the member's attention when he starts using expressions which he obviously doesn't understand about an unfair labor practice charge. It may be an illegal act but it is not an unfair labor practice. If you will check The Trade Union Act, you will find . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The hon. member for Regina South knows what an unfair labor practice is and he knows how to find it in The Trade Union Act, because he's been charged and convicted under that . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order. I wonder if the members could direct their questions through the Chair, and if the ministers could direct their answers through the Chair, and leave out the personal references? We can deal with the questions and answers more expeditiously then.

**HON. MR. SNYDER:** — I would be more than happy to answer the questions if I could hear myself think. I think better on my feet when there is less commotion taking place. Mr. Speaker, I was attempting to convey to the hon. member that it is not my intention to involve myself in direct negotiations with the camp employees for a very precise reason. If the hon. member will attempt to acquaint himself with The Trade Union Act, he will know that would constitute an unfair labor practice on my part. It is perfectly ethical for the labor standards branch of the department to attempt to resolve any difficulty or to do an assessment. I indicated to the member and I repeat again that is in the process of being done. If there is a violation, the members have a grievance procedure through their union which they can approach for the very precise purpose which he suggests. But for me to enter into direct negotiations with the members of that trade union organization could very well be construed to be an unfair labor practice on my part. I don't intend to place myself in that position.

**MR. KATZMAN:** — Mr. Minister, is it not a fact that the labor officer is supposed to take the hours presented to him by the employees and it is up to the employer to prove those are wrong and he is to pay overtime on those hours presented to him by the employees (not by the employer, as has been the past history on every other one of these cases I have seen)?

**HON. MR. SNYDER:** — Of course, the hon. member will have to acknowledge that what he is saying is simply not the case. What evidence do you have other than pay roll records which are kept by the department or by the employer, under that set of circumstances? How else would you determine whether minimum wage has been paid, whether hours of work provisions have been observed, and whether there have been violations? Obviously, the people who keep the books are the employers and they must present those books. If there is conflicting evidence then, of course, it is a necessity. It will be a requirement for the labor standards officer to measure those too. In the event that they are unable to agree, a certificate is filed in the courts of the land to make that

decision. I think the hon. member knows that is an answer without attempting to persuade the house that something different than that takes place. He knows that is the normal routine practice which takes place in all instances.

**MR. HARDY:** — I have a new question, Mr. Minister. Would you not consider it an unfair practice to work these employees for three years on overtime without paying them?

**HON. MR. SNYDER:** — I think it has to be said, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite are attempting to make this appear to be a black and white situation. You will know that from 1977 until the date of the last collective agreement, rightly or wrongly, the employees were determined to be field employees working hours which were not defined. As a result of the last collective agreement, my understanding is that these employees were not deemed to be field employees any longer. Accordingly, I presume that the assessment is being made on that basis. If the employees or their union have reason to doubt or quarrel with that assessment, then every opportunity will be provided for that to happen.

But the fact of the matter is that some attempts are being made to reconcile the differences. Employees, by agreement some time ago, were working four 10-hour days, by virtue of a certificate which was provided. They worked four 10-hour days, actually working eight days back to back with six days off, with camp pay provided at \$20 a day with respect to overtime. There are a lot of ingredients. I don't intend to indicate that I know all the ingredients which are involved. But obviously, it is not quite the black and white situation the member for Kelsey-Tisdale would have somebody believe: that it is just a matter of making a simple assessment without taking into consideration some of the qualifying features which are involved in the whole set of circumstances. Obviously, it is something which needs to be examined. Employees, through their union, will have every opportunity to put forth their case. I would be disappointed in them if they didn't.

### **SGI Contract with British Insurance Company**

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the minister responsible for SGI. Mr. Minister, I would like to refer you to the document that was signed by SGI and RMC (Reinsurance Management Company) in 1975. My question to you is very simply this: did SGI have authority to sign that contract in 1975?

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** — I suppose, Mr. Speaker, in replying to the member for Regina South, I should point out that was one of the things in dispute. I'm sure that if the member gets legal advice from any of the brilliant legal people in his caucus, he will know that lawyers present great arguments in court actions, upon which they do not expect to succeed, so as to give greater strength to other arguments being made. It's true that we engaged leading counsel in England which we might use in the defence at this particular trial. They prepared the case. One of the contentions would be that the corporation had exceeded its rights and was, therefore, ultra vires. As I understand it, that's what you're talking about.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — No.

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** — Okay. Try again.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — I would appreciate it if the minister wouldn't anticipate my questions, or make them up, but would hear me out first. My question was very simply

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this: did SGI have authority? Yes, or no. Did you have authority to sign that contract you signed with RMC? The answer I'm looking for is either a yes or a no.

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** — Mr. Speaker, the original act said that we had the right to enter into all reinsurance contracts.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — You had the authority, under the act, (the officials of SGI had the authority) you're saying (I want to understand this very correctly), to sign this document on behalf of SGI without permission from the cabinet, or without legislative authority. Is that what you're saying?

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** — Obviously they had, because in the management of any Crown corporation, the management of the corporation has to run it. They report to the board things which they feel are necessary for the board to know about. Obviously what the board does is to set policy.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Mr. Minister, on what grounds were you using your defence, in your case in the high court of Britain, saying that the agreement was ultra vires, that in fact you did not have that authority?

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** — Mr. Speaker, I said previously that if the member for Regina South would refer to the brilliant legal advice he gets from his own caucus, he would realize that in court actions both parties raise a number of arguments on which they do not expect to succeed, so that they give greater strength to their other arguments.

We engaged leading counsel in Great Britain, which SGI might use in its defence in this particular court trial. They prepared the case. One of the contentions would be that the corporation had exceeded its rights and was, therefore, ultra vires. That does not mean that the contract was illegal. It only means that if it were ultra vires, then it had gone beyond the rights of the particular corporation. That was never proven or disproven because it never went to court.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Well, just to pursue that question one more item, you said that the contract, which says:

The underwriters hereby appoint Reinsurance Management as their representatives to accept on behalf of the underwriters all classes of reinsurance business, subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter mentioned.

And those terms and conditions hereinafter mentioned say: "anywhere in the world" and "the limits of \$50,000." Now, you are then saying to this Assembly that your officials had the authority to sign that contract which is contradictory to the act. They had the authority to sign this under all classes of insurance when the act called for specified classes of insurance.

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** — Mr. Speaker, as I pointed out previously, the original act said the corporation had the right to enter into reinsurance contracts. I want to point out to the member that 97 per cent of the contracts or writs accepted under that contract related to property and casualty. This was the answer I gave him the first day when he asked the question. It was property and casualty; that's what I said. And 97 per cent of

the coverage was on property and casualty. Less than 1 per cent was on aviation, less than 2 per cent on marine.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — A new question to the minister in charge of SGI, Mr. Speaker. Would you tell the Assembly, Mr. Minister, what really gave rise to the losses incurred under that contract?

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** — Mr. Speaker, obviously, I'm not familiar with the actual cases and I should not be; I have no reason to be as chairman of the board. The fact of the matter is that particular contract was entered into in 1974, five years before I got on the board of SGI . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I accept that. I got the report in the fall of 1980.

Okay, let's look at the facts in relation to this particular contract. The opposition wants to make a big thing of this. The contract with RMC, we admit, was a contract that we would have preferred not to have had. Obviously, that's why we settled out of court and got out of it. But the fact is that there are over 300 reinsurance contracts. They make money in some cycles and they lose money in some cycles and that's common in the insurance industry. The insurance industry is the acceptance of risk. Obviously, if you knew the risks that were going to turn out badly, you would never take them, would you? An insurer accepts risks. He spreads that risk by reinsuring with a reinsurer. The reinsurer often spreads the risk further by reinsuring with what is called a retrocessionaire.

The people opposite want to make a big thing, Mr. Speaker, of the fact that we were in the world market. All insurers are in the world market, directly or indirectly. And all of it ends up in the London market whether they know it or not.

**MR. LANE:** — Not many insurance companies write a blank cheque to a reinsurer and that is one serious management mistake. We ask you again: how did those losses occur that gave rise to these particular financial losses that the people of Saskatchewan have to pay for?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order. The rules that govern the question period are quite clear. They say that a question, oral or written, must not multiply with slight variations a similar question on the same point. I regard the question asked by the member for Qu'Appelle to be the same as the question asked by the member for Regina South.

**MR. LANE:** — You have indicated that 1 per cent of the losses were aviation and 2 per cent were maritime. I'm taking the approximate figures; I don't think that they are in much dispute. Would you break down for this Assembly the 97 per cent and how those losses occurred and what gave rise to those losses?

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** — Mr. Speaker, obviously, I cannot break them down. If the member understood anything about reinsurance contracts, he would find out that the reinsurer will take and allot to an underwriter maybe 1 per cent or 0.1 per cent of 100 factories spread over a dozen different countries. They may be in Canada or North America or Europe. Who knows? And that question really does not permit a breakdown.

I notice the members opposite trying to imply that we were insuring the Iranian navy. Well, I'll read you a part of a reinsurance contract.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained herein, this agreement

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does not cover loss or damage directly or indirectly occasioned by, happening through or in consequence of war, invasion, acts of foreign enemy, hostilities whether war is declared or not, civil war, rebellion, revolution, insurrection, or military power.

Obviously we couldn't be involved in that respect. The only connection between the word insurance and Iranian is that they both start with the letter "I".

**MR. LANE:** — I would like to direct the minister to his earlier reply, which I hope is still operative and we're not into a little further Nixonest evasion here. But you indicated that (this is April 13):

Additional losses were reported by RMC in its next report to SGI.

I'm on page 2081 if the minister is . . .

SGI officials continued to review information provided, to request additional information from RMC, and to conduct their own investigations with respect to the losses.

Today you stand up here and say you don't have the information. Yesterday you say you've done your own internal investigation. Now which is the truth? Now will you stand up and tell us how those losses arose.

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** — Mr. Speaker, the management of the corporation does the investigating. Obviously I, as a board member, am not going to be involved in that.

**MR. LANE:** — Are you saying that you have not asked your management how those losses occurred?

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't think the board wants to know whether there was hail damage in a factory or what. They want to know what is involved in terms of the overall contract. Let's give that the information these people across the road . . . They say it costs \$4 million in out-of-court settlement. It was less than \$400,000. They are always a thousand per cent. The losses were \$4,058,000 in one year? No, over five years. The fact of the matter is I read in the paper today that further losses of \$1.5 million are anticipated. We don't know that they'll ever occur. They may never occur. They may never materialize. But we've made reservation for that possibility and that's in the accounts.

**MR. LANE:** — I would like to direct a question to the Minister, going to your further answer on the same day, when you indicated that the board of directors of SGI received a recommendation from management to terminate the arrangement — all resulting from the previous paragraph which I quoted about their investigation of the losses. Will you now admit that in fact the board of directors of SGI has that information, that you have the information, and you know precisely how those losses occurred?

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** — No, I do not know, Mr. Speaker. Neither does the board know, and neither should they know.

**MR. LANE:** — Well, then, why did they terminate the contract after their investigations?

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** — Mr. Speaker, we have confidence in the management,

obviously.

**MR. LANE:** — I'm wondering if maybe we could get a little information from the minister about further statements he made the other day. You indicate that you got a quarterly loss during August '79 and then you had additional losses reported, and I believe you said outside that the next quarter showed additional losses. What were the losses in the next quarter and what were the losses in 1980? Are you prepared to table the quarterly reports of RMC to SGI showing the losses?

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** — Mr. Speaker, I tabled what I said I would table the other day, and that was a public statement, a joint statement made by RMC and SGI in relation to the presentation of the court. And that's what was tabled and that's all that's going to be tabled.

Going back to his argument, surely, Mr. Speaker, these people realize that any reinsurance contract can be good for a period of time and can be bad for a period of time. The agreement we had with the Reinsurance Management Company was a good arrangement in the initial years. We made some \$2.5 million up to the end of 1978 on it. Admittedly, it began to deteriorate in August of 1979 and it continued to deteriorate throughout 1980. That's why we decided to get out of the contract. That's the nature of insurance and the reinsurance market.

Insurance, by definition, is acceptance of risk, and one cannot tell when you accept that risk whether it will turn out favorably or unfavorably. When we experienced unfavorable results from that particular contract, we gave notice of termination.

**MR. LANE:** — Can you tell us the quarterly reports of RMC showing the losses and then perhaps answer. If the contract was so good at the outset, what events took place that caused you all of a sudden to decide this great contract was no longer any good?

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** — Yes, obviously that's the major approach the member is taking. The fact of the matter is that I have never seen broken down statements with regard to the losses. And why should I ask for them? Management reported to us that this contract was in trouble, and therefore we wanted to get out of it. So we got out of it. And we got out and made a good deal even, according to the member for Regina South the other day in the statement he made.

**MR. LANE:** — I ask you again. Will you give the information to this Assembly as to the events that gave rise to the losses? And, secondly, the quarterly losses that you have just said went on throughout 1980 — would you table them in this Assembly?

**HON. MR. ROBBINS:** — I told the member before, Mr. Speaker, that I have tabled what I am going to table, and it's in the House already.

**MR. LANE:** — Is the minister aware of the principle in the British parliament of what is called ministerial responsibility; perhaps I could give the minister a bit of an outline of it. I think in the interests . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — The member is not here for the purpose of giving information. If he has a question, we'll be able to accept it.

**MR. LANE:** — I think it's vital to the democratic process and the parliamentary tradition,

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Mr. Speaker, that I give some.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — What's vital to the democratic process is that the members pay attention to the rules that govern question period. That's what's vital.

**MR. LANE:** — And now that the same rule is applying to the minister, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to ask under the . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order. The same rules apply to the minister as apply to the member for Qu'Appelle. I am listening for the member's supplementary.

**MR. LANE:** — Under the rules of British parliament, of ministerial responsibility, would you now table before this Assembly the information you have as to your quarterly losses that went on throughout 1980?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order. The rules of this Assembly are quite clear with regard to question period. It is not proper for a member to place an oral or written question which multiplies with slight variation a similar question on the same point. The member for Qu'Appelle has been doing this, and has done it repeatedly. I've tried to give him maximum latitude with regard to his questions, but I think the member for Qu'Appelle is repeating, and repeating, and repeating the same question.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Canadian Transport Commission Hearings on Grains Report

**HON. MR. MacMURCHY:** — Mr. Speaker, all hon. members will recall that some few days ago the hon. member for Thunder Creek raised the issue of the Canadian Transport Commission hearings, which will be getting under way, I believe, next Tuesday (I guess that's the best way to put it) for the recommendations of the grains report. Hon. members will recall the issue of the wreck at Mississauga and the implications of it, and the subsequent (as it's now called) grains report. I want to report to the hon. members that we've had an opportunity to review the Canadian Transport Commission orders concerning this report, but, more importantly, concerning the movement of dangerous commodities in Canada. It is our clear view that the orders issued by CTC have policy implications which can only be determined by parliament, or its representative, the Minister of Transport.

The railways have indicated that if they are forced to implement these orders, grain (what the railways call the traffic with the poorest revenue characteristics) will be removed from the track in order to make way for the higher volumes of trains required under the dangerous commodities orders. Canadian National has gone so far as to indicate that it may remove up to 6 million tonnes of grain. This combined with a similar amount we move from Canadian Pacific lines could constitute more than Canada's entire grain export volume to the West Coast in one year. This can simply not be tolerated by Saskatchewan, by the western economy or by the Canadian economy.

Yet, in our opinion, the Canadian Transport Commission is powerless to prevent such action. Under The Railway Act, the Canadian Transport Commission does not have power to prioritize the movement of commodities.

Mr. Speaker, sweeping changes to the regulations governing the movement of any one class of commodities affect the movements of other commodities and in such a

situation, where capacity is limited, it therefore becomes policy. Such sweeping changes must be considered and dealt with by elected policy makers, in this case, the Government of Canada.

In our judgment, the federal government is abdicating its policy responsibility in the extreme, if it leaves the resolution of the movement of dangerous commodities to the Canadian Transport Commission. This is unfair to the public of Canada and to CTC. I report to the hon. members that we have today sent a letter to the federal Minister of Transport, calling on the federal government to decide the policy question of what priority relative to commodities in particular, grain — are to be given in the Canadian rail system. We have indicated in our letter to the federal government that, in our view, the recommendations contained in the orders are inappropriate, because they are based on one accident in one particular set of circumstances. This narrow situation cannot be generalized without modification to the rest of Canada.

The situation in western Canada is different. Our pattern of population is different. The movement of dangerous commodities comprises proportionately less rail traffic in western Canada, compared to central Canada. Western Canada has significantly more serious capacity problems, with traffic increasing at a faster rate than the rest of Canada.

Secondly, the grains report addressed only safety aspects related to the transportation of dangerous commodities. The economic impact of its recommendations or the effect on other traffic was beyond its terms of reference. No order can legitimately be implemented without taking these large questions into consideration.

Let me make it clear, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan certainly supports increasing the level of public safety, but it cannot be done entirely at the expense of grain movement. It is completely unacceptable that those who do not contribute to the risk (in this case, western farmers: should be required to absorb the burden of an increase in safety, which primarily benefits central Canada.

We have advised the federal government that the schedule for implementing safety features on cars and trains carrying dangerous commodities should, in fact, be speeded up. This would include the installation of roller bearings, double-cell couplers, heat shields, thermal insulation, as well as hotbox detectors at frequent intervals on the rails. Saskatchewan agrees that trains passing through major urban centres should be limited to speeds of 25 miles per hour, but with respect to similar urban communities, each situation should be examined separately to determine the appropriateness of reduced speeds in each instance.

With the above measures in place, the 400-foot train length restriction should not be implemented.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the letter we sent to the federal minister. I report also that Saskatchewan will have people present at the hearings in Ottawa, beginning next Tuesday, but after (and only after) we have had a response from the federal government, will we determine our further participation at those hearings.

Mr. Speaker, I will table the letter to the Hon. Minister of Transport, Jean-Luc Pepin.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Mr. Speaker, I would just like to make a couple of comments with regard to the minister's statement regarding the transportation of dangerous commodities by rail. I would thank the minister for tabling the letter to the Minister of Transport as well as the government's position on the transportation of dangerous commodities in Canada. Primarily I would like to commend the minister for accepting the Progressive Conservative opposition's suggestion on this particular subject, as was advanced by our member for Thunder Creek, who is unable to be here this afternoon.

I think it is important to point out to the minister that the question of rail safety is becoming very important, in particular because of the increased traffic by rail. I certainly concur with the comments indicated in his statement. Certainly we can't afford, as a western province primarily involved in the production and the export of grain, to lose up to 12 million tonnes as was indicated by the railroads.

I noted a couple of things in the report which you have just given regarding your indications. I don't know if I am possibly reading you wrong but that could be and I will talk to you later. You suggested that the Canadian National has gone so far as to indicate that it may remove up to 6 million tonnes of grain. This combined with a similar amount removed from Canadian Pacific, calls on the federal government to decide the policy question of what priorities relative to commodities, in particular grain, are to be given on the Canadian rail system.

I don't know whether you're suggesting the federal Liberal government in some way coerced or persuaded at the Canadian Transport Commission to set priorities on grain. I wish we were so fortunate as to have grain given the priority in terms of the various commodities which move across this country. On the other hand, I shudder to think where grain would rank if it were left in the hands of the federal Liberal government. I would hope you're not suggesting that. Given their track record, I don't think we could look to much success in that regard.

Other than that, we agree with the comments you have made, certainly with regard to safety. I was very pleased to see that you mentioned the hotbox detectors placed at regular intervals. I think that's very important. I would also advise you that we had made that suggestion a couple of years ago, and I would just hope that you, in continued discussions with the federal Minister of Transportation, make that point well known. With that, I thank you for your statement.

### **Point of Privilege**

**MR. LANE:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise a matter of privilege and I ask that Mr. Speaker, take it under advisement. Yesterday in question period, I asked the Premier as to whether there was any change in the Government of Saskatchewan's position with regard to the charter of rights. If I can quote the Premier from the April 14 *Hansard*, page 2158, and I am quoting the salient last line:

Certainly, I say again, the position of the Government of Saskatchewan has not changed since February.

It was a very unequivocal statement to a very deliberate question, Mr. Speaker, as it pertains to the change of Saskatchewan's policy. In the Premier's press conference today, I am advised that the Premier made the statement that Saskatchewan's position has changed significantly. If that is the case, we have been deliberately misled, and I ask Mr. Speaker to rule on the question of privilege that I raise. I ask him to take the matter

under advisement and determine whether or not the Assembly was, in fact, misled.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I believe I have the gist of what the member was raising and will examine the matter later and report back to the House.

## **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

### **Bill No. 63 — An Act to amend The Wills Act**

**HON. MR. MacMURCHY:** — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the hon. member, I move that a bill to amend The Wills Act be now introduced and read a first time.

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

### **Bill No. 64 — An Act to amend The Liquor Licensing Act**

**HON. MR. MacMURCHY:** — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Hon. Mr. Cowley, I move that a bill to amend The Liquor Licensing Act be now introduced and read a first time.

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

### **Bill No. 65 — An Act to amend The Water Resources Management Act**

**MR. BOWERMAN:** — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a bill to amend The Water Resources Management Act.

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

### **Bill No. 66 — An Act to amend The Teachers' Life Insurance (Government Contributory) Act**

**HON. MR. MacMURCHY:** — On behalf of the Hon. Mr. McArthur, I move that a bill to amend The Teachers' Life Insurance (Government Contributory) Act be now introduced and read a first time.

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

### **Bill No. 67 — An Act to amend The Teachers' Superannuation Act**

**HON. MR. MacMURCHY:** — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Hon. Mr. McArthur, I move that a bill to amend The Teachers' Superannuation Act be now introduced and read a first time.

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

### **Bill No. 68 — An Act to amend The Securities Act**

**HON. MR. KOSKIE:** — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a bill to amend The Securities Act.

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

**Bill No. 69 — An Act respecting Trust and Loan Corporations**

**HON. MR. MacMURCHY:** — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a bill respecting Trust and Loan Corporations.

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

**MOTION**

**Inflationary Impact on Agriculture**

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Before orders of the day, under the provisions of rule 39, and in light of the fact that inflation is severely hindering economic development in the province of Saskatchewan (in particular the agriculture sector), and taking into consideration that the provincial government has a responsibility to battle inflation, especially as it poses such a serious threat to the agricultural industry (as has been pointed out most recently by the Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture, and I might add, Mr. Speaker, a number of other farm commodity groups and interest groups), I would ask that the Assembly grant leave for the following motion which I now move, seconded by the hon. member for Kindersley:

That this Assembly recognize the serious consequences of inflation as it relates to the agricultural sector, and that the standing committee on agriculture be convened for the first time since 1926 to receive briefs from all sectors of the agricultural industry to include related industries, to consider measures that may be implemented by the Government of Saskatchewan to protect the farmers from inflation and make recommendations to this Assembly.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Under rule 39 unanimous consent is required. If unanimous consent is given, all business of the House will be set aside until this particular matter is discussed. Is unanimous consent given?

Is there anything further before orders of the day?

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**COMMITTEE OF FINANCE**

**CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY CASH OUTFLOW**

**SOCIAL SERVICES**

**Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 36**

**Item 1 (continued)**

**MR. SWAN:** — Mr. Minister, when we were dealing with your estimates yesterday, we were discussing home care and the delivery of home care services. At that time, you had agreed to provide me with some information. Do you have that information here this afternoon?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes. The information asked for was the number of

services which home care is delivering in the province at the present time. The number of services delivered by the home care boards is 1,118; for other agencies which we fund it is 5,438.

**MR. SWAN:** — When you have your home care program completely in place in all districts, what is your anticipation of the number of people whom this program should service?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Roughly 1 per cent of the population we anticipate will be using the home care program which, in today's terms, would be about 10,000.

**MR. SWAN:** — So then you are telling me that you are serving in excess of one-half of the people whom you expect to serve through this program. Could you indicate to me how much you anticipate the home care program will alleviate the level 1 care facility need in the province?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — On the question of level 1, we foresee in the area of continuing care that home care and the new sheltered housing program will pretty well eliminate the need for level 1 care in Saskatchewan. I think it is important to remember that sheltered housing is a new program which is just coming on stream. Together with home care, it will take the place, hopefully, of level 1 institutions.

**MR. SWAN:** — You have opened the subject of sheltered housing. Do you want to expand on that a bit? What qualifications does a person need to be eligible to operate a so-called sheltered house? How many are you operating at this point in time? What kind of charges are being placed on the people in those situations?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes. At the present time we have one demonstration housing unit which we were talking about — the sheltered housing. We anticipate that they will be controlled and operated by a local board. The cost of it is actually in the health budget, but I think we have the figures here and we will be able to get that for you.

**MR. SWAN:** — Well, in your earlier answer you indicated that wonderful things were happening through the sheltered housing program, and now you tell me that you have only one facility. How many people are in that facility, and what are your costs? What do the people have to pay to be in that facility?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — You were saying that I had mentioned that it was a fullfledged program. That's not quite accurate. You were asking what is going to happen to level 1 in the future, and I indicated that we anticipated that home care and sheltered housing, when it comes into place (we anticipate it will be soon), will replace level 1.

The sheltered housing program is a concept that is relatively new. It connects units with an alarm system whereby the seniors will be able to get in touch with a person who will be on call 24 hours a day. What it will do is give a certain amount of extra independence to seniors which they don't have at the present time in a level 1 institution. The cost of it is in the health budget, but we anticipate that it will not be more than what the seniors are paying in the low-cost housing at the present time.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — Just a couple of questions, Mr. Minister, on the home care program. Can you give me the date on which Elton Marshall was fired, and the effective date of his dismissal?

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**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — The letter was mailed on February 24, with an effective date of March 24.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — Okay. Can you give me the date on which you received the report from Access Consulting in Saskatoon, dealing with a review of the home care program?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — We received the report around March 9.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — Okay. Can you explain to me how or on what basis your decision to fire Elton Marshall was made, bearing in mind that one of the terms of reference of this report was to evaluate his position and effectiveness? The report wasn't in your hands until about three weeks after he was fired. I just wonder if you would square that with the Assembly.

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes, the report was done to deal with and assess the programming which was being done in home care. The consulting firm was not doing an in-depth report on personnel. In fact, it doesn't deal with personnel. What it dealt with was the programming and how it was working. Of course you will be aware that management makes the decision on personnel and that we don't depend on consulting firms to make those decisions.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — So, he was fired on a personal basis. I think you will agree that the report from Access Consulting fairly well vindicates Elton Marshall and his activities with home care, and that all the activities he was responsible for received a rather glowing report in that particular document. But be that as it may, could you tell me if the position vacated as a result of his firing has yet been filled?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — I want to indicate to the member that the report that was done by Access Consulting doesn't mention Elton Marshall, give him a glowing report or any other thing. On the other hand, I would like to indicate or mention to the member opposite that Helene Donahue has taken the place of Elton Marshall.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — The report clearly gives a clean bill of health to those areas of the home care program that Elton Marshall was responsible for. Now the next question: who is Helen Donahue? Where is she from? Was the position advertised? How much is she being paid? What are her qualifications?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Helene Donahue has a B.A. in economics and master's degree in health services administration. She most recently worked in Vancouver at the Shaughnessy Hospital. As well, you asked: how much does she make? It's about \$36,000 a year.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — Was the position advertised?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — I will tell the member that the position was not advertised.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — Why? When the program was set up, it was advertised when you recruited Elton Marshall. Why was it not advertised this time?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — She was appointed under clause 723 of the public service commission regulations which allows for filling such a position in emergency cases without advertising.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — And you deemed this to be an emergency when your reports said that the system was in fact in good health. I am talking about the consultant's report from Access Consulting. Would you indicate to the House when first contact was made with Helene Donahue, when in fact she was recruited, and what was the effective date of commencement of employment?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — I will inform the member that Helene Donahue started work for us April 6. She was first contacted about February 26. She had been seen by other agencies of government starting as early as September 1980 in terms of looking at her for jobs in the public service.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — You wouldn't be prepared to indicate what other jobs she was being considered for?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes. I could tell you she was being considered for executive assistant to the deputy minister of health.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — Mr. Minister, I am not going to dwell a long time on this. We have touched on it in this House before from time to time. You know our feelings on it. I would suggest to you that we will be watching very closely the performance of this Ms. Helene Donahue (and this should not be taken in any personal way by her). But I am always a little suspicious when this government fills positions by going out and just saying, "Come and work for us, please," not advertising the position, and allowing no competition for the position. We have seen it before where these kinds of positions are filled with people who pass political blood test. I am not passing judgment on the lady in any way, shape, or form. But I will tell you this: we will be watching very closely the performance of that department, in particular as it relates to the field staff which I understand she will be directly responsible for.

The dates seem to me to be just a little more than a coincidence. I suspect (and I am sure you will deny it) that you went out and found this young lady who passed your political blood test. Then, you couldn't find a position for her right away, so you found a rather convenient scapegoat and fired him to make a position for this young lady. Again, I am not passing judgment. I will just wait. We will watch the performance. I do sincerely hope she does well. I do wish her luck. She will receive the utmost co-operation from this side of the House.

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — I would just like to set the record straight on one point for the member for Souris-Cannington. She was not hired on that basis. She was hired on her qualifications, as all our people are. I think we can be very confident that the home care program is going to go ahead and work very well because of the good people we have in the department, and because of the fact that many volunteers are working in your constituency and in all areas of the province.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Mr. Minister, on this topic of hiring or appointing these people, I don't think you should use the word hiring; you should use the word appointing. If one hires, one looks around at suitable candidates; if you want to pick someone, you appoint them. That's what you've been doing. It seems shocking to hear that people at salaries of \$36,000 or \$40,000 are appointed. There's no competition; you just appoint them. My question to you is: in the last year, have there been other people appointed in the Department of Social Services in a salary range of over \$30,000?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — It's not unusual to appoint people to senior positions in any government. This happened to be done in an emergency situation, as I mentioned earlier. We are presently advertising for an assistant director of home care, and going through that process. This case was an emergency. I think it's fair to say that it was appropriate to hire Miss Helene Donahue in this manner.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — You didn't answer my question. I asked if, in the last year, there had been other people appointed in the Department of Social Services with salaries in excess of \$30,000. I'll be a little more specific. Ms. Gillis — was she appointed or hired in September? I think you know the lady I'm referring to.

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Ms. Gillis, who works for the department, went through the normal process of competition and was hired in that manner on her ability. I would like to say as well, that apparently three people in the range you mentioned have been appointed.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Who are they; what function are they performing; and what are their qualifications?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — I have the three names here. The first is Nola Seymoar, executive director of regional services. Her qualifications are a Ph.D. in social psychology and, as I mentioned, she is executive director of regional operations.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Where is that Ph.D. from?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Union Graduate School of Ohio, 1973. The second is Don Sherman, executive director of community and personal services. He came to us as vice-president of operations of the western division of Extencicare. As well, Steve Petz, who spent six years in health, was involved in the drug plan, and three years in budget bureau.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — Is he still with the home care program?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Steve Petz is executive director of continuing care.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — On the home care program — Elton Marshall — was he provided access to his personal files and has he launched an appeal?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes, apparently Elton Marshall has lodged an appeal. He has, as well, had access to his papers on an ongoing basis. He hasn't availed himself of that process yet, but I expect that he will.

**MR. BERNTSON:** — What stage is the appeal at now? And when are you going to reinstate him?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Apparently there's a tentative date for an appeal some time in the area of May 11, 12, 13. I'm not sure of the exact date, but we could find out.

**MR. GARNER:** — Mr. Minister, just one other point before we leave the home care program. What is your total administration cost since the inception of the home care program?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — I'm not sure of the question. Is that the total administration cost since the inception of the program? It will take a fairly long time to get the answer. We'll have to go back over three years of records to total it up. We can get the answer for you tomorrow, but it would take quite a while.

**MR. GARNER:** — That's fine, if you can provide me with that answer tomorrow. While you're doing that, too (I know we did discuss this in detail last night and I don't want to go into it again today), will you send me 10 or 15 copies of this assessment form — this little piece of garbage that we did discuss last night? Hopefully you will be reviewing this and you'll think twice before using a document like this for an application to intimidate our senior citizens, which I think we proved beyond a shadow of doubt last night. I would like about 10 or 15 copies of this as well, Mr. Minister.

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — We can get that for the member for Wilkie.

**MR. SWAN:** — Mr. Minister, the information I am receiving from the established home care boards is that they are underfunded and having great difficulty in delivering the service. Is it your intention to increase funding to make their job possible, or is it your intention to pass on the costs of home care to the local tax base?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — The member asked whether or not we realize there are problems in funding. As a result of discussions, as well as from talking to many home care boards over the last month or so, including the conference which was held on the home care board association which is being developed, we do have some indication that there are shortages in some areas in funding. I think at this time it is premature to say how much the shortage is or whether the increases will be needed right away. But I would also like to say that there is no intention of shifting the funding or the cost arrangement onto the backs of the local government.

**MR. SWAN:** — I am pleased to hear that last comment, because this has been one of the fears of the municipalities regarding the home care system: as soon as they got in trouble they feared the cost would be shifted back to the local municipalities. So I am pleased to hear the minister make that announcement. We intend to hold you to that announcement.

I would like you to give us some indication as to why your government is providing assistance in the form of a grant to the Planned Parenthood group in the province, and yet not the Pro-Life group, which is doing similar work (perhaps one is for you and one is against). I think both groups have the right to existence. Why then do you fund one and refuse funding to the other?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — We found neither the Planned Parenthood group, nor the other group you mentioned. We do fund a Catholic group. No, sorry, health does. So the comment you make about Planned Parenthood — we are not involved in our department.

**MR. SWAN:** — I would like to move along, then, and get some information on your employment services program. How is it faring this year? How many employment services committees do you have? What effect are they having in the district? Are they putting people back to work and decreasing the number who are on social assistance?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Would the member for Rosetown-Elrose repeat the first

part of the question? It was a bit noisy and I missed the first few words.

**MR. SWAN:** — I agree, it was a bit noisy. Some of the members across there are going to have to be quiet. I asked you if you could tell me how many committees you have in the employment services program, and what effect those committees are having in the way of putting people back into the workforce and taking them off the social assistance program?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — They are not called committees, they are called projects — but they are the same thing. There were 57 for a total number of positions of 393, which, translated into the number of clients is 1,057.

The most recent completed evaluation shows 86 per cent of ESP people not to be on social assistance.

**MR. SWAN:** — You say that 86 per cent has been taken off social assistance through that program — of the ones they have dealt with. Is that the figure? What has been the cost of the program, and how many people have you serviced in the past year? When you talk of 86 per cent — 86 per cent of how many?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — The total budget for ESP in 1980-81 was \$1.9 million. As I mentioned, there were 1,057 recipients, or people who were employed through ESP.

**MR. SWAN:** — Are you satisfied that the employment services program is a good program? Is it your intention, then, to expand it to give opportunity to more people to get into the workforce?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes, we are planning to expand the program. We feel that it is a worth-while program. Any time you can take people off the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan and get them working in the community at normal jobs, then it's a good program. We do plan to expand it in the future.

**MR. SWAN:** — We've been getting a number of concerns raised over the past while about the adoption program in the province. I would like to ask you: is there any way you can improve the methods now used in the adoption program? I raised this concern with the minister earlier in the session, but the complaint I'm getting is that people who apply under the adoption program to get a child have at times gone a full two years without having any communication from the department. I think that is a sad commentary on the operation of your department.

I would like to know what programs are being put in place to enable people seeking adoption to know whether they are going to be given a child. If they were assured of having a child when a child is available, most of them will wait patiently. But when they come to you, make the application and then wait for two years with no indication of whether or not they're accepted as a family suitable to adopt a child, that's when the concern arises. So I would like you to give me some background on what you found when you went to your department, and what improvements you are putting in place.

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — There were a couple of questions raised by the member for Rosetown-Elrose. One of them was about the waiting list for adoption in Saskatchewan. I think the waiting period right now is about two and one-half years, which is a common waiting time across Canada. His proposal (he, in fact, has brought this up to me and I have taken it to the department) that we keep people posted on

where they are in the process, and whether or not they're moving forward is a good one. We have taken it under consideration and are planning to do something about it.

The other point was the home study. I think it's important to remember and note that the home study should be done as close as possible to the time the adoption will take place, so that the records are current at the time the adoption takes place. For example, if a person applied today and the home study was done tomorrow, and then they went on a waiting list for two and one-half years, a lot of the circumstances could change, so we attempt to do the home study as close as possible to the date the adoption will actually take place.

**MR. SWAN:** — Mr. Minister, under that kind of a program, people may wait for two and one-half years, or close to it. Then you go in and do your home study (as you call it), and you may find that they have indeed waited two and one-half years to no avail, because you're not going to allow them to adopt a child. Do you not think that there is need to make an initial evaluation shortly after the application, so that they know whether or not they are eligible to adopt? If they're not eligible under your program, maybe they would want to switch over and not adopt a really young child, but maybe one who is 10 or 12 years old. They may be suitable for that and not suitable for the very young. So don't you think there's a need for an initial assessment? You may have to have a second look before the child is placed, but at least there would be some indication.

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — I think there's a point there worth looking at. On the other hand, if you're doing the assessment early in the term (let's say the day after you applied), the same thing could happen: you could be rejected. However, if you stay on the list and things change, you could be accepted at a later date. I think that argument can work both ways. I think the important thing in the whole debate over adoption is that the person we are most worried about is not the person who is going to receive the child, but in fact the child. What works best for the adopted child in the long run is what we are going to be looking at. That is not to say we are not concerned about the parents who are on the waiting list. We are doing everything possible to make sure that the waiting is as easy as possible.

On the other hand, I suppose we could look at early screening, where people could possibly be advised whether or not they would be eligible in the future on a more simple type of arrangement, or a more preliminary type of arrangement, and then a more in-depth study could be done closer to the time when the adoption is to take place. It is something we could look at, but at the present time we think with the way we are working it — the home study done later on in the waiting period — the best interests of the infant is being served.

**MR. SWAN:** — Mr. Minister, I would agree that you need to serve the best interests of the infant, but I believe that when you are dealing with couples seeking to adopt a child you are also dealing with a couple who is willing to be of assistance to society, in taking a child into their home and making a home for that child, and I think they also have some rights and some needs.

Of the complaints that come to my desk (and there are a number of them), I don't raise them all here in the House, because they are not the kind of thing that you raise in question period very often. I raised it quietly with you to see if I could get an answer. Now, what you're telling me today is that you're going to look at it. It is nearly six weeks since I raised that issue with you and you said you would deal with it. Have you done anything with the concern that was raised, that these people get a letter from the

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department saying that they're on the waiting list, or that they're making progress, or that they're not making progress?

I don't think that everything must wait for two years in government before it gets a response. I think six weeks is lots of time for you to notify people of their position as far as the adoption process within your department is concerned.

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — As I indicated to the member, it was about a month or six weeks ago that he brought the point up with regard to keeping people posted on where they are in the system, and I told him earlier that is in motion, and a month to make that change is not too long, I think. It is in the process of being brought about. That is an indication of the action the department takes when a proposal which is good is brought forward; I might say, even by the member for Rosetown-Elrose who is a member of the opposition.

**MR. SWAN:** — I'm very pleased to hear that once in a while you listen to the opposition. It isn't often that you do.

I would like to have you address the foster-parent situation. We notice from the statistics that there is a very serious need in our province for care for young children, and the foster parent program is basically the main program in position to date. The statistics show that we are seeing an increase in the number of suicides, particularly among teen-agers, and these suicides at this time are 16.3 per 100,000. I think it is a trend that we should be watching. I'm wondering what process you have in place to screen the people who are acting as foster parents, and also to do a follow-up — not just an initial screening, but to appear once in a while to see what kind of care indeed these children are receiving.

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes, at the present time we have a program for foster children whereby a person wanting to receive a foster child fills out an application and then goes through the process of a home study, which checks into the background of the people who will be accepting the foster child. We also ask for references from people in the community who know the people who are going to be acting as foster parents. I think it is fair to say, as well, that we do not want to get involved in the day to day life and operation of the family that accepts a foster child any more than we want to with any other family that exists in society.

I think it is fair to say, though, that if we have reports of any type that indicate we should be getting involved, we do have people for that purpose and we do check in on them on a regular basis to see if they are having problems. But I think you don't want to get involved to the point that you seem to be a big brother coming in to check on how a family is operating any more than you would with any other family.

**MR. SWAN:** — But you do have a process in place to assist these families when they are in difficulty. If they call and say, "Look, we've got a child we're having difficulty with. We don't know how to cope." Do you then respond? And what kind of training do the people have who respond?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes, I am informed that we do visit on a regular basis people who have foster children. On the other hand, if they were to phone the department a trained person would go to see what he/she could do to assist them. I think it is important that if they are having problems (and from time to time, they will

have problems with children adjusting to a new lifestyle or to new parents), we do have people who are trained in that area to assist the family.

**MR. SWAN:** — What kind of training? Can you be a little more specific in that particular area?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes, the minimum is a degree in social work or the equivalent. Some have a master's degree. They are people who are trained in that area who can step in, give advice and be of assistance in making the family unit work better in the foster home situation. These people will come in and give advice, or take advice from the family, and help them sort out the problems which exist at that time.

**MR. SWAN:** — I would like now to move into the special-care homes area. You have made announcements recently that you are studying, and you are putting a freeze on increases until July 1, and this sort of thing. This is fine to "put a freeze on," but I would like to know: what do the nursing homes use for money to operate when there is a high inflationary period? You know the nursing homes last year received less than the inflationary increase (even in your portion of the rate), and that only covers a small part of the costs to a nursing home. Now we are down the road a year and the assistance which they get from your department is to tell them to freeze their rates until July 1.

Now it is fine to freeze them, but what interim measures are you putting in place to be of assistance to these homes so they can operate until July 1? I can see that many of these homes are going to face a heavy debt load by July 1 if they don't change their rates.

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes, we did announce a freeze on nursing home rates, effective April 1 to July 1, in anticipation of a new arrangement being made on the home care rates in the province to reflect the 30 per cent increase which was allocated in the budget of March 5. In terms of what is happening between April 1 and July 1, we have an agreement whereby we will be picking up the deficit of the nursing homes which are incurred as a result of the freeze. I would also like to inform the member that during the fourth week of April cheques will be mailed out on a monthly basis to the nursing homes which have accepted the freeze on rates from April 1 to July 1. We realize that if we didn't do that, the nursing homes would be placed in a very precarious position. We saw the need for injecting money into it and as a result we will be mailing out cheques the fourth week in April.

**MR. SWAN:** — Can you tell this Assembly how much of an increase they can expect in this cheque above and beyond what normally would have gone forward under the old formula?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — The increase will be based on a 12.5 per cent increase on their March rates. That will be the level where we will pick up the deficit which will be incurred over that period.

**MR. SWAN:** — In your earlier comments you said that you were going to pick up the deficit. Now you tell me it is 12.5 per cent over their March rate. Are you going to pick up the deficit up to 12.5 per cent above March rates, or are you indeed picking up the deficit? Which is it?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — It is 12.5 per cent, but if there is a further deficit incurred we will be making adjustments after that period. So we are looking at the whole spectrum of where a loss would be incurred over and above the 12.5 per cent. We will,

in fact, have a look at it and make up the difference

**MR. SWAN:** — Has a letter gone to all special-care home boards in the province notifying them that you are going to indeed look at the deficit as a government expenditure?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes, there was a letter sent out under my signature to all the nursing homes. It outlined the process which would be involved in picking up the deficit. I think it's important that the nursing homes are aware of what we have planned and how the process is going to work. So, we have sent out letters to make them aware of it.

**MR. SWAN:** — Could I ask the minister if he would make a copy of that letter available to me so that I can see what is happening?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes, we can get one for you. I don't have an extra copy here, but we'll get one for you.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Mr. Minister, you have indicated, through your discussions with the critic for social services, that it's going to be a deficit situation with regard to these nursing home boards. How do you arrive at that? How do you know that there's going to be a deficit? In answering the question, you indicated that it seems to be a foregone conclusion that there are going to be deficits which you're going to have to pick up as a government. How do you arrive at that?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Most of the homes plan to increase their rates by about 12.5 per cent. What we did was freeze those increases. Naturally, a deficit resulted. What we're doing is giving 12.5 per cent interim funding, because that's what we feel is the appropriate rate of inflation in the nursing homes. If a further deficit is incurred, we will settle that later.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Basically, what you're saying is that your freeze is going into effect before their proposed increase. Is that correct?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes, the rates for the proposed increases had been announced. Therefore, we were aware of what the increases were going to be. We found that the middle road was about 12.5 per cent. We used that as the basis for the interim funding to the nursing homes to which the freeze would apply.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — If a particular home had indicated in its financial report that it had to propose a 15 per cent increase to cover its increased expenditures due to, primarily, salaries, then you only would be prepared to pick up the difference and subsidize them (with direct reference to the fees) to the extent of 12.5 per cent. They, then, would be required to pick up the additional 2.5 per cent. Is that correct?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes, we used the 12.5 per cent base because that was an average. For example, if there is a nursing home which has a 15 per cent increase, we will do a mini-budget review and pick up that deficit if it has been properly incurred. In that way, after that period is over, we will be able to fund those nursing homes where extra money was needed to meet their budget.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — So, in other words, in reality the 12.5 figure is a rule of thumb guideline which you're using in terms of justifying the freeze to the nursing homes. You

have announced a freeze up to July 1, and what you've said is that you're going to pick up up to 12.5 per cent, but in reality it's only a rough guideline. I suspect, right now off the top of my head, that there would not be too many instances over that particular average. You're saying that you're prepared to be flexible — if one does go over the guideline of 12.5 per cent, you would be prepared to pick it up. I suppose I'm right in that, so I can pass it on to someone.

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Just further to that, the 12.5 per cent is a rate which was arrived at through consultation with the Saskatchewan Association of Special-Care Homes, which represents the majority of nursing homes in the province. It was its understanding and ours that that was sort of a happy medium and would cover most of the homes. But, in fact, if some of them have increases greater than that and can legitimately document them, we will look at increases of slightly more than that where it is warranted.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Okay. I would ask you a question on a different subject. Would you say that it is reasonably correct to suggest that in the last two years there has been approximately a 90 per cent turnover in Department of Social Services personnel?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — How many years? Two?

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Yes, in the last couple of years. What per cent of your staff has actually been either fired or released and, of course, new people hired? I just wonder what that figure would be in the last two years?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — It isn't true that there has been a 90 per cent turnover in the last two years. The average rate of turnover within the department, and this would include promotions within the department, going up and down or whatever, would be something under 10 per cent. I suppose if you were to extend that for two years it would be an 18 per cent or 20 per cent turnover on a regular basis. That rate of turnover is not uncommon in the public service. In fact, it is fairly representative of the number of changes which occur on an annual basis.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Unfortunately I have to leave to attend a meeting, but I wonder of there is a quick answer as to why there is a reasonably high percentage of turnover, even at 20 per cent over the last couple of years. You say it's a very common thing in the public service. Is there one common denominator as to why there is a reasonably high percentage of turnover in the public service?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — It isn't a high rate of turnover. I don't think there is any one simple answer to why there is a 10 per cent rate, but I don't think it's uncommon in any department. Probably part of it would be because of the clerical staff; young clerical staff may be getting married and moving in and out of the department. That may be one reason, but I don't think there is any overwhelming reason. It's not uncommon and therefore I don't think it needs a great deal of explanation.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — I'll just conclude by saying that I believe it's very beneficial to the department to have, in particular at the senior level, a staff which familiarizes itself with the department and to have as few personnel turnovers as possible. I believe the Department of Social Services is a very complex department; it's a very difficult

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department. It handles a lot of problems and crosses over a lot of territory. I think that to appropriately handle all the problems which come under that department you would have to have people who were, in fact, career civil servants. They would be people who took their work very seriously and dedicated themselves to providing social justice programs, if you like, through that department. I believe that would enhance the department.

I look at the various programs under your department, and there are many. I just have to say that it must be very difficult, when you start out on a program and have X number of people before the plan is actually formulated and ready to provide a service, and a number of the people just aren't there anymore. So, in its conclusion, there are different people seeing in through its last phase. I don't know how to describe that. I suppose it would be like having a pinch runner in a baseball game and a different runner going to the next bases.

I would like to see, particularly at the senior level, that you have adequate staff. I know if I were minister, I would want to have senior staff around me who intended to stay for a while and who could very adequately advise the incoming minister. Ministers change quite frequently and I suppose I can appreciate that. The senior civil servants, in particular if they are doing a good job and serving the interests of the people under this department, should be left there — to see that programs are initiated properly and to carry them through to the point where they meet their aims and objectives as stated in the legislation or as outlined by the minister. It doesn't matter which program. But I think it's important.

I wanted to make that comment just as a general statement. I don't think it's an argumentative point, nor does it require an answer.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Mr. Chairman, there are a number of items I would like to discuss with the minister. Some of them have been touched on previously, but certainly in the level 2, level 3 and level 4 care I understand you are making some announcements and there may be some changes.

I think you realize that on this side of the House we have been pressing for something. We feel that old people should be on a board-and-room type of situation similar to what exists in some of the other provinces. Are we in the great economic boom we hear about from the side opposite. Looking at the situation one sometimes wonders. The government opposite is great at saying that there is, so let's accept that there is. It would seem only reasonable that the people who should share in this economic boom are senior citizens. These are the people who developed whatever there is in this province which caused this magnificent boom, which is supposedly here, and they will continue to do so in the future.

It seems to me to be a great social injustice that people who are in their twilight years should, in many cases, be humiliated by suffering economic hardships. I think I speak for a great number of people in Saskatchewan when we say that these people deserve to spend their twilight years in the greatest comfort we can provide in this province. Therefore, I think it would only be reasonable that Saskatchewan would look at a system where these people can use some of their old age security to pay for their board and room in a facility which will give top-notch care and maintain their health and look after them so they can live with dignity, comfort and self-respect. This would be and should be a very deserving goal for the Department of Social Services.

I want you to realize that on this side of the House that is the objective we have for our senior citizens. I would like you to respond to this. Tell me if this is what you envisage, as the Minister of Social Services, and that you will implement this type of a system.

Before I take my seat though, I would also like to mention the matter of the retained savings which they can have. I think that is kind of a humiliating thing. I visit these senior citizen homes many times and they tell me about this concern. I think \$1,500 was the maximum which they could have. I believe last year, after some questioning, there was some talk that it might be raised to \$2,500. Actually, in real fact, that hardly even covers the cost of their funeral. This is one of the things these old people are quite concerned about.

I think we have to look beyond that. I think we have to look beyond just letting an old person keep enough money to bury himself when the end of his days should come. I think these people — many of them are in fine mental condition and have connections with their family — want to have a little bit of money left so they could give their grandchildren presents, if they so wish, or so they could buy themselves a few amenities or a few of the things that you and I would like to have.

So, I just outlined, very briefly, to you some of the concerns which I have regarding the care of the senior citizens of this province. I would like you, as minister, to respond to these concerns so that I could get some idea of the direction the government opposite is taking to address this problem.

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — I think the member mentions many honorable ideas about treatment of senior citizens in this province. It is an area where we can agree with him very much. I think, in fact, over the past number of years, we have gone a long way in doing that, in honoring our seniors — the people who have built this province since 1905 when it was formed. I think you need only to look at some of the programs which have existed in Saskatchewan since 1971 when there were 15 rec centres for senior citizens. That has gone to 350. We put in 20 per cent of the capital funding in those centres and have funded them on an annual basis from that time on. That is one area which we have gone way in front of many other provinces. You need only look at the home care program, the drug plan, and free hospitalization to see many of the ways in which we intend to continue to serve the needs of senior citizens in this province.

I think the home care program is one which will go a long way to meet the needs of keeping seniors as independent as possible in their own homes and communities.

There are other plans which we are looking at and have been studying. We realize that the \$1,500 maximum has been eroded by inflation. It is something we are looking at. We certainly aren't announcing any changes to that, but we are aware of the problems which exist in that area. I'm not sure from what year it was; I think it was 1976. So some of the implications in that area are realized and we are looking at what we can do to help them out.

On the other hand, in the levels of care, we are looking at a more equitable move with a 30 per cent increase in nursing home funding announced in the budget. We haven't decided exactly how that is going to be allocated. Room and board charges are part of the negotiation which is going on. We haven't taken that into consideration. I think it is fair to say that a final decision on that matter has not been made. But we hope to have an arrangement ready to announce and to put in place by July 1.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Mr. Minister, many of the things which you mentioned fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Health — the drug plan, and so on. I will accept those as benefits to seniors. I want to address this problem again to you. I guess I thought it had been raised to \$2,500, but I believe that was the suggestion which I put forth last year. Unfortunately, the other minister didn't take action on it. Certainly, \$1,500 is a negligible amount of money. It is an embarrassing thing. I think if you check with most funeral homes, for a half decent funeral it is \$1,500 or in excess. So I would ask you, as the Minister of Social Services, to take action on that. Goodness sakes, these are the old guys; they didn't have pension plans. Most of these people worked darn hard. By our standards, these guys went without a lot. I think the greatest thing we can do is to let them have that little bit that they saved — they saved this, most of these people. Oh sure, you'll find a few who have lots of money, but that's not always going to be the situation.

But you go into the nursing home and you'll find a bunch of good, dedicated people who came up the darn hard way, who remember the Dirty Thirties in this province and have finally seen that we're in this so-called boom. I say: let them have their money. They worked hard for that money; they deserve the right to spend that money to do the things that they want. I don't know whether you should even have a level on there, if you're really being just to them. But, for goodness sakes, take that miserly amount of \$1,500 and put it up to \$2,500 or \$5,000 or something, so that this person can end his days with some of his money and not be dependent totally on the state. That's degrading; that's demoralizing to them.

The other thing is to get on with board and room. That's the thing we should be doing. These people have built the province; these people are our senior citizens. Let's provide it so that it's the same for everybody, so that they pay board and room that is somewhat less than their old age pension, or in that neighborhood, so that they all have this, and that we pick up the health costs which they may have.

Those are the things that I think we should be doing. I just wanted to reiterate those again, because I spoke in some detail on it last year. It must have fallen on deaf ears with the minister. We have a new one now, so let's see some action. Maybe this will be part of the new image of the department. I was wondering for a while here this afternoon, if the new image of the department was to not pay overtime to some of the SGEA (Saskatchewan Government Employees' Association) employees. I'd be a little worried if I were an employee, if that's the new image of the department. Secondly, I was wondering if the new image of the department was to appoint at the tope echelons. I hope that's not the new image of the department.

I hope that the new image of the Department of Social Services is to bring in a board-and-room concept for our senior citizens and also to raise the amount of money that they can have.

We could move to another situation here, and that has to do with the Lakeside Home in Wolseley. Mr. Minister, I understand that, as of about two or three weeks ago (or a month or more ago), there was a nursing study being done at the Lakeside Home. I would like to know if that study is completed and what the findings of that study were.

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — I'm not sure which study the member for Indian Head-Wolseley is talking about. Maybe if he could elaborate on it we will be able to dig it out. I'm not sure which study you are trying to find out about.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — This is interesting. Maybe there's a whole volume and different chapters to this. Just about a month ago they informed me that there were some people sent out; they were down there for two days checking on the nursing facilities. One thing which may help indicate what study it was is that I remember mentioning something last year about some of the medical supplies which were being used on the citizens there. If you don't remember question period last year, talk to the Minister of Health who was then minister of social services and you will recall what I am talking about. I understand that after this investigation there was a dumping of much of the obsolete medical equipment which was being used there. I just wonder if you have that report together. It is certainly of interest to me. What were the findings, or what was the sense of them going out there in the first place if they didn't provide a report to you?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes, the study that you are referring to, if it is the one that was done a year ago, is on fire inspection standards and was done by government services. We don't have it here today. We could get it for you out of another department, and have a look at it. But it wasn't part of our investigation which was being done out there. I'm not sure that we would have access to it, but we can check and see if we can get it for you.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — No, that's not what I'm referring to at all. I know that study was done, and I know that the fire improvements are being made. That's fine and dandy. What I'm asking (and it seems there's mass confusion over there) is: who authorized these people to come out approximately one month ago, walk around for a couple of days behind the nurses there, and come up with a study as to the adequacy of the nursing facility at Lakeside Home in Wolseley? Now, surely somebody had to send them out there, or were they just out for a little view of the nice scenery?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes, I'm informed that it's a regular type of inspection which goes on on a regular basis in all the nursing homes across the province. They look at the standards, whether or not there are problems, and will advise us if in fact there are problems. Maybe you could indicate to us what you are trying to find out or if there is a problem you are aware of which you would like us to check into. But it is just a normal process, not a special investigation. We have staff who go around and check the nursing homes in all parts of the province, not only in Indian Head-Wolseley.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Well, there seems to have been something a bit new there, but I'll take it that it's a general investigation. What I want to know (and what I asked at the beginning) is whether you are satisfied that the nursing care is of a very acceptable standard. As I said last year, some of the medical instruments and facilities were obsolete. There was no mention then. I understand that a day or so after this visit, boy, a whole bunch of stuff was dumped. Are there any problems or is Lakeside just going along great?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes, I'm informed that the nursing standards in the Lakeside home are above the provincial average. We don't see any great problem. The fact is that the home is old. There are problems with all old buildings, as you will be well aware; but we don't have a great deal of difficulty in saying that it is a home which is running very well and is above the provincial average.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — That's very rewarding to hear. I realize that the building is a little obsolete, but I can speak for the people out there. They are quite satisfied with it and so are the residents. If it is above the provincial average and one of the best homes in the province of Saskatchewan (and I believe it is), and there is a growing need out there, why doesn't your department take some action and expand it so that many of the level 4

people who receive excellent care there could be accommodated in the Lakeside Nursing Home in Wolseley?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — At the present time, we have no definite plans to expand in that area. We are monitoring that whole area along Highway No. 1 east to see whether there is a problem which warrants construction of new facilities. But, at the present time, we don't have any definite plans to construct in that area. I would like to say at this time, too, that the rate of beds per 1,000 senior citizens in Saskatchewan is the second highest in Canada. While we're never going to meet every demand, I think it's fair to say that we are doing an adequate job. The ratio of beds per 1,000 senior citizens reflects that.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — I'd just like to ask you a question on this topic of senior citizens. Of all the towns along Highway No. 1, there is one which lacks a facility. That is the town of Broadview. There has been considerable interest expressed there. There have been studies done of the need and proposals have been made to your government regarding this. I think the need for a senior citizens' facility in Broadview is a glaring one. I know there have been many representations from interested people in Broadview. I suggest that, if you are looking at construction (and I see that you have made provision in your budget for construction and grants for special-care homes of \$1,766 million) is there consideration being given to constructing one in Broadview? If not, where is that being spent and why is Broadview not getting one?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — The department people met with the people from Broadview as recently as two days ago to discuss the need for nursing home care in Broadview. It is under consideration, as are many others in the province, but to date we haven't made a decision as to where that money will be allocated, and where the new beds which we are going to construct in the coming year will go. It is fair to say to the member that we have had consultation with the people from Broadview, and it is under consideration.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — So the \$1.7 million that is shown in the estimates here has not been designated, and it is possible that a portion of that could go to satisfy (and I want to reinforce this) this need that does exist in Broadview. When you look at the towns up and down the main line (of course I'm looking at my constituency; I'll be honest with you) — Indian Head, Wolseley, Grenfell — you see that they have facilities. There is always a need, but certainly the town of Broadview has been sold short by this government in any assistance for nursing home help.

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — As I mentioned earlier, we haven't made a decision on where the construction will go. We are actively considering the Trans-Canada east. I find it interesting that the member would stoop so low as to involve politics in the construction of nursing home beds.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Now let's not get nasty here. I wasn't stooping low; I was fighting for the senior citizens, as I have been for one-half hour, trying to impress upon you, as a minister, that for goodness sake, let's leave politics aside and look after those people. It may have been that I talked about a certain boundary, but I'm really concerned about those old people out there, and I'm sure you are, too.

I would like to move to another topic, and that is the sheltered workshops. We discussed that a little the other day in question period, but the answers in question period are sometimes rather long and rambling, and one doesn't get exactly the

information one wants. I pointed out to you that the funding of the sheltered workshops has been lagging. Can you give me a commitment that you are going to fund those adequately on these estimates?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — At the present time there are plans, and it has been announced that we plan to increase funding for workshops by 10 per cent this year. It is an area that we are very much interested in. At the present time we fund 50 per cent of the workshops in the province. We have had representation to increase that funding. It is in an area we are looking at for future consideration.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — When you say “future consideration,” can you be a little more definite? Are the sheltered workshops going to receive funding this year that is at least in line with the inflationary costs, rather than what they have been receiving in the past?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — At the present time we are looking at a 10 per cent increase, which will more or less cover the rate of inflation. In midsummer, we will be looking at making a special arrangement, if we have to, for those areas where there are special debts or special problems being incurred. It's too early to tell whether any of that will occur, but it's something we will review as the year goes on.

**MR. McLEOD:** — Mr. Minister, just to follow up on your last answer when you mentioned to my colleague for Indian Head-Wolseley about special areas that you may be considering for some sheltered workshop help. Certainly I know there has been representation made to your department from the Handicapped Employment Society of Meadow Lake regarding the possibility of establishing a sheltered workshop and a group home in conjunction with that. I can't express to you deeply enough the need for that.

As you may know, my own background has been working in the junior high school, and part of that school is a special education section. Many of the people that would benefit directly from that workshop that's badly needed are people I know personally. I know that there are 20 to 25 people that are waiting for that. At the present time they have to travel out of Meadow Lake to North Battleford or Lloydminster — well over 100 miles. It may not sound like a big distance to some of us who are a little more mobile, but to some of them leaving their families for that distance is a tremendous hardship. So I would ask you if you are considering, in this special area you are talking about, the one at Meadow Lake?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — We have been in consultation with the group. We have met in the very recent past and have indicated to them that we would be letting them know by the end of June whether or not money would be forthcoming for that project. I think it is important that when we look at expanding the program of workshops throughout the province, that it not only occur in the major centres, but that we have an expanded program throughout the province. People, whether in Meadow Lake or in Shaunavon, should have access to those types of programs. So it's an area we are looking at. We will be getting back to that particular group by the end of June.

**MR. McLEOD:** — Okay. I know you've indicated that to them, and they have indicated as well that they've been waiting. Certainly I understand then you say that you are looking at special cases. I would say to you the area — we talk about 100 miles in talking about the area right at Meadow Lake — they would service goes a lot farther than that. It certainly goes into what we call the northern administration district, into Pierceland

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and to the Alberta border. There is a tremendous area there. I can't emphasize enough the need there. I hope that you will come with a positive answer, because to give an answer that the government will answer requests in due course, really doesn't help them very much in their planning. They have some committed, I believe, from the Kinsmen Foundation, if they are able to get some approval in a reasonable time. The Kinsmen Foundation has seen this as a particular need in a particular area. I would hope that your department would follow suit.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — In regard to the sheltered workshops my colleague was pointing out (and he's well-versed in the need for these, being an educator and was relating an instance in his own jurisdiction), I was pointing out to you the other day what I have found, and I'm sure your department must be finding the same thing. In fact I know your department and some of the employees in it feel totally frustrated with their inability (and I don't say that personally at all) to provide the necessary programs that are needed for a portion of our, shall I say, handicapped society. I want to illustrate three or four situations that I have had brought to my attention from various parts of Saskatchewan of people who are not in sheltered workshops. I don't like to put a classification on their competency, but these people do not seem to fit into the sheltered workshop situation. On the other hand these people are not quite responsible enough to fit right into the mainstream of the working force. Therefore, there is a terrible vacuum which exists within the province of Saskatchewan concerning these people.

The ones which have been brought to my attention have mainly been male. I'm not saying there aren't females in the same situation; maybe it's easier for them to find work. But there are these fellows and it's a sad situation. These people are in an IQ range where they realize that they are just a little step different from normal, but they still want to achieve and succeed. The situation in Saskatchewan today, Mr. Minister, is if they won't accept the sheltered workshop, there is really nothing else for them.

I have recycled some of these people through your department three or four times. I feel very frustrated. I'm sure the people in your department also feel frustrated, because they tell me, "We have no place to really put these people." Of course, the most serious situation is that these people feel tremendously frustrated. They want an opportunity to use their capabilities to the best they are able so they can help in this society.

I suggest to you that we should look at some type of a program for these people. They probably need some basic educational skill. We have technical institutes in this province — Wascana, Kelsey, STI (Saskatchewan Technical Institute). Perhaps some type of course which would teach these people some skills that they would need, perhaps it could be accomplished with some type of apprenticeship program. You might have to look at some degree of subsidization for the employer; I don't know all the ins and outs of this.

We need something which would take these poor frustrated chaps from the situation where they are just sitting spinning their tires and sometimes becoming behavioral problems because of their great frustration. We have to help them to fit into something. I think if we could do this, we would see, over the long haul, that these people would find their niche and that they could become very productive, in view of their capabilities. I have seen instances where this happened despite the barriers that exist for these people in our society. Mind you, they are few and far between.

I'm sure you must realize that there are a number of individuals who fall into this

classification out there in Saskatchewan, and I think there is a real vacuum as far as services which could perhaps be provided to help them.

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes, the member makes a good point in talking about people who are in the gray area where they don't fit into certain handicapped areas and yet they don't fit into the mainstream. I think that we, as a society, as a group, and as a department, do have a responsibility to fulfil in that area, whether it's through training or whether it's through the educational process. We should bring about an area where these people can work alongside the mainstream in our society.

We are looking at a program where we do build sheltered houses for people like that, where they can live on their own as independently as possible. I think the very worst thing we could get into is institutions which we are moving away from in every area that we can today.

The other thing is that we did announce in our budget \$107,000 for a new supportive living program, where people will be given the opportunity to learn life skills, and they will be able to live on their own in their apartment or in their own home through help and assistance from the department. So, I think in that area, we are making moves to help those individuals and I think possibly if you have two or three names that you're having particular difficulty with (you wouldn't want to mention them here), and if you have an opportunity some time, we will take a look at them and see what we can do.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — I appreciate your offer and I will provide you with the names, because the families are frustrated and (I shouldn't call them children) the young gentlemen are frustrated also. I'm glad to hear that you have some money in place for this. I just feel that there is certainly a need there. We would like these people to become productive, to be able to live on their own and spend their lives contributing to the welfare of this province also.

I noticed in your budget that you have grants and allowances to agencies, organizations, associations and institutions providing programs or services for the benefit of the handicapped, and it has only gone up about \$500,000. I thought that was probably a little bit negligent, when this is the International Year of Disabled Persons. I was wondering, seeing this is the International Year of Disabled Persons, why we did not put a greater financial thrust into that. I see that day care received quite an infusion of money, and I'm not opposed to that, but I was expecting that, in this International Year of Disabled Persons we would really see some startling amounts of money put into such things that can help very much in these early intervention programs. I know that they're under the Department of Education, where we have the opportunity rooms and the developmental centres, but I think we all realize that with people with handicaps, the earlier the intervention the better.

That concentrated intervention is beneficial in two ways. Firstly, it is beneficial to the development of that person, because if you get to these handicapped people with this type of service early enough in their lives, it is just utterly startling as to what changes come about, and I think that's what we all want. Secondly, it is, of course, a very wise economic move for the society, because if we can bring these people to be productive individuals, that is the goal we hold.

I would be questioning whether \$500,000, in this budget year and the International Year of Disabled Persons, is sufficient to really achieve the types of programs that will help the disadvantaged people in our province. I'm looking a great deal at the younger

disadvantaged people, who, with this injection, can certainly improve greatly.

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes. I think that this being the International Year of Disabled Persons, we are well aware and we are making some very impressive moves in dealing with some of the problems that handicapped people are facing in today's world.

I think you need only look at some of the institutions. Take, for example, Valley View, where over the past number of years, the population has decreased significantly. We have a zero admission rate for young people — for children, the population since 1971 has gone from 350 children down to about 25 or 30 children below the age of 12. And you're right, in replacing people from the institutions you have to come forward with new programs, and early intervention is the area where money spent is money well spent.

The other area, I think, is in terms of parenting training for people who are going to have children. Studies which have been done show that a full 50 per cent of handicapped children could have been avoided if people had taken precautions during pregnancy, in terms of smoking and drinking and eating habits and those types of things.

As well, when you say how much money we are spending as a government in the International Year of Disabled Persons, the total funding is about \$82 million that the Saskatchewan government is directly putting into handicapped services for all the people in the province. That would include the money spent in health, social services and in education.

The program which I think is very impressive is the early intervention program. We have \$177,000 of new money which will allow for 85 new spaces. As well, we fund the Alvin Buckwold Centre in Saskatoon and the centre in Prince Albert on the same basis. I think we are well aware that this year is a special year, but I think we have to be cognizant of the fact, too, that often, when you have a year like this, it happens one year and then everyone forgets about it. I think it is the responsibility of all of us, as citizens of the country, to make sure that this isn't a one-year type of deal, that it goes on and on and that it only becomes a better program in years to come.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — I would certainly be in agreement. I think these years should serve as a focus or a target to inform the general population that there is a need out there. I certainly agree that we just can't look at things one year, take a massive shot at it, and then forget it after. I think it would be criminal to do anything of that nature.

I want to say in regard to the Alvin Buckwold Centre that, I think, it supplies a fine service to the people of Saskatchewan. I have had reason to contact the Alvin Buckwold Centre and have nothing but praise for the consultation and advice which was handed out at that centre. I do feel, though, that there is a bit of a limiting factor in southeastern Saskatchewan. I don't know if in your area people go to the Alvin Buckwold Centre. I think these kinds of services, wherever they can be provided, are certainly a great help for the people of Saskatchewan.

In the \$500,000 which you are putting out in grants for allowances to agencies, organizations, and associations for providing programs for the benefit of the handicapped, I would like to know perhaps where you are spending some of that money. I'd also like to ask you about your core services and about the availability of

speech therapists in this province. Does that fall under your jurisdiction? I think there is certainly a need for speech therapists. I would like you to enlarge a bit on what you are doing in your core services program for the province.

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — There are quite a number of grants which are paid out to the different groups. There is a list of about 15. Rather than read them out, maybe I could send you over a list. The exact allocation of the \$500,000 isn't decided appropriately, but we can send a list of where it is going to go in general.

In terms of speech therapists throughout the province, I think there is a shortage of speech therapists throughout Canada. They are just very hard to get hold of. It is an area which is handled by the Department of Health mainly, rather than the Department of Social Services. It is an area where there is a shortage.

There was another question. I'm not sure what it was. Would you repeat it?

**MR. TAYLOR:** — The question was on speech therapists. I realize there is a shortage of speech therapists in the school systems and in the population as a whole. I don't think we train speech therapists in Saskatchewan. The way I pronounced that, I sound as though I need one. This may be an unfair question to ask, if we are training them (I don't think we are). If we're not training them, I think representation should be made to the minister responsible for continuing education to look at the possibility of developing speech training in Saskatchewan — a school for speech therapists.

If there is a need across Canada, and good employment there for our young people, I would encourage you as Minister of Social Services to press the minister responsible for continuing education to see if such a program could be offered in Saskatchewan to fit that need.

You might elaborate, more for information than for anything else, I touched on speech therapy as being one aspect of your core services. Would you, in a neat little bundle, tell me what your core services offer to the people of Saskatchewan?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Core services cover a very large area. Their total funding is \$27 million — throughout the province. They are responsible for co-ordinating and developing activities for people who are mentally handicapped. As well, the new early intervention program will come under that jurisdiction. Valley View Centre and North Park Centre are part of the core services. The funding that is going into upgrading that facility in Moose Jaw at the present time is in the area of \$2 million so far, and another \$3 million or \$4 million will be spend in the future. It doesn't fall into their purview. It's not part of their budget. Government services is paying for that. So, that doesn't show up in this budget.

On the other hand, there is a fairly long list of groups which are funded directly — group homes, and that sort of thing. We'll send over a list to you later. Basically, core services handles the area dealing with the people who are mentally handicapped in the province. It's an area which is becoming more and more important as we deinstitutionalize people and work toward normalization.

It is very important that we set up programs throughout the community and as I mentioned, not only in Regina and Saskatoon. The money for the early intervention program hasn't been allocated yet. Hopefully, some of it will be located outside the major centres and in rural Saskatchewan.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Does your department fund, in any way shape or form, the Saskatchewan Mental Health Association? Does anything come from the Department of Social Services to Saskatchewan mental health in the way of a grant?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes, we don't have a grant that goes directly to the Saskatchewan Mental Health Association. We do pay a grant to the Saskatchewan Association for the Mentally Retarded. On the other hand, we do finance people who are using the facilities of that group in terms of the group home. Indirectly, I suppose we are funding that operation, but not directly in terms of a standard grant to the association.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — The one I was referring to is down here on Albert Street and 11th Avenue. I visited that one day. I saw handicapped people there. I just wondered if they were getting any funding from your department. They are getting it from government somewhere, but I was wondering if it was coming out of social services or not. I suppose the answer is that it is not coming from social services.

The last thing that I would like to touch on is auditing. I noticed today that the Minister of Labor indicated that there was some auditing of the books in the Department of Social Services taking place in regard to the SGEA problem. I am going to ask two questions here: (1) what books are they auditing? What has necessitated this? (2) Why have these people in the correctional camps, around Hudson Bay and Kenosee, and so on, not been paid the overtime which was due to them?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — The Department of Labor is auditing time sheets of the employees, the correctional workers, who work in the camp locations. They are not auditing directly the books of the department. They are auditing the time sheets which are filled in and sent in by the employees who work in camps.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Mr. Minister, would these people be getting overtime? Have they been mistreated? Were these people eligible for the overtime in these camps?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Our department feels that the overtime wasn't legitimately coming. Now that is not the view of the people of the correction 1 workers who have a grievance or who are working to gain overtime. I think it is fair to say that negotiations which will bring a resolution to this problem will take place out of this Assembly and around a table where the two groups will sit down and hammer out an agreement. I think, as in any dispute, there will be one side which will defend its position and the SGEA, which will defend its. I think an agreement will be reached. We are encouraged that negotiations will begin again in the very near future and that a resolution of the problem can be brought about very quickly.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Mr. Minister, two questions: First, why did it take your department so long to act on this very serious problem? Second, assuming (and I know you are doing an audit on the time sheets) that you find the hours of work claimed by those individuals to be correct . . . The figure I have heard from my colleague from Kelsey-Tisdale is that you owe them some \$500,000. Assuming that you find, through your audit, that is a fact, it is correct, how soon will you be paying that \$500,000 out to those workers?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Yes, you mentioned the long time involved in the negotiation. I'm informed that the change in classification from a field worker to a

regulated worker occurred when the new agreement was signed in July, 1980. Since that time, I feel it's fair to say, the department hasn't been dragging its feet; we have been attempting to resolve this matter.

I think on the other point, the \$500,000 you mentioned, if (and I emphasize "if") it were decided that we were responsible for paying that money, then it would be paid. It would be paid once the decision was made or the negotiations were concluded. At this time it is far from being resolved. As I mentioned, that resolution will come out in negotiations between the two groups.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — You say you have been attempting to resolve this, and that you haven't been dragging your feet. Let me ask you this question. I'm advised by my colleague again that you have in fact made an offer of settlement to these individuals without bothering with an audit. The offer would amount to some 10 per cent of what you really owe them. Obviously you are admitting your guilt in making any kind of an offer retroactive, but you are offering only a percentage of what is really coming to them. So I suggest that your statement of trying to resolve it and not having dragged your feet is far short of the truth. You didn't really attempt to do anything except make an offer that would get you off the hook.

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — I'll take notice of that question and bring back an answer tomorrow.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:03 p.m.