

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
February 24, 1983

EVENING SESSION

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE

SOCIAL SERVICES

Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 36

Item 1 (continued)

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, when we broke up at 5 o'clock we were really discussing the question of whether or not the department would discuss its broad policy for the future, or whether or not it would confine its comments to policies respecting money which is going to be spent for the period that we are considering. I can only say that the proposition that a department will only talk about its policies with respect to the period for which money is being spent is unusual to say the least. If that were operated in the House of Commons, for example, and I use this as an example, it would be really quite impossible to have a discussion on, let's say defence policy. You can't have a rational discussion of defence policy if you are only talking about the period for which money is going to be spent — the next 12 months. You couldn't possibly talk about whether we should have battleships, or cruisers, or destroyers, or corvettes, or frigates because whatever you say, the money is not going to be spent in the next 12 months.

Traditionally, every parliament and every legislature has talked about the policies of its departments in estimates. That's when we discuss it and at no other time. If we talked about highways, and I asked the Minister of Highways what his policy with respect to four-lane highways was, and he said "I'll tell you what we're going to do for the next 12 months but after that I won't tell you what our policy is with respect to four-laning highways," that is clearly nonsense.

Every government has policies which project over 4 or 5 years. If we talked about regeneration of hospitals in Saskatoon when we come to health, as we will want to, it may well be that whatever policy is being discussed and debated, no money would be spent in the next 12 months. But that is no reason for not discussing the policy; indeed, that is every reason for discussing the policy before the government commits itself to expenditures. That is what estimates are for. And if anyone doubts it, they can look at the Beauchesne's or otherwise and see whether or not they don't agree.

The question that I want to ask the minister is this: will she advise me what the policy of the department is for the next considerable period of time with respect to day care facilities in Regina?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure if we're talking about plans or policies. Before we adjourned at 5 o'clock we were talking about plans for the future, and that becomes very difficult. How does one put plans into place if you don't have the

money committed? And you were talking about plans for the future after the end of March, which I maintained was the '83-84 budget estimates, and I still do because you're coming right back to the same thing.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Then I will ask you what your plans are or your policies are, either one. Will you tell me either (a) your plans for the future with respect to day care in Regina, or (b) your policies for the future with respect to day care in Regina?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — My plans up until the end of March for day care is approximately to have spent on grants \$966,000.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — And I ask you what plans will you make before the end of March for day care following the end of March.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Mr. Chairman, we are beginning to split hairs. I still maintain that you are asking for a figure in the '83-84 estimates that we will get to in due course. Can we finish with the '82-83 estimates? That seems fair.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry that I'm not making myself clear. I am not asking for figures as to what you're going to spend in '83-84. I am asking you what policies and plans you are going to pursue into the future. And that is why I am unable to know how the minister can operate the department in February without knowing any plans or policies for April or May. If she feels she can and is stating that, yes, she has plans for February and March, but no plans for April and May, and nothing to tell the House as to what direction she's going in April and May, then say that. But if you have plans about — broadly, always subject to availability of money, as every five-year highway program will be subject to that, every program will be subject to that — but broadly what are your plans with respect to day care?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Mr. Chairman, I thought we had agreed that plans ultimately made a commitment of dollars if they are to be carried out in the long run. I do not have a commitment of dollars yet, because we haven't gone through the process of spring budget and spring estimates for the '83-84 budget for approval, or non-approval, to know what I will have.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Madam minister, have you approved of any construction of nursing homes in the year under review?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Yes.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Were all the commitments you gave to those nursing homes covered by sums which are in the budget up to the year ending March 31, 1983?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — No, sir, they're not.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Did you then commit to them sums of money which will not be voted in the current budget?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Yes.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Would you call that a policy or a plan to build a nursing home where you have committed those sums in the future?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — I would call it the nature of the project because it has to do with capital expenditures and construction.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — So we have established that money can be . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — Capital.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — There's no inherent difference between capital and operating. So in the future we can commit capital moneys. We've established that, regardless of whether it's in this year's budget. And I'm happy to have that admission from the minister.

And clearly there is a policy implicit when you commit capital money into the future. You have, I take it, given them no commitment that there will be any operating grants for those nursing homes into the future.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — You don't have the specifics with it. What you have is a commitment in principle, naturally.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Would the minister give me her plans or policies in principle with respect to day care in Regina?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — If I had to write a policy for the future, it would be one that probably states, "to continue to improve quality of day care, accessibility of day care and to give women several options that they may choose from."

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Does the minister anticipate that in the next short while there will be a need for additional day care spaces in Regina and Saskatoon, or does she anticipate that there will not be a need for additional spaces?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Given the fact that we have approximately 370 vacant spaces in day care centres around the province, one would initially say no to that, but I guess I would prefer to monitor it closely to make sure that there isn't a need for more and that those that are vacant are filled up first.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Does the minister have a view as to the adequacy of the levels of subsidy that now exist with respect to day care? Does the minister feel that they have kept up with the additional costs being incurred by the day care or have they not?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — I would suggest that if you look at Canada, they have more than kept up. They are one of the highest subsidies in the whole of Canada.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Minister, have they been increased in the last nine months?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — There was an increase effective April 1, 1982.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — May I, Mr. Chairman, ask the minister again, and I'm not sure whether I caught the answer and this is not meant to be in any sense repetitive, but is it likely that if a person applied to set up a day care that there would be funds likely to be forthcoming or not? I appreciate that that is a specific question dealing with the future, but if someone is going to get going on April 1, they need to know whether there is likely to be any money available. I have a person who asked me whether there is any prospect

of being able to set up a day care centre in southwest Regina, and I am asking: what advice should I give to that person?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — The first thing one would have to do would be to submit an application to the department. Secondly, the department would then do a needs analysis to see if there is a certain number of kids that it would make the venture viable. And thirdly, I would suggest, given the figures that I just gave to you at 5 o'clock of the number of vacancies in Regina, that perhaps now is not a good time to be applying if there are all these vacancies.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well, on the day care issue, there would be many people in the day care community who would explain the number of vacancies throughout the province as a result of the lack of funding for day care and the simple matter that the price that individual parents have to pay for day care in the province of Saskatchewan has risen out of reach of most of the parents. The day care program, you have admitted, was the highest subsidized in Canada when you took over April 1, but since then there has been no money put into the program, and as a result of that each week that goes by more and more parents cannot afford to put their children into day care.

This isn't only my opinion. I think if the minister has met with . . . I believe she met with a day care group on October 15 at which time she said that she didn't have time to study the day care policy at that time. I am wondering if in fact she has had time to study the policy and come up with an answer, in light of the fact that in every other area of the country day care spaces are being grabbed up as quickly as they can be built, whether or not it would have anything to do with the policy change of November 15 where people who are on welfare are no longer getting subsidies, in fact, after one month, not two, because they have to give the day care that they go to one month notice before they pull out of it. The fact is that once they pull out of the day care, do get a job, they have a very difficult time in cases, of getting back in.

And it seems to me that it's a lack of funding, it's a lack of funding, Mr. Chairman, that's causing the vacancies, rather than any decrease in demand. People are basically finding other methods and other places to put their children, and I would suggest whether they are getting the best care possible in the province of Saskatchewan as a result of the lack of funding.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — I'm here to answer questions, not preambles.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — The question was whether or not you think the policy change of your department on November 15 — the letter from a Shirley McKendry saying that the people who are on welfare would not get subsidies after, in fact, one month — has anything to do with the fact that there are vacancies in the province at this time.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — The answer is basically no to your question if that was an indication of policies to come. I believe that was the question, but I'm not quite sure.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, during question period today, I believe the minister told the House that the reason that group of individuals were cut off subsidy was to open up day care spaces for those working parents who were looking for day care spaces.

Well, we now have an admission that there are 375 vacancies, and will she consider

changing that policy back to what it was, where individuals looking for jobs, on welfare, could get the subsidy for six months, now that you have freed up, as a result of cutting the subsidies off, almost 400 day care spaces?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — That policy was changed on October 27. At that particular time, there was indeed, from all our indications, a shortage in day care spaces. Very directly to your question, I will not consider changing it back to the six months at this point in time.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — “At this point in time” — I’m not sure if that means the minister is anticipating changing it if the pressure grows enough, but you almost give the indication that if we’re to have a demonstration here on the opening day of the next session or the budget day, that you would consider changing it. So maybe that’s what it will take. But I think that the reason that we are seeing vacancies in Saskatchewan at this time has nothing to do with any attempt at trying to explain it away that there’s less demand. It’s simply because people cannot afford to put their children into day care centres, where in many cases they should be and are attempting to find much cheaper, and in many cases, unsatisfactory situations for the children. And I think it’s a bad precedent to follow. I’m just wondering whether the minister is following the advice of some of her own caucus colleagues who are talking about too many day cares in the province and whether that is the route that she is considering going at this time.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Mr. Chairman, I believe as elected MLAs, whether they are ministers or backbenchers, they have every right as a caucus to have input into policy. Now that maybe didn’t happen in the past, but it’s happening now and will continue to happen in the future, because that’s the year of the grassroots — elected to do what they’re supposed to do.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MRS. SMITH: — The MLAs have input into all government policies, whether there’s going to be changes or not be changes. And before any kind of drastic changes are made in day care, I assure you it will have the consensus of 56 MLAs.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well, the minister gives an indication, I believe, to the day care community of things to come, and I would let them know it’s not going to be an easy time in terms of getting money out of the Department of Social Services to set up new day cares after the discussion that has gone on here today.

I wonder if the minister would mind giving me a list of the subsidies that are available for new spaces that are being set up. If after the new budget comes out, what policy is in place at the present time for new spaces being set up, whether it’s in a day care home or a day care institution and also, the equipment grant?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — The grants for day care centres, the start-up grants in place: there’s a one-time \$600 child-space accountable grant for expenses and opening a new centre and expansion of spaces in an existing centre. There are equipment grants, an annual grant of \$100 per child-space to centres to assist with the replacement of supplies and equipment. And then there is the special needs grant, a special supervision grant of \$200 per month per child to assist centres with additional supervision costs. And there is a special needs equipment grant of \$50 per month per child for centres to purchase special equipment for the handicapped child in care. Then there are grants for the family day care homes, a one-time start-up grant of \$200

per family day care home and an annual grant of \$50 per space to all family day care homes after the first year of operation for the replacement of supplies and equipment.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — As I understand, the minister has indicated earlier that that is the same as it was as of April 1 for all those areas.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — What I just read to you is what is presently in place . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, you should know that better than me. It was there when I got there.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I guess what I'm saying and outlining is the fact that there has been no input by the present government into funding of day care in terms of increases, even though the inflation rate in that area where you have the needs of a household to service has gone up fairly considerably. I'm sure that you will be considering increasing the funding of day care in your budget.

In another area, I just want to ask a couple of brief questions on corrections and one of them is: can you give us an indication of how many individuals are on remand at the present time in the province of Saskatchewan?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — It is approximately 100 to 110. It's in that neighborhood.

MR. YEW: — Mr. Chairman, I'd like to raise a few points with the minister as well. I noted in your estimate book here that there are certain reallocations made. I suppose that is with regards to the realignment of the department, DNS. I have noted specifically five areas that have been reallocated. One is in regards to day care. Another is in regards to home care and grants to senior citizens. Another area is child care and ESP, employment support program. I wonder, Madam Minister, if you can advise what has been spent to date to northern communities, northern associations, local community associations, with respect to: (1) day care, (2) grants for home care, (3) grants for senior citizens' services, child care and employment support programs.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Okay, in the '82-83 blue book, the one we're working with, for day care, \$572,960; for home care, and I'm assuming that that's what you tied the senior citizens' service in to — was it? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Okay, \$223,130; child care, 764,800; and the ESP program, 57,780. Those figures represent a six-month period of time.

MR. YEW: — Thank you. With regard to these allotments, Madam Minister, and this whole process of realignment with the southern line department, there are program areas in question at the present time, and I'm sure that the communities and the local associations involved are interested to know if there is any regulation or any policy or any plan to ensure that those dollar figures, those amounts of financial support that your government is prepared to provide to the local associations and communities . . . I'm sure that they are concerned to know if there is, in fact, a way of assuring them that this money is allotted to them, number one, and, number two, that they can get a fair and appropriate emphasis in terms of government services and programs, if you know what I'm getting at. Is there such a plan in effect, or are you anticipating coming through with some policy or other, with respect to this?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — It is our intent with the figures that I gave you that we will have spent that full amount by the end of March. And I assure you that our commitments in carrying out the programs that are my responsibility in this portfolio are every bit as

sincere for the North as they are for what some people call the South.

MR. YEW: — I greatly commend your sincerity, Madam Minister, and I don't question your integrity at all, not one bit. And I just want to put the politics aside in terms of this issue. I don't intend to try to ruffle your feathers in any way, shape or form. I'm sorry if I have done so but this is in all actuality a very serious concern of ours.

I'd like to go back to this — the area of the grants for the employment support program, as an example. You say that the money that has been appropriated for the northern administration district will be expended for the northern areas at the end of this fiscal year. And yet you quote that for the employment support program you have allotted somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$57,000, whereas you have earmarked in the '82-83 estimates \$2.6 million, just to round it off evenly. Is that \$57,000 then the full entitlement for the North program?

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order.

MR. KOSKIE: — A point of order. I wonder if we could have some order in the House so that those who are interested in listening to the member can in fact hear the questions which are being put, because during the whole session there has been talking out loud and moving around this Assembly. And certainly, if the members want to, I would think that it's reasonable that the member have an opportunity to direct his question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — The point is well taken. I would caution all members to be a little more quiet so that we can hear the speaker.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Mr. Chairman, the \$2.6 million figure that you quoted out of the blue book was the total dollars of the whole province. The \$57,780 that I gave you was for a six-month period of time, from the time the transition period took place of DNS into social services.

MR. YEW: — For that six-month period then, my question was: was that \$57,780 the full allotment for the employment support program for the North out of the \$2.6 million allotted?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — That is the full allotment for the six-month period of time.

MR. YEW: — Maybe I'll try to rephrase the question. Do you anticipate allotting any more out of the \$2.6 million earmarked here for that portion of the budget? You have allotted \$57,000 for the previous six months; however, the current fiscal year is still on us. Do you suggest then that there is money available for another grant to some community or other in the northern administration district?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — It is not our intention to be allocating any more out of that \$2.6 million for this year.

MR. YEW: — With regard to the nursing care home that was proposed for La Ronge, and now with the review and study process under way for the hospital, is there any consideration being given at this point in time for, say a feasibility study of some kind to assist the community of La Ronge for the possible establishment of a nursing care

facility there once the government has decided to go ahead and proceed with the new hospital?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — I believe my colleague, the Minister of Health, had a trip to La Ronge not too long ago, and in his tour with the hospital there and discussion with the local people, had indicated to them that, because the whole issue of level 3, level 4 care was raised to him at that time because of the physical feature of the building that was presently there, he would be coming back and he and I would be sitting down to talk about the need to co-ordinate some of the services between health and social services if we were to be able to meet the demand. Mr. Taylor and I have not had that meeting yet, but that will be coming up shortly.

MR. YEW: — Thank you, Madam Minister. Another area — and I won't take up too much time — but there is another area that is of some concern up North, and that is the area of perishable food. We had, in former programs with the former administration, a transportation subsidy, a food subsidy for perishable goods to five remote communities. I wonder what your current policy is, and with respect to future plans and policies, if this will remain intact — firstly, your current program, if it does exist and secondly, your future policy for such.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Could we have a bit of order and quiet, please!

HON. MRS. SMITH: — I believe when the transfer took place that program that you are talking about was transferred to the Department of Health, but I am also told that it is in place through the Department of Health.

MR. YEW: — Thank you. I'll make a note of that and certainly pursue it when we come to those estimates. I'd like to come back to that area — giving the northern communities assurance that they are, actually, in fact, being given the proper and adequate services and programs. I'm concerned that with this realignment process that a lot of their program and service requirements will be somewhat jeopardized, or maybe that's the wrong expression, but somehow lost in the process.

I'll go back to the initial question. Is there a plan, a policy of some kind, that your department is contemplating, and several other agencies and departments as well, of reassuring that Northerners will get their full-fledged services that were applicable with the former administration?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — I can't vouch for the plans of the other departments, as you well know, sorry about that. You may not want to ruffle my feathers and I don't know why the term feathers is always used when it comes to women. I suppose I should say, "I may not wish to ruffle your whiskers" or whatever. You'll have to get that information from the other departments.

We are still delivering the services for social services, with a director assigned in La Ronge for the northern part. The only thing that has changed on the matter of social services is who that person is reporting to. He is now reporting to Regina, as opposed to DNS.

MR. YEW: — You say you have a director in place or did you suggest that you will have a new director, Madam Minister?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Well, I kind of like the one that's there.

MR. YEW: — With regard to the realignment process, I'm not suggesting in any way that we're different in northern Saskatchewan from the rest of the province. I'm not trying to create a separate mini-province in any way, shape or form, but the vastness of that area is quite unique and different from the South, even when it comes to social and economic opportunities. We haven't got the amount of services, programs, facilities, and opportunities that are comparable to the rest of the province. That is why I keep emphasizing the North.

I take it that in some instances some members do get a little cheesed off when someone does mention or emphasize the North, but certainly it warrants special consideration. I, for one, would strongly suggest that the government opposite should consider a way to monitor, to co-ordinate, to give assurances that those communities up north won't be neglected in any way. I hope, Madam Minister, that you can work something out, in that respect, with your colleagues. I know you're not responsible for the other departments, but I certainly hope that something can be worked out, that the North can still receive that special consideration that it deserves. It's, like I say, a vast area, and economically, we're not as fortunate as the rest of the province. Therefore, I leave that with you. I have no further questions at this time.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I have a couple of questions on the home care program. Maybe the minister would outline the number of home care district boards that are actually providing service. I believe there's possibly one left that is not set up and operating.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Four; one not on stream yet, and that's Regina.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — What seems to be the holdup in Regina? Is it something that's coming on relatively quickly, or are you anticipating that it's going to take some time before that board is in place and providing services?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — It has nothing to do with whether the board is in place or not. The board has been in place since April of '82, and they are looking at being on stream by this summer some time.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — At a meeting in, I believe it was, Saskatoon, at least it was the Saskatchewan Home Care Association . . . I have a copy of a speech here where you were outlining what you termed "the recovery formula" whereby you were attempting to get several million dollars back from the home care board that had been allocated by a previous government. I'm just wondering, how is that rate recovery program going and are you getting the boards to send the money back that a previous administration had sent to them?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Well, I think it's going better after I made a few changes instead of following the plan that had been in place for you to recover it if you had got back in on April 26, and that was to recover the whole thing, including the interest. The interest was left for the boards.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I think that the minister in her recovery program . . . It was the first time that anyone had heard of this formula. I think when they first heard you talking about it, they thought that this recovery formula was some new and exciting means of stimulating, maybe adding additional programs such as transportation, which had been asked for, or physiotherapy. And when they heard what the recovery program was, the asking for several million dollars, I think it came as quite a surprise. What I'd

like to know is: are there any home care districts in the province at the present time that have a component of transportation involved in the delivery of service at the present time.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Mr. Chairman, I assure the member that it was no surprise to the home care association. The entire procedure was carried in consultation with them, direct meetings with them. It was not a surprise to the members that had been around from the inception of home care. The transportation matter — there are no home care boards that are supplying transportation, but we do have approximately 20 agencies that get various grants for the transportation of mostly seniors and the handicapped.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — What about physiotherapy? Is that a component in Regina or Saskatoon that is funded by the Department of Social Services as a part of the home care program?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — The University Hospital in Saskatoon has a physiotherapy component in their home care program. There is one home care board, I believe, that has physiotherapy they are offering, not as one of the mandated services, but as an extra. That is the Wheatland, in that southwest corner. They have been able to do that out of the interest of the money that they have.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — You're telling us you're not going to attempt to get that money back in your recovery program, so that that can continue.

I'm wondering how soon the home care boards can expect that this government will move on the transportation, so that all the residents of the province, the people who are aged and need that type of transportation, can expect funding from your department so they can expand the home care program to include both the transportation component as well as physiotherapy.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — In this upcoming year, there will be a review conducted of the present formula. It's based on the per capita of seniors. It did not take into account the number of beds in a nursing home in a district, or the lack of nursing home beds. It does not take into account the fact that people do not quit being sick after 5 o'clock and remain that way until 9 o'clock Monday morning. So, with some of those factors, also some of the districts facing some deficits because of some factors with their senior citizens, we decided, in consultation once again with the home care association, that we would have a good hard look at the formula to see if there is a way of bettering it to meet the needs of the people that were the big users of the program.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well, you don't foresee then, in the immediate future, a component that would deal with the transportation needs and the physiotherapy needs in the various home care districts?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — I don't have my crystal ball with me tonight.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I have a couple of other short questions. One of them is on the employment support program, which my colleague had asked a couple of questions about, but if I am correct in reading this, I believe there is something over \$2 million in employment support program. Is that the correct total?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — \$2.6 million.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I would like to just ask the minister if she wouldn't consider it an appropriate move to shift some of the money that is now going out to those who are classified as "unemployed employables" — the \$6 million a month. In light of the fact that you have a program in place that could use a great deal of that money, in terms of very meaningful job creation, where it would be a very simple process to move some of this money — maybe not all of it, but a good part of it, even if it were \$2 million or \$3 million a month — into creating jobs, whether it was building houses or needed community facilities, the ESP could very quickly be geared up to create employment. The excuse that you were using earlier, that the whole government, the Minister of Industry and Commerce, and everyone else has to be involved, I think it's fairly obvious that within your own department you have a mechanism, you have an administration, and all the plans must be there somewhere where very quickly it would be a relatively easy matter to shift money from welfare, from those people who are unemployed but employable, to create jobs through the employment support program. And I am just wondering if consideration is being given at this time to shifting the emphasis from paying out massive amounts of welfare to people who would rather be working, to the employment support program.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Well first of all you've got to be kidding, after being minister of social services, to think anything is ever done simply, particularly when you are talking about millions of dollars and the whole issue of the welfare state. I think the department is always open to suggestions and the possibilities and the potential of shifting some moneys, particularly if there is an underexpenditure in one area and an over or a problem in another area. The job creation program is one example of the government being open to those kinds of suggestions also.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well, the program that you referred to, in my mind, is a very small effort when you look at the total program — I believe being worth \$10 million — and we find \$6 million a month going out to those who are unemployed and employable.

I am glad to see the member for Rosthern is back in his seat. I know that in previous estimates he has been a great proponent, and at that time, there was very little money going out to people who were unemployed and employable by comparison to what it is now, and I am sure that as a Legislative Secretary he will want to lean on the minister a little to see if some of that money can be shifted over to creating jobs through the employment support program, and I am sure that he will do that because he knows the speech very well.

With that I would like to thank the minister and her staff for the efforts that they have made here today. I hope that the effort is increased because I am sure that the many groups out there who are attempting to face a severe recession or depression are depending on the department to do much better in the next months than it has in the last 12, in terms of getting money out of a treasury which seems to have great amounts of money for the upper echelon, and the theory of trickle-down economics or supply side economics or the David Stockman theory that has been virtually thrown out in the States, and start putting some money into those people who could stimulate the economy.

MR. LUSNEY: — I have one or two short questions for the minister. On the home care,

you indicated that some home care districts may have some problems because of the large amounts of senior citizens within the district. Have you considered, at any time, granting extra funding for those areas that have this problem within the fiscal year to see if you can get them through to March 31 or whenever your year ends, because there are some areas where their funding is running out and they are having to drastically cut the services provided because of the funding that isn't there. Have you considered, or is it possible for them to apply for additional funding?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Yes, we have considered it; we considered it in the whole issue in trying to deal with the surplus policy. I had already indicated some boards for some reasons have some legitimate deficits, having a high number of senior citizens in their district and a very low ratio of nursing home beds in their district, and also some of them having senior citizens with a very low income, lower than the average district, which made the home care board low on the user-fee accounts. So we have considered, upon request, those and will be helping some of them out.

MR. LUSNEY: — Have you to this point given out any additional funds to any district?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Three districts.

MR. LUSNEY: — Could I ask for the names of those districts?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Woodlands, Canora and Touchwood.

Item 1 agreed to.

Items 2 to 37 inclusive agreed to.

Item 38

MR. LINGENFELTER: — On the Saskatchewan Income Plan, I wonder if the minister could briefly outline why that number is significantly lower than it was the year before, as well as what was budgeted by the previous government.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — There has been no change in policy on the payments and what your level of income must be, and I suggest it is through seniors having a higher level of income through small investments, perhaps because the interest rate is higher in the bank — 30-day term deposits. And also because more seniors, including some women, you know, 65 and over, have access to Canada Pension Plan. That's all.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I think the fact that in the previous budget there was what was called a senior shelter allowance . . . I think it would have put about \$7 million or \$8 million into those seniors' hands to deal with utility rates or rent or mortgage payments. The minister I would hope would consider putting some income, extra income, through the Saskatchewan Income Plan in the very near future, because I think that is another area, if you're looking at stimulating the economy — the fact that these people put very little money away and spend every cent they get. If you're looking at stimulating the economy and the small businesses on Main Street in Small Town, Saskatchewan, this is a very proper and a very good way of going at it. And I would watch with a great deal of interest to see whether or not this comes to fruition after the next budget.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — I do believe the figure was not \$8 million or \$12 million but more like \$4.5 million that you were talking about. But I stand to be corrected if you go back

and check what you didn't put through the shredder.

Item 38 agreed to.

Vote 36 agreed to.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (NO. 3)

CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE

SOCIAL SERVICES

Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 36

Items 1 to 7 inclusive agreed to.

Vote 36 agreed to.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE

SOCIAL SERVICES

Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 36

Items 1 to 13 inclusive agreed to.

Vote 36 agreed to.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

CONSOLIDATED FUND LOANS, ADVANCES AND INVESTMENTS

SOCIAL SERVICES

Vote 67

Item 1 agreed to.

Vote 67 agreed to.

CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE

EDUCATION

Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 8

Item 1

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is my pleasure to introduce the officials from the Department of Education. I have with me Mr. Ray Clayton, the deputy

minister, sitting on my left. On my right, Mr. Peter Dyck, executive director, regional services, and to the left over here is Gil Dumelie, executive director of administrative services, and John Moneo, director of financial management, and at the back, Ken Horsman, who is the executive director of policy and planning; Fred Nakonechny, acting executive director, program development; Arlen Copeman, administrative officer of the superannuation commission; Ken Kirby, who is the director of the educational administration. Lou Jule, who is the executive director of the official minorities language office.

MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, I just want to say at the outset that I hope that we can roll along in the estimates with some dispatch and I want to say for basically two reasons. One is that the fiscal year that we're reviewing is essentially past. Never before have we had the distinct opportunity to deal with a budget so late in the year of any government. And secondly, in reviewing the basic budget, I want to say that you had a fair amount of wisdom in that you essentially adopted the budget which the previous minister put forward. And so, as a consequence, many of the areas have been addressed and I look forward to your wisdom in the future years, that you will use the precedent that we left to you as a guide for the future.

As an introduction, since in fact you have been minister for some 10 months or so, if the minister would outline, sort of briefly and in general terms, basically his conceived direction that education will be taking under his tutorship, indicating any areas of concern that he may foresee in the future that need to be addressed, and basically outline any overall concern with the present educational system and the corrective action which you hope to achieve.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Chairman, I hope that I'm able to address myself to the general topic that the hon. member has asked me to speak to. As far as the overall aim and objectives and goals in education which I think you are referring to, quite frankly I believe that what we are aiming for in education is to establish the best opportunity possible for young people to have the opportunity to grow and to develop academically, aesthetically, physically, in as balanced a manner as possible. And by balanced I mean having the opportunity of learning the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic and alongside of that, a proper balance of learning which will develop the person's ability to enjoy life, the person's ability to realize his potential in so far as the arts are concerned. It's just the overall growth and development, creating that kind of facility and learning atmosphere which will allow that to take place.

That's a pretty general statement. Now, as far as the directions that I see it taking are concerned, we do have at the present time a review committee that has been struck. It was struck by the previous government to review the overall curriculum in the province of Saskatchewan. The main purpose of this is to find out just where we are at as far as education is concerned, where our shortcomings are, where our concerns are, and what directions we should be taking and where we should be placing greater or less emphasis.

I am pleased to report that the curriculum review committee has met going into the last part of this year, and has deliberated itself over a period of a year. It has submitted to the public a questionnaire. It has been conducting, and is conducting at the present time, public hearings throughout the province for the purpose of getting as much input from the public as possible. And sometime in October, the report should be finalized and submitted to myself for review and to determine what direction we should be going in education.

I think that this is a very timely thing. I think there are many people in our society who are questioning what we are doing in education and are concerned. I think that it is a good exercise for us to go through in order to be more confident about what we are doing, even if we just find out that what we are doing is acceptable, is palatable out there, and the people are satisfied. I think it is worth the amount of money that we are spending on it and so I was fully in support of the review committee and we have continued it and we will continue it to its finalization.

As far as concerns are concerned, that's a pretty broad area. There are a number of concerns out there. There are a number of concerns with regard to practical implications like declining enrolments and closing of schools and just a host of those kinds of things.

Maybe I could mention a few things like the expansion of the French program. The bilingual movement has taken hold and we are not talking just now about the expansion of the program in French just for the Francophone communities but there is an ever-increasing demand on the part of the Anglophone communities to have French immersion. It seems that perhaps we in western Canada, and particularly in this province, are more mature as a people, that we have come to the realization that this is not something that has been forced down our throats. It is something that is added to us and gives us another component, another dimension that culturally gives us some substance and also is of great value to us living in the world of the latter part of the 20th century.

I could mention, and I had in mind, certain other concerns, but perhaps some of these would be raised by the hon. member as we proceed.

MR. KOSKIE: — Thank you for your comments, Mr. Minister. Some of the trends in education in Saskatchewan and some of the changes which I expect will occur, you have mentioned in respect to the enrolment trends throughout the province, so that the declining enrolment in rural areas certainly has to be addressed.

I refer to a study that was done which deals with the emerging trends and issues in Saskatchewan education from 1982 to 1986 — the summary version of it. Certainly, I think that is a very important area that must be addressed because, certainly, although there is declining rural enrolment, and while the public perception is that when enrolments decline so should expenditures, that's not necessarily so.

I just want to emphasize that in the past what we attempted to do was to recognize the small rural schools in the general formula to help address that. I am glad to hear that you are cognizant of that area. I hope that in the future that you, too, will give it full consideration.

I think there is one other area which I think will in the future need to be probably addressed as it was being done in the past, and that is in respect to native education. So many of the natives did not attend school for a long duration. Also, I think you will find that if the statistics are correct here it indicates that the Indian ancestry portion of the school-age population will likely rise from 22 per cent in 1976 to 32 per cent in 1986 and 46 per cent in the year 2001. That's a projection.

So certainly I just want to say to the minister that in respect to Indian education the *Leader-Post* on October 9, 1982 had an article in respect to Indian education has come

a long way. I just want to read a part of it. The study, launched because of the SFI, felt there was pretty serious trouble and gave the following picture. This was launched in 1969. They say:

A large number of students were dropping out of schools between grades 7 and 10. We just weren't witnessing any graduations. Some Indian bands, particularly around Prince Albert, didn't have control of the schools on the reserves. Only 50 Indians had graduated from university in the province. Only five Indians were working in education in the province.

Some of the changes which they recognized I think we have been able to achieve in the province. A total of 3,800 Indian people are employed in education in Saskatchewan backed by special training courses.

"3,800 is a large number," Sanderson said. "They can make one hell of a large influence on the change in the system." Several schools around the province have been transferred from the federal Indian Affairs Department to the bands and they are producing more and more high school graduates.

It goes on to the development of what has taken place in the past. Without really elaborating too largely on this, I just want to raise this as a concern to me, a concern which I think the Department of Education was seriously attempting to correct. They had made some gains, and all I say, in this regard, is that I hope that the minister will continue the growth in addressing the education of our native people.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Chairman, I fully concur with the hon. member in regard to a need for us to address ourselves to recognizing the need for taking initiatives in order to educate Indian children and Metis children.

As a matter of fact, I have had the opportunity of travelling in at least a portion of northern Saskatchewan. There are many good things out there, and I think we ought to start to build upon the good things that are there and go from there. It is not going to be an easy task. It's going to take commitment and dedication on the part of the people who get involved in these areas.

Some of the things that I might mention that I have seen have been very heartening. First of all, I have seen the eyes of the children in the schools that I have visited — in places like Green Lake, Meadow Lake, Beauval, La Loche, Ile-a-la-Crosse, and so forth. I've seen the light of hope and not despair. I was very heartened by what I saw happening in the schools, and perhaps I was a little concerned when I thought of what does happen then, after these young people reach the age of anywhere from 13 to 16 and so forth.

Certainly, I concur that it is one of the most important avenues through which we will be able to mobilize this area of human resource, through the processes of education, and through different kinds of programs that will suit the needs of those children.

I would mention having had the opportunity of visiting the headquarters for NORTEP, not just of visiting there where they're training native people to go out and teach in native schools, in native communities, but also of meeting with people who were interning out in the schools and listening to these people talk, and getting from them the feeling that they had about the pride that they were taking in becoming teachers

and serving as models for the young children coming up. I think this is a very exciting direction for us to be going. I think that we have to give more and more encouragement to this kind of initiative.

Also, I had the opportunity of visiting what is happening at SUNTEP, which is the urban training program for native teachers. I've had the chance to visit community schools. Community schools are a new thing in the cities of Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert, where we involve the native peoples themselves as teacher aides who come into the schools and work with the elders and with native peoples themselves. We are doing an evaluation of those programs at the present time.

My personal evaluation of these programs, from what I have heard and seen, is that they have been outstanding successes compared to what we've had in the past. There are just many, many ways that I think we can reach out and do a better job than what we have done in the past, and I am not saying this to gain political points.

Yesterday, we had a group of students visit this Legislative Assembly who were introduced by the member for Regina Victoria, and they came from Cochrane High School. I was very, very pleased to see that half of those students, or at least it seemed to me, approximately half of those students were native students.

I perhaps have an ulterior motive in mentioning this because of the fact that I happened to be the principal of that school when it was first established, and it was established in order to help those students who were experiencing difficulty in the regular program. There are many, many ways that we can work toward educating native and Indian children in the same way that we educate other people with different kinds of thrusts.

MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Minister, I thank you for your comments. I want to turn to a number of individual issues, if I may call them that. In one area, certainly there has been some concern, and that is the area in respect to the various school divisions, where the Department of Education has sort of requested or demanded that the superintendent, who was employed by the department, be replaced by a director. I want to raise this specifically to the minister's attention, because I have copies of two concerns, and one is in the Humboldt Rural School Division No. 47. The minister will be aware of the letter. The second area of concern that was raised, or the school division that raised the concern, was Sturgis. Those are the two that I am aware of.

I want to just outline briefly the facts as I know them. In respect to Sturgis, apparently the director of education, or someone from the department, met with not the total board, but according to the facts as I understand them, with a portion of the board, and they were required to change from a superintendent to a director in the middle of the year, or as of January 1, as I recall it. And they were concerned, number one, that they weren't given the option as to whether they maintain the superintendent through the department or a director. Secondly, they felt that the timing was improper in that they could not at that time really, they felt, advertise for the suitable candidates and automatically choose one; they wanted the other principals to be free to apply out of the school year. And secondly, they felt that it was hoisted upon them, rather than really consultation. It seems to me that this government has been constantly talking about consultation, how they consult with all the groups before they make these decisions, and certainly I heard the previous minister addressing that with the flamboyant language which is so accustomed to by so many and for so long. So, leaving it at that I would like to ask the minister to address those concerns.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — We have in the province of Saskatchewan at the present time eight directors who are provincially employed. In all the rest of the school division, they are locally employed. This has happened over a period of years, largely through boards requesting that they be locally employed, and it has been the philosophy in education to, as much as possible, give local autonomy to school boards and school divisions.

So in keeping with this, our department has decided to encourage — perhaps it has been misinterpreted as force — boards to hire, to continue with the rest of the boards completing this process of going to locally hired directors who would be controlled by the boards of education and not operate from the Department of Education. So this is what the hon. member is referring to.

As far as Humboldt School Division is concerned, as I recall, we have communicated with them and in the communication we have indicated that we would be prepared to consult with them. In some instances we have found that they are under misapprehensions of one kind or another, that they feel that they are obligated in ways that we don't feel they should have to be. We feel that if they have locally employed directors, the board of education will tell the directors what they do or what they don't do, instead of the Department of Education doing it. It's going away from centralized control to local control, and quite frankly I was surprised that there was some resistance to this.

Now, the way that we have dealt with the resistance has been that we have sent a letter, and I think in the last statement this very clearly stated that we are prepared to sit down and consult with them concerning this transition. And the way that we are going is that if they decide that it's not in their best interest to do so, by no means will we be forcing them to do this.

As far as the timing is concerned, we had given them advance notice, plenty of notice, so that they could make these preparations and do the advertising for this particular position, not with the idea that they would be compelled to have this person replaced by January 1, but rather by June 30. And I think that was pretty clearly stated when we sent out this message.

MR. KOSKIE: — Well, I think that the facts as I get them in correspondence with the minister, and from the Humboldt area . . . I didn't want to necessarily get into the letter but he says that he was terribly disappointed as to the action of the regional director of education with his handling of the matter, and in particular “. . . in the way he notified me. That is, he came to see me personally in a wheat field where I was combining.” It said in essence:

It was the decision of the Department of Education that the board of education of the Humboldt Rural School Division No. 47 would have to employ their own director, effective January 1, '83.

Now he took objections to the method but his interpretation there (and Sturgis as well) was that the effective date was January 1. So I guess what I asked the minister . . . This is the information that's in the letter — that it was to be as of January 1. And this is a letter from the chairman of the board of Humboldt School Division to the minister. And in the letter from Sturgis the same question was raised, that the decision was they had to employ as of January 1. Now, can the minister clarify whether that is inaccurate, a misconception, or whether it has been altered by the department to give them more time?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Yes, I know what you're referring to. I was actually referring to the Humboldt public and this is the Humboldt rural that you're referring to — the letter from the chairman of the board. Right. All right. All I can do is reiterate what I previously said — that at no time was it the official policy of our department to insist that boards change at the time of January 1, but rather June 30. Nor was it our official policy for a board member or the chairman of a board to be told that he must, that they must, take on a locally-hired director. I think that's about as clear as I can be about it. Excuse me, if I might add, quite frankly I did have a difference of opinion with that one board that you're referring to. Quite frankly I didn't agree with the assumptions that were being made by the chairman of the board.

MR. KOSKIE: — In respect to the Sturgis School Division, can the minister indicate what has taken place in this respect — whether the problem has been resolved in a similar manner, that is, or have they in fact proceeded as they led me to believe that they were required to do by January 1? What has happened in the Sturgis situation?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — In regard to the Sturgis situation, we have had ongoing dialogue with them and as a matter of fact there was a meeting with the board today in this regard and I'm not sure what the outcome of it was — whether they decided to go there with the locally-hired director or to stay with the provincial director.

MR. KOSKIE: — In either case, Mr. Minister, I believe you to have said that you clearly indicated to both the divisions that I raised, the Humboldt Rural School Division and the Sturgis, that it was really their decision as to whether or not they chose to go with the director rather than maintain the existing situation.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — I didn't say it in those words. I said that we were prepared to consult with them, which in my way of thinking meant that we were prepared to consult in the best interests of achieving the concept of local autonomy in the province of Saskatchewan — completing that process. If they choose to feel that it is completely contrary to their wishes, I can commit myself to saying to you that they will not be forced into going that way.

MR. KOSKIE: — Fair enough. Just one other particular area of concern that I have and that is in respect to the Correspondence School and the relative fee increases. I wonder if the minister could indicate what Correspondence School fee increases have been during the current year, the amount and the reason for those increases.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Well, the tuition fees have not been changed, but the course material or the cost for the course material has been changed. From the top of my head, maybe you could correct me, I think this is the first change since 1977 in correspondence courses. And you know the cost of all materials, of printing and everything else has gone up substantially since that time, and I don't think that this is really a prohibitive kind of an increase. It's just to bring us up to where perhaps it should be. Perhaps these adjustments should have been made year after year in the past, and we would intend to do that in the future. So it's just in order to recover the costs so that it's cost efficient really or cost recoverable.

MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Minister, if you'd indicate the amount of the increase, perhaps I missed it.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — The amount would be \$17; what we charged previously was \$6 for a credit course and \$3 for a half-credit course.

MR. KOSKIE: — Were there any other increased charges in respect to correspondence courses?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — I'm informed that's the only change.

MR. KOSKIE: — I have a correspondence from the director or the principal of the Correspondence School and it indicates, I think, in this correspondence that there was another change. The Correspondence School tuition fee of \$20 per credit course and \$10 per half-credit course shall remain the same. However, a \$6 registration fee will be charged for each subject. Is there a registration fee? Is this a new charge?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — The total amount that was charged in the past at the Correspondence School was \$26. That was total cost. Now what has happened is that the cost has gone from \$26 to \$26 plus the \$17. And where we get the \$6 from is that it has been categorized now and broken down into materials and registration — tuition and registration I guess is what I should have said. So that's where, I guess, we get that \$6.

MR. KOSKIE: — One other issue I think the minister is fairly familiar with. I would like him to indicate what progress he has made in resolving the particular question. It really has to do with the noon-hour supervision in respect to schoolteachers and the general interpretation of the particular section of the act. I know that you have received correspondence from many of the school divisions across the province urging you to change The Education Act and to clarify with respect to teachers the noon hour supervision issue. I would just like the minister to indicate what steps have been taken to date. I don't know if you have made a decision. If you have made a decision, fine. I'd appreciate that. But what steps have you taken in resolving that particular issue?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Well, some of the steps that we have taken is that we have met with the trustees' association and we've met with the teachers' organization, the STF. We've brought the leadership of the two groups together on two occasions. This is an issue that has been there since I was in education, which was some 35 years. It's an issue that was not resolved, really, by the government for a period of 75 years. It's been there historically and except on one occasion when (I think it was) the Liberal government introduced a clause which dealt with this; it was in 1969 and in 1974 it was changed, was rescinded.

What I am saying is that it's not a black or white issue. It's a very complicated issue and a very sensitive issue because it affects basically the quality of education that will happen in this province. So we are trying to deal with this in as responsible a manner as we possibly can, and trying to get these people who have the responsibility for giving leadership to their respective organizations to see if they can arrive at a consensus whereby it would work in the best interests of all of the students in this province. And if they can do that, then these are the people, the main players in the education scene, who should be resolving this issue rather than for the government to step in and say that it's going to control everything from Regina, which I don't think the people of this province really want.

So the thing actually has been to court in the case of Tisdale, and it's to go to court in Moose Jaw. And so you know I don't think that it would be really a wise thing for the

minister to stick his nose into the thing at a time when it's going before the court again.

MR. KOSKIE: — I certainly concur with the minister that bringing the parties together and attempting to resolve the issue in that way is desirable. Obviously, as he says, it's a very important issue to both sides because it has in fact been to court, on one occasion in Tisdale and proceeding in Moose Jaw. All I want to say is that certainly the process of consultation is one responsibility and the process of decision making is also another responsibility in respect to running any department. It cannot always be resolved necessarily by consultation and one of these days I think the government is going to realize that they're going to have to make a few decisions. I suspect this may well be one.

I want to leave that particular issue. I want to come back to a decision that you made early as a minister. And that was the repeat of legislation in the city of Saskatoon in respect to the establishment of wards for the election of school boards. I want to say that I certainly do not agree that the minister necessarily had full consultation, because I know it is a fact that the recent elections were held in Saskatoon, and electing from a large list of potential candidates it is almost an impossibility for the electorate to intelligently make a decision. Of course, many interviews indicated that they walked away from in fact making a selection. I want to indicate to the minister that the issue is not, in my view, a dead issue. He indicated before that he would certainly consider it as he examined the situation. I know the Saskatchewan teachers' association, through their president, is in agreement with the development of the ward system. I know that there is in fact a citizens' advisory council, the Saskatoon Public Board of Education, that have also indicated to us that they are in favor of the institution of the ward system.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Tell me who they are, Murray.

MR. KOSKIE: — I just did. I want really to ask the minister: is the same flexibility that he indicated in June still a part of his evaluation of whether or not he will take another look at the ward system?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Chairman, I can assure the hon. member that, yes, I am still just as loose as I was at that time and open to any suggestions whereby we can improve education for the students of this province. There were pros and cons and I think we discussed these when that piece of legislation was rescinded — when the ward system was rescinded.

There were some assumptions that were made which caused that ward system to be introduced for the electing of school boards. It seemed to me as I read the Bergstrom report that Mr. Bergstrom had assumed — I'm sorry, the de Vlieger report — he had indicated one thing as a kind of a cut and dried assumption, it seemed to me: if there was a long list presented to them in the voting poll, people would just present themselves and vote for the first five or six or seven on the list. I was interested in the results of the elections in Saskatoon and Regina. These were the two cities concerned. If anything, the opposite was true. People way down in the alphabet were being elected to school boards.

So you know, sometimes we do research or we get somebody to come in with some research, and I'm not sure sometimes that it's really that valid all the time. I am concerned. I think the point that you made is a very legitimate point about having a list that is extraordinarily long and confusing to people who go to the polls. And if this sort of thing continues then I would say yes, I remain flexible in my opinion with regard to

this issue, but not necessarily with going specifically to the ward system. Maybe a modification of what we're doing and the ward system would be better than just going from this extreme to that extreme, as it were. But there are alternative kinds of arrangements that are used throughout Canada, and I'd be prepared to take a look at anything which would improve education for the children of this province.

MR. KOSKIE: — I want to say to the minister that his, if we can call it that, criticism of the de Vlieger conclusion is not valid because of the fact that someone who does have their name down the alphabet does in fact get elected. I think it has been pretty well statistically researched that even candidates in a provincial election will receive a portion of it just by the fact of being first on the ballot. What you said to contradict the de Vlieger conclusion is not legitimate because obviously there are many people who are very well-known throughout a city who may be well down on the alphabet so far as their name is concerned, and this will account for the skewing of the conclusion that Mr. de Vlieger indicated. But I got your assurance that you're going to get even a better system than the straight ward system or at least a look at it.

I want to ask about one other area of concern to the STF and to a number of teachers that I've talked to, and that was the decision by the government to sack and get rid of the crown corporation, SaskMedia. Now I have correspondence from the STF. I have talked to a large number of teachers. Both of them said the same thing. I know . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, I'm not going to get into debate with you guys. The STF, I think, represents many of the teachers, but leave that aside. What I'm indicating is that there is some concern in respect to the government's decision, and rightly or wrongly many people are concerned not so much with the action of the government but with whether or not those services which they were able to provide in the past will in fact be there in the future.

The minister again would obviously be a party to the decision, and again I wonder about this government who say they consult before they made decisions. If the minister can advise me whether consultation before you entered into a part of the decision-making . . . felt it incumbent or whether you did in fact have any consultation with the representatives of the teaching profession.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — I'll try to answer as much of this as I can, because although SaskMedia shows up in the budget for education it actually is under intergovernmental services. So in a sense it doesn't really belong to me. In connection with your remarks about the STF, we did meet — that is, STF met with the cabinet approximately one month ago, and they did raise the issue of SaskMedia and so both the Attorney General and myself assured STF that the service that was being provided to the educational system would carry on. In other words, we assured that there would be service. As far as the production part of SaskMedia is concerned, the opportunity to do some production has been retained and that's about as far as I can go with SaskMedia.

MR. KOSKIE: — I want to, following those particular issues, Mr. Minister, turn to a number of traditional questions which we have been directing to various ministers. I want, if he could provide me, the names, positions, salaries of all members of the minister's staff — his personal staff; I don't want him to go through the whole department . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm going to find that out.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Do you want me to give it to you here or do you want me to send it to you, or what?

MR. KOSKIE: — Have it typed out. If you want to send it over, that's fine. It will save time.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — I have the information right here, so I would be pleased to give it to you. Executive assistant to the minister, Mr. Ron Mitchell. Do you want salaries? \$50,000. That one really should be special assistant — it's written down here as executive. It should be special assistant, Ron Mitchell; executive assistant, Marilyn Rice, \$35,000; and secretary to the minister, Connie Lambert, \$24,830.

MR. KOSKIE: — In respect to the Department of Education, I take it that Mr. Clayton has been appointed as the deputy of the department or is he acting deputy?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Clayton has continued in the role in which he was and is an acting deputy minister as are all deputy ministers at this point in time . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, excuse me, I just demoted Mr. Clayton. I didn't mean to do that. Mr. Clayton informs me that he is not acting, that he is the deputy minister. I guess I wasn't too caught up in those semantics.

MR. KOSKIE: — Also, I would like, if the minister could provide it, the total amount of entertainment expenses incurred since May 8, 1982 by the minister, deputy minister, special assistant and executive assistant, if that is possible. If you can't do that right now, you can just send it to me. Would you do that? Better get it on the record.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — That would be the entertainment expenses? I'm not sure that I understand, being a rookie in here, what entertainment expenses consist of. Does that mean having a dinner or . . . (inaudible interjections) . . .

MR. KOSKIE: — Yes . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . I'll talk to you afterwards and explain. No, just in respect to expenses that have been incurred in respect to meeting with groups, dinners or the like.

I would also like the name of each person in the department who is on contract or has been on contract since May 8 and the monthly pay of each, if there are any. That is whether you have in fact, rather than go through the public service, hired someone through contract. So I want a list of the names and the persons in the department who indeed are on contract and the amount of the monthly payment or the rate of pay. Will you provide that, Mr. Minister?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Sure I will.

MR. KOSKIE: — Can the minister indicate how many vacant permanent positions there are in the department?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — There are eight vacant permanent positions.

MR. KOSKIE: — Have any of the minister's staff — and we've gone through what constitutes that — been assigned a CVA vehicle? If any of them have been, would you indicate . . .

HON. MR. CURRIE: — None of them have been.

MR. KOSKIE: — I wonder if the minister could provide a record of all CVA aircraft flights charged to the department since May 8, indicating the date, place of departure, destination, names of persons whose flight was charged to the department.

And one other I'd like is the information as to the number of all the charter flights charged to the department other than CVA, indicating the date, place of departure, destination, persons who the flight was charged to in the department, and the cost of each of the charters. Do that? Good.

And I would also like a list of all of the out-of-province trips taken by the minister since May 8, indicating the date, the destination, the persons who accompanied him at government expense, the total cost of such trip and the travel agency used for each such trip.

And have you got a press agent, as some of the other ministers have acquired?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — No, I don't have a press agent.

MR. KOSKIE: — I would like also a list, Mr. Minister, of all the persons whose employment was terminated since May 8 in the department. I'd like to know their names and the positions of those individuals. Can you provide that?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — I could give you that answer right now. There have been none.

MR. KOSKIE: — I would also like a list of all the persons whose services were terminated from any board, commission or agency under the jurisdiction of the minister. Can you provide that?

One final question: how soon can the minister provide this information?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Early next week if it's satisfactory.

MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Minister, I want to ask a series of questions here, not many in total, and some of these questions I must admit I likely wouldn't have to ask but I don't have (at least I can't find) an annual report for 1981-82. As a consequence, some of the information is certainly in the report and accordingly, I want to ask a series of questions because of the lack of that report. First of all I'd like you to provide me with the total student population in Saskatchewan during the year 1982-83.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — The provincial total is 186,262. That doesn't include students who would come in as tuition paying students from other provinces.

MR. KOSKIE: — I wonder whether the minister could give me a breakdown, rural versus urban, and do that in the same way in which the department does. I know they take in some of the towns and so on which are urban that are classified as rural but if you could give me that breakdown.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — The total for the rural, which would include the small towns and villages is 92,753. The total for the urban is 93,509.

MR. KOSKIE: — I would like the minister to give me a list of all the committees established by the department. He indicated that he had a committee in respect to curriculum. I think there is another one in respect to libraries. I would like you, if you could, to give me a list of all the particular committees that you have established that are operating during the particular year that we are dealing with, and possibly the purpose of those committees and the personnel, if that is indeed possible.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Would it be in order to submit that along with the other information at . . . (inaudible) . . . time?

MR. KOSKIE: — Yes. The next question: I wonder if the minister could indicate whether there were any consultants employed by the department during the past fiscal year that we're talking about, the name, the purpose, and the payment in respect to any consultants that you may have.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Yes, we can get that information to you, too.

MR. KOSKIE: — Would the minister indicate the number of schools that were closed throughout the province during the current year, if in fact any were closed?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Yes, I regret we don't have that information available at the present time, but we'll be pleased to submit that with the other information as well. It's the school closures that you meant?

MR. KOSKIE: — Yes. And further information that I would like, Mr. Minister, is in respect to the school capital grants formula that is used in establishing the grants to the divisions — if you can provide that with a copy of the framework of the formula, and whether or not any changes from the previous formula that was used by the previous administration were in fact introduced during the past year.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Yes, we can provide an outline of the formula. Just from the top of my head, there were some very minor changes as far as the capital formula is concerned.

MR. KOSKIE: — When you provide that, would you indicate the minor changes so I'm clear on that.

The other thing that I would like, also, is the school operating grants formula, and whether or not during the year that we're discussing any changes were made to the school operating grants formula.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — We will provide that along with the other information.

MR. KOSKIE: — I wonder if the minister, also, could provide — and you maybe can do it here — a list of all new schools approved in 1982-83, and the total expenditure, if any, during 1982-83.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — I would like to ask the hon. member: would you wish to have renovations included, or just the new schools themselves?

MR. KOSKIE: — I would like a differentiation. I want both because the next question was: are there capital projects for 1982-83 and the expenditure and the balance to be expended — in other words, to complete?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Would it be in order to submit that along with the other information?

MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Minister, in respect to the Correspondence School, I wonder if you

could provide me with the total number of students that were enrolled during the past year.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — It's in the vicinity of 6,000 but we don't have the exact figures here. We prefer to send it with the other information if that is all right.

MR. KOSKIE: — And two other important questions. I would like the total number of teachers employed in the education system, in the school system, during 1982-83 and the number of teachers of native origin that comprised a part of that total.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — We'd be very pleased to provide that information as far as we can but we may have difficulty with that latter part in determining who is or who isn't native in origin.

MR. KOSKIE: — I want to turn from those particular detail questions, Mr. Minister. It has apparently been reported in the press that the minister may well in fact be considering a special school board for Francophones — a special school board which would run French-speaking schools in the province, and be able to create new ones. This is the report that we have. I'd like the minister's comment, if in fact that is an accurate report that he is in fact considering it. I'll let you comment on that.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Yes. I would think if that was reported it might be a little stronger than what I had indicated, that I was considering setting up French school boards. I think in reality what has happened is that we have met with the ACFC (Association Culturelle Franco-Canadienne) and the ACEFC (Association des commissaires d'écoles franco-canadiennes de la Saskatchewan) and we've listened to their requests and to their wants. We've given consideration to these, and what we have asked them to do is to get involved in the exercise of determining what they would see as the implications both on the French schools that are set up and also the implications that it would have in so far as the remainder of the school population is concerned. So we haven't gone as far as stating to them that we are considering this as such. We have indicated to them that we are interested in trying to give them as much control and autonomy as possible, but we do have to keep in mind the implications that it has in regard to other students. So that's about as far as we've gone in our negotiations or in our talks with the ACEFC.

MR. KOSKIE: — I take it, in the continuing consultation process which you have initiated so far with the interested party that as you indicated there may have been some impact on the whole system, that other groups such as the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association will be consulted, if indeed you have not already consulted with them — probably the STF and perhaps other interested groups. I would hope that the minister would give the assurance that before he makes a final policy decision he would in fact make sure that a proper consultation takes place.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — You have my assurance on that.

MR. KOSKIE: — One other area that has been indicated is that the chamber of commerce has some desire to have economics taught in the school and I wonder whether the minister has in fact dealt with the chamber of commerce and whether he has as yet adopted a policy on this, or is that still in the infant stage as with the French school board?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Let me reply to that question. We already do have an economics

course in existence at the secondary level in division 4. However, the chamber of commerce is asking for something above and beyond that kind of an economics course and it's certainly at its infant stage, as you had mentioned. It would be considered. Perhaps the best timing to consider that request would be at the time that we review the recommendations that come forth from the curriculum review committee.

MR. KOSKIE: — One other area in respect to future curriculum development. The SFL also has indicated that they feel that an appropriate course for students to understand better the trade union movement would be a positive approach to the educational system, that labor education become a part of the curriculum. I wonder if the minister has initiated the infant stage in respect to the discussion with the trade union movement as he has apparently done with the chamber of commerce?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — No, I haven't, nor did I initiate the movement with the chamber of commerce, quite frankly. I have listened to requests and if the trade union movement does want to incorporate, or does want something integrated into the course that is not already there . . . Certainly in any school that I've been in the trade union movement is dwelt upon in one form or another. I would think that it should be part of a good social studies course at the most appropriate level, along with the balance of free enterprise and so forth. That is what I would see as being a desirable kind of a mix in the best interests of educating people to understand the real world.

MR. KOSKIE: — In respect to the official minority language office, I just want to ask the minister whether Mr. Archambault works in this particular department. I'd better find out if he is there.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — If you didn't know that he was there. Yes, Mr. Archambault is in the official minority language office.

MR. KOSKIE: — Would the minister indicate whether or not he is under contract, and if indeed he is under contract, at what salary?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Yes, he is under contract, and we will provide that information along with all the other people who are under contract. Is that all right?

MR. KOSKIE: — I would also appreciate the term of the contract, that is the length of the contract. I should hope that it not extend beyond 1986.

One other question in this: does Mr. Archambault have his headquarters within the department, or has he headquarters in other parts of the province, and are they provided for him by the Department of Education?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Archambault has his headquarters in Gravelbourg along with three other members of the office of minority languages.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I'm wondering if the minister could give us the names of the other people who are employed in that same office in Gravelbourg. I believe it's in the courthouse in Gravelbourg. Can you confirm that as well, the location of the office?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Yes, that's right. The office is in the courthouse. As I said once before, my French leaves a lot to be desired. Marcel Moor, Andre Moquin, and Noelle Giradin. Gee, you speak pretty well.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I wonder if the minister would mind, not that I'm criticizing his French at all, but if he would mind sending that little slip of paper across. He's following in the footsteps of the great Conservative leader John Diefenbaker in his French and is doing quite well at it.

But I'm wondering on another issue, whether or not you can tell me a little bit about the process that has been going on with the two schools in Regina that are proposed to be closed. I believe McNiven is one and the other one just slips my mind at the present time. Is there any consideration by the department at this time to become involved, the minister, in attempting to keep either of these schools open, or is that matter cut-and-dried and you are not getting involved?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — No, I have not become involved as minister, nor do I intend to become involved as Minister of Education. That is under, according to The Education Act, a matter of local jurisdiction. We respect the right of the school boards, who are duly elected by the people, to make those decisions, so that's the way it would stand.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Minister, just before we leave the matter of the French consultant, would the minister advise us what he felt the particular qualifications of Mr. Archambault were for the position?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Yes, I would be pleased to advise the Leader of the Opposition. He has both teaching and administrating experience. He has taught at the elementary, the secondary and the university levels. He has taught the core French program as well as in the designated programs. He has been the principal of Gravelbourg High School and director-general of College Mathieu. He has been involved and associated and worked with the French cultural activities throughout this province and is very, very well known by ACFC and ACEFC. Quite frankly, I particularly felt some need for us to have some additional assistance in regard to consulting with the ACFC and the ACEFC and in regard to initiating, implementing and developing a program throughout the province. Quite frankly, I was personally very, very impressed, not just with the qualifications of Mr. Archambault, but with his capabilities and his personality. I am very assured, more assured now than even at that time, that he is going to fill a void that was in bad need of being filled.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, I am sure none of us doubted that the minister would be impressed. We never doubted that he had those particular characteristics which would impress any minister of the crown. What I am asking now is: could you elaborate a little more on his university experience?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Archambault was a professor at the University of Regina and he was teaching in a methods class. I don't have further details here, but we would be pleased to provide those details along with the information that we've been requested to send over.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Just one further question, Mr. Minister, with respect to Mr. Archambault. With respect to Mr. Archambault's freedom to participate in personal matters when he is on leave of absence — campaigning for the political party of his choice — do the same rules apply to other senior employees of the Department of Education or are there other rules which apply to them?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — I have no rules for the members in the Department of Education. I

haven't said anything to them about what they could or they couldn't do. Or to Mr. Archambault.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I wasn't quite asking whether you had done so. I was asking what rules applied to the people in your department, and obviously rules have been enunciated for Mr. Archambault. We have heard them from the Premier. What I want to know is whether the same rules that apply to employee A in your department, Mr. Archambault, equally apply to other employees at the same level in your department.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — The answer to that would be, yes, the same rules.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Well I thank the minister for that and trust that he will keep it in mind and that the same rules will apply, that any member of the Department of Education in the same approximate position as Mr. Archambault may campaign for the party of his choice with no greater personal consequences for his career pattern. Do I understand that?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Yes, that's what I said.

MR. KOSKIE: — A follow-up question in respect to this. As you have indicated, Mr. Minister, that Mr. Archambault is in fact on contract, accordingly I would expect if you're employed within the department and take a leave you'd notify the particular department and accordingly the proper reductions in salary are taken off or in lieu of holidays or whatever. Could you outline — is there any set procedure in respect to an individual who is on contract? What are the rules that guide in respect to what deductions will be taken off?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — The terms of his general contract are that he is seconded, just as any other teacher is, until June 30 of 1983.

MR. KOSKIE: — You indicated in your initial remarks the breadth of some of the areas that have to be addressed in the future, and I am wondering in respect to two or three of the particular items, whether you would in fact — in policy, planning and special projects, there has been a decrease in the amount of the budget and also in the staff — explain the rationale for a decreased amount.

And there is only two or three others like that, then we can get through it. Yes. Item 5, subvote 29.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — I'm not sure just how much detail you would like me to go into, but just generally we saw some efficiencies that could be realized within the department in that particular area, and we just acted accordingly.

MR. KOSKIE: — Finish this off then. Would the minister provide me then, for the decrease in respect to item 5, the reasons for it, how the efficiencies were in fact brought about? It looks as though a number of staff have also been reduced, and accordingly I would like to know the positions of those that have been either displaced or otherwise.

Item 7 also. In program development, there is a decrease in the amount in program development, and I would similarly like an explanation as to it and not just a general term of efficiencies, but putting it into some details as to how that was achieved.

Also in respect to item 10, special education is down from the amount of 1981-82 estimated and substantially down from our proposed budget.

I think those are the ones, Mr. Minister, and if you provide me the reasons with this, I have no further questions then. Can you provide them?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Yes, we are pleased to provide that information.

Item 1 agreed to.

Items 2 to 13 inclusive agreed to.

Item 14

MR. YEW: — Just a brief question to Mr. Minister. In respect to item 14, is that a separate allotment directed to the Department of Northern Saskatchewan? I wonder if you might explain briefly what that relates to?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — That refers to the northern education branch and it refers to a period of six months starting October 1.

Item 14 agreed to.

Items 15 to 21 inclusive agreed to.

Vote 8 agreed to.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY CASH OUTFLOWS

EDUCATION

Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 8

Items 1 to 4 inclusive agreed to.

Vote 8 agreed to.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 10:09 p.m.