

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
March 2, 1983

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Report of Standing Committee on Estimates

DEPUTY CLERK: — Mr. Sutor, for the Standing Committee on Estimates, presents the first report of the said committee which is as follows:

The committee met for organization and elected Mr. Sutor as chairman, and put Mr. Lusney as vice-chairman. The committee considered the estimates of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Library, and adopted the following resolutions:

Resolved: That there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 1982, the following sums: for Legislation, \$249,520, including to provide for and authorize grants and salaries to each caucus research staff of \$65,860.

Resolved: That there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 1983, the following sums: for Legislation, \$2,508,600, including (a) to provide for and authorize grants to the CPA and Society of Clerks, \$47,610; and to provide for and authorize grants and salaries to each caucus research staff, \$319,110.

Resolved: That toward making good the supplies granted to Her Majesty on account of certain expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1982, the sum of \$249,520 be granted out of the consolidated fund.

Resolved: That toward making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain expenses for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1983, the sum of \$2,508,600 be granted out of the consolidated fund.

Resolved: That this committee recommends that upon concurrence in the committee's report the sums as reported and approved shall be included in the appropriation bill for consideration by the Legislative Assembly.

MR. SUTOR: — I move, seconded by the member for Pelly,

That the first report of the Standing Committee on Estimates be now concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

QUESTIONS

Education Facilities for Off-reserve Treaty Indians

MR. THOMPSON: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to address my question to the Minister of Education, and it's regarding the problems that the Northern Lights School Division is having in northern Saskatchewan, the financial problems that they are now facing, and the announcement that has come out that there is a possibility, and a strong possibility, that all the schools in their jurisdiction (which involves 4,500 children) could be closed down on April 1. Given your remarks the other day in the House regarding education and the importance of education, the sincerity with which you spoke, the fact that you had visited the schools that we are talking about and indicated at that time that you were impressed with the educational system and the hope that you are seeing in the eyes of the children in northern Saskatchewan. Mr. Minister, would you give your assurance today in this House to the parents and the children of northern Saskatchewan that there will be no school closure on April 1, or no closure at all until this school term is over?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Speaker, in reply to the hon. member for Athabasca, I think that it would perhaps be a mistake for me to comply with your wish at the present time. As I mentioned in my reply to the hon. member for Cumberland a few days ago, we were as concerned as he was about the situation, the plight of the Northern Lights school Division and we were monitoring the situation. At that time, I think I also informed the House that this area of negotiating with the federal government concerning the federal government's pronouncement that they were going to withdraw this support from the Northern Lights School Division was in the hands of the Attorney General, who is the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. I think at that time I deferred the thing to him to see if he had anything further to this question.

In the meantime, he has been in Ottawa dealing with general federal-provincial agreements and, quite frankly, he returned either last night or this morning and I have not had the opportunity of discussing anything with him. I did mention to him that I wanted to make arrangements to meet with him as soon as possible, so that is as far as I can go at the present time.

MR. THOMPSON: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Education. Would you not agree, Mr. Minister, that the financial problems that the Northern Lights School Division is facing in their relationship with the federal government has no bearing on the children and the parents from northern Saskatchewan? It's the parents and the children who are going to suffer, and would you not agree that the financial problems that they're in is no problem that the children and the parents should be facing? No fault of theirs?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Speaker, I would concur in principle with that, very definitely. But, I think under the circumstances, I would like to defer to the Attorney General.

HON. MR. LANE: — I would like to suggest to the hon. member that should the federal policy continue, the people of Saskatchewan will suffer, not just the children and parents directly affected. We have again over the last two days made it abundantly clear to the Government of Canada that we believe they are reneging on their legal obligations as they attempt to abandon, basically, off-reserve Indians. That position has been supported by the Assembly of First Nations.

I am somewhat optimistic that perhaps at the first ministers' conference, the federal

government may reconsider its decision, and I urged hon. members in the past to remember that the problem extends beyond the Northern Lights School Division. And it's a question of a deliberate federal government policy to abandon its legal obligations to the native people in the province of Saskatchewan. We oppose that policy. We oppose that policy most strongly and we will continue (and I hope we have the support of hon. members opposite) to fight the policy of the federal government. As I say, I am optimistic that perhaps there can be a reconsideration at the first ministers' conference. There is certainly some significant support from the delegations and it will be a matter of discussion at the first ministers' conference.

MR. THOMPSON: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the Attorney General that it is a very serious problem that we are facing. But I ask you, would you not agree that using the closure of schools, in particular the announcement in northern Saskatchewan, and using children as a bargaining tool is a very poor way to handle the situation that we do have? I would ask you as the Attorney General, in charge of federal-provincial negotiations, would you not agree that the provincial government should guarantee to the children and the parents in northern Saskatchewan that regardless of the problem that we are facing, there will be no closure of the schools?

HON. MR. LANE: — Well, I believe that the Government of Canada should guarantee to the parents and the children and the people of Saskatchewan generally, continued funding for the Northern Lights School Division. I hope that the remarks of the member opposite are not to be interpreted as supporting the federal position that they do have a legal right to abandon (at least we argue) their obligations and turn this over to the provinces. If that's your position, frankly, I'm disappointed.

I think that the hon. member, as well, would not want the Government of Saskatchewan to say, at this point, that should the federal government abandon its responsibilities, we will move in to take up where the federal government has abandoned. I'm not sure that's a wise or an advisable position to take. Should the federal government policy prevail or continue, then obviously the Government of Saskatchewan will have to consider its options.

As I say, I am somewhat optimistic that perhaps there can be a reconsideration of the federal position. If I could suggest to the hon. member, he would be well advised to lobby with his colleagues in Ottawa to put what pressures they can on there to have the federal government change its policy.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I address a question to the Minister of Education, and I preface it by saying that we on this side of the House completely accept and support the position taken by the government in their dealings with the Government of Canada on the obligation of the Government of Canada to provide educational benefits for treaty Indians on and off reserves.

My question to the Minister of Education surrounds this. With the full knowledge of your department, sir, the Northern Lights School Division planned and financed its year's operation on the basis of receiving federal funds. My question to you is simply this: in the light of that, and in the knowledge that your department had of these financial circumstances of the Northern Lights School Division, are you now ready to assure the parents and students of the Northern Lights School Division, are you now ready to assure the parents and students of the Northern Lights School Division — and I'm speaking of those particularly who are not treaty Indians — that their educational opportunities will not disappear and that the schools will remain open until the end of the school year?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think, as I said originally, that when you're asking a question which in effect is a hypothetical question it would be a mistake for me as Minister of Education to tip the hand of the government while we're in the process of negotiating. Therefore, I think that I've expanded upon this issue as far as I'm prepared to expand.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister saying that he's unwilling to answer this question on the grounds that it's hypothetical, and that he therefore will give no assurance to this House until the schools actually close as to whether his department will take any steps to ensure that the schools stay open?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Speaker, in effect it seems to me that the Leader of the Opposition is trying to get me to the point where I'm prepared to negotiate with the federal government in public in the legislature. And I don't think that I would be responsible, and I don't think it would be in the best interests of this government or of the province, or of the children in the province of Saskatchewan to do so.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary. We are not in any way attempting to get you to negotiate. My question to you is: with respect to those students who are not treaty Indians and who are in any direct sense in no way connected with your negotiations, are you willing to assure the parents and the students and all of those children that you will make sure that those schools stay open for them, regardless of what happens to treaty Indian students? Are you willing to go that far?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Education, yes, I will assure the Leader of the Opposition that we will guarantee to provide education for all the students of this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, just a short supplementary question. We thank the minister for his assurance. We ask him to communicate that to the Northern Lights School Division. My question to you is this: will you communicate to the Northern Lights School Division that your department will ensure that all students in this province will have educational opportunities available to them till the end of the school year?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Speaker, I've already indicated that I don't think that this would be in the best interest of the Northern Lights School Division, of the children, and the people, and the parents in the province of Saskatchewan. I say, no, I am not prepared to convey that message at this particular time. We are dealing with the situation. We are monitoring it. I have plenty of faith in the negotiating ability of the Attorney General and we are hoping to come up with the best possible deal for the province of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Layoffs at Prince Albert Pulp Mill

MR. THOMPSON: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct my question to the minister in charge of CIC. Now that the Prince Albert-Duck Lake by-election is over, certainly out of the way, your government has announced its plans for the Prince Albert pulp mill for 1983. Those plans don't include an expansion, as your government hinted during the campaign — just massive layoffs. Will the minister confirm that your plans call for 29 people to lose their jobs permanently? Will the minister also confirm that 320 workers face at least 10 weeks of layoffs during April, May, June and July?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Speaker, the management at the mill announced that there would be three production outages this year. There will be a five-week shut-down beginning April 1, a five-week shut-down beginning June 10, and a four-week maintenance shut-down in early September. Layoffs will be involved in the April and June shut-downs. It is my understanding that few, if any, employees will be laid off during the maintenance shut-down. In-scope staff will average six weeks of vacation and holiday pay during the shut-down. I might add that the maintenance shut-down, Mr. Speaker, will be carried on by the employees of the mill. Also, they would be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. In addition, Mr. Speaker, the wood handling division will go to a five-day work week instead of a seven-day work week starting in May. This will result in 22 regular positions and seven relief positions not being required during the rest of 1983.

MR. THOMPSON: — New question, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister indicate to this House whether there will be a three- to five-month shut-down of the bush operations starting on May 6?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Would you repeat that question? I didn't quite get that.

MR. THOMPSON: — Would the minister indicate to this House whether or not there will be a complete bush operation shut-down starting on May 6?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd have to take notice of that question. I'm not aware of a complete mill shut-down starting on May 6?

AN HON. MEMBER: — Woodland shut-down.

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Or a woodland shut-down, yes.

MR. THOMPSON: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister in charge of CIC. Are you aware of any shut-downs in the bush operations starting this summer?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — I've already indicated some, Mr. Speaker. If there are any more that I'm not familiar with, again. I will take notice and advise the member.

MR. THOMPSON: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. This indeed is a black day for the forest industry in Saskatchewan. My supplementary is: does the announcement of layoffs mean that production will be completely shut down during these periods of April, June, September and Christmas in the pulp mill?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — First of all, I think it's only fair to say that I don't run the pulp mill, but we do have a management. PAPCO is not a crown corporation. There is a management in place; there is a manager there that runs that company and who will

make the decisions on the layoffs and what will be in place in the periods that he has suggested.

I have indicated the shut-downs that I've been advised of and the decision being made by the management of PAPCO. That is, to my knowledge, the situation the way it will be this year.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the minister in charge of the crown investments corporation. The minister has indicated that he's not running the pulp mill and that PAPCO is not a crown corporation. He is, however, issuing press releases about PAPCO. I refer him to his press release of January 12, 1983, referring to a particular appointment and going on to say, "This appointment is an important step to the expansion of the PAPCO mill through joint ventures or otherwise, making it increasingly attractive for sale to private interests once the economic environment improves." I will ask the minister: is this layoff, this extensive layoff announced today, part of the strategy for expanding the pulp mill which he announced just before the Prince Albert by-election?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Speaker, I don't recall announcing an expansion that we'd be carrying on. What I believe the announcement indicated was the desire of the provincial government to see that an expansion did take place as soon as possible, and with a joint venture, if necessary, through the private sector. There's no question about that. We've said that before.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Minister, a supplementary. We were perhaps misled by a press statement attributed to the now member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake which said, to quote, "He said the Conservative government plans an expansion to the Prince Albert pulp mill." That led us into believing that the government was planning an expansion to the pulp mill. Would you now state whether or not the government plans an expansion to the pulp mill, as you said earlier would take place?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Speaker, the government will encourage an expansion of the pulp mill; we will do everything we can to see that it happens. We are interested in having the pulp mill expanded. I have officials at CIC presently working on a strategy, on a plan to develop, to expand for Aspen, as well as other expansionary plans that we have been working on for some time.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, I will say that the government will not use the government's funds, at this point, to invest in the expansion that is contemplated. We want to do it as soon as possible. We will do it through, hopefully a joint venture, whatever way it takes other than actual government funds being expended to invest into the mill at this point in time. Plans can change, Mr. Speaker.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. I remind the minister that his press release prior to the election said, "This is an important step to the expansion of the PAPCO mill through joint ventures or otherwise." Would the minister kindly explain how he could expand that mill through a joint venture without any government funds?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well, Mr. Speaker, there are many ways that an expansion can take place through the government sector without government funds being expended. I am not going to lay out the plans in this legislature at this time, and I am

amazed at the line of questioning on the pulp mill today, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite know full well, Mr. Speaker, the market conditions for pulp in North America and, in fact, indeed the world.

But, let me also say this, Mr. Speaker. They bought the balance of that plant in I believe it was 1980, for millions of dollars more than the actual value — what it was worth at the time. They paid a lot of money compared to what the value is, and furthermore, Mr. Speaker, at no time . . . when they did buy the plant, they lost the management, they lost the marketing arm of that plant; there was no one left there to do the marketing that was necessary, and two years later they still did not have a manager in place. We have since put in the most qualified manager available in Canada today for the operation of that mill.

Saskatchewan Government Insurance Layoffs

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Since time is running short, Mr. Speaker, I was asked a question yesterday that I took notice on, and I would like to give the answer today. The question had to do with confirming that in fact we are dismantling the renewal offices at Estevan, Weyburn, North Battleford and Swift Current.

The restructure of the corporation was carried out to streamline operations and increase the efficiency of the corporation. Most of the business transacted at these four motor licence issuer offices took place over about four or five days at the end of each month when renewals were due. As a result, maintaining full-time staff in these locations was not warranted, Mr. Speaker. However, Mr. Speaker, SGI will appoint existing SGI agents in each of these communities as motor licence issuers, the way it is done in most other parts of the province. This means service to the public will be maintained, and in fact, improved. At the same time, agents can combine licence issuing duties with their insurance business which will reduce administrative costs.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to congratulate the Minister of Industry and Commerce, by way of background . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — You have enjoyed a remarkable career as Minister of Industry and Commerce. The Premier announced an open-for-business approach and you've done nothing since but announce layoffs, shut-downs and bankruptcy. You have yet to have a single significant success as a result of the Open for Business conference.

My question, Mr. Speaker, concerns another business that you are in the process of shutting down, and that is SGI, and I suggest that you are in the process of shutting it down. By way of background, let me remind you that when you announced the layoffs, you said it would be in the soft . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Let me remind you, because the minister seems to need all the assistance he can get. You announced that the cutbacks would be in the soft areas which an insurance company doesn't normally provide, such as safety. Surely, you will admit that that is nothing . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please. The member is making a speech. If the member has a question, would he get directly to it?

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Surely the minister will admit that the layoffs are part of a long-run plan by this government to diminish and restrict the role of SGI as a crown

corporation.

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Speaker, if I had 10 minutes left I'd take the 10 minutes to tell him, to make a little speech about what SGI is going to be all about. However, I don't have that time. Mr. Speaker, I indicated yesterday, I indicate again today, that the intention of this government with respect to SGI is to make it a very effective, efficient corporation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to remind you the members opposite that it was not this government that mismanaged SGI, that had \$53 million in losses in two years, that loaded it top-heavy in the management, fired 13 people a couple of years ago and turned around and hired 100-and-some to replace them. That built up the staff in the period of time from 1978 to 1982 from 1,233 people to over 1,600 approved positions, with no increase in business, but for other reasons.

Mr. Speaker, I indicated before and I say it again, our government will run SGI efficiently, will run it effectively, and, Mr. Speaker, will provide the service to the people of Saskatchewan that they haven't received while they were government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MOTION

Tabling of Retention and Disposal Schedules

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day, I would like to move a motion, by leave of the Assembly:

That the retention and disposal schedules approved by the public documents committee and tabled as sessional paper number 83 for 1982-83 be referred to the standing committee on communications.

I so move, seconded by the member for Indian Head-Wolseley.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE

HEALTH

Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 32

Item 1

MR. CHAIRMAN: — The estimates today are for health. Would the minister please introduce his officials?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, I would be pleased to introduce my officials. I would like to give a few introductory remarks at the same time. Seated beside me is the

deputy minister of health, Mr. Ken Fyke. To my left here is the associate deputy minister, Dr. Peter Glynn. Seated right behind me is the acting associate deputy minister, Mr. George Loewen, and beside Mr. Loewen is Mr. Lawrence Krahn, director of administrative services.

In beginning the estimates of my department, the Department of Health, a department which I am very pleased to be able to head up, Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a few comments by way of introduction before we get into a lot of the details of the health budget.

The total budget for the Department of health is \$728.7 million, which represents, Mr. Chairman, an increase of 26 per cent over the 1981-82 estimates. The total number of person years has increased by about 100, but most of that is attributable to the transfer of northern health services to the Department of Health as of October 1.

I should perhaps note increases in a few major areas. There has been an increase of 85 million or 26 per cent for payments to hospitals for operating expenditures. The budget for community health services has increased by 1.9 million or 19 per cent, and for the psychiatric services branch, 1.7 million or 23 per cent. I think, rather substantial increases and a commitment to our goal of improving health services in the province of Saskatchewan.

The budget of 146.6 million for MCIC is 37 per cent higher than in the 1981-82 estimates. But as I said in the House last fall, it is only slightly higher than the 142.9 million the previous government had actually approved for the 1982-83 budget.

The grant to the cancer foundation has grown by 1.6 million or 16 per cent. In certain other areas, changes for both the 1981-82 estimates (the last official ones) and the unofficial estimates tabled last March, reflect a re-ordering of priorities as well as circumstances beyond our control. For example, the remaining \$210,000, Mr. Chairman, set aside for the 20-35 program has been quite properly deleted from the expenditures of this government. Grants to hospitals for capital projects are down, but this simply reflects the effects of the long construction strike last summer. The funds we have approved for construction and renovation projects are helping to create valuable and productive jobs in communities around the province this winter.

Elsewhere in the budget, Mr. Chairman, we have provided adequate funds to ensure that the level and the quality of services will be maintained. We have done this, Mr. Chairman, despite pressures created by our current economic situation.

Mr. Chairman, that's all I want to say by way of introduction, and we will now respond to whatever questions the opposition would like to raise at this time.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister. I appreciate finally having an opportunity to ask the minister questions which would pertain to various items in the health program in Saskatchewan. The minister, in introducing his staff, took the opportunity to make some glowing remarks about his performance in the province of Saskatchewan and in the Department of Health. There are a few things he neglected to mention.

I'm sure that the four-year-olds in the province are very impressed with the fact that the dental care for them has been neglected and is not being taken care of as planned, and as had been in place when he took over the department.

There are a great number of senior citizens who believed him when he talked about all the new drugs that would be included in the drug plan if he were to become minister, and are still waiting. I don't believe there has been any change in that area since the day he took over the department.

The people who were interested in low-level radiation will be impressed with the fact that a grant of \$400,00 which had been budgeted in his department was not reduced or cut back, but completely eliminated in his budgeting process.

As well, there were a number of level 4 beds for rural hospitals which had been promised by the minister, and I don't know whether or not they are in place. What the hospital boards are telling me is that they haven't been increased in my part of the province. And I don't think that he has fulfilled his commitment of level 4 beds in the province, and should do something about it.

I think as well, the grants to the cities for health care are not what had been anticipated, and what had been counted on by the cities.

These are but a few, in just a quick glance through the estimates while he was speaking. While he can gloat about how well he's doing while he's sitting in the House, I think it's quite another story if he were to travel out to Maidstone and ask about his performance in supplying the hospital needs of the people in that area.

I can see it's going to be a long session here. I had hoped that we would be able to spend an hour and get through the health estimates, but with the performance of the minister up to now, this could take a day or two days. I've got weeks, because I've got my constituency well in hand, and I can spend a week here if I have to, if that's the attitude he's going to have. I'm sure my colleagues will have many questions to ask about northern Saskatchewan and some of the increases that he boasted about, and the jiggery-pokery which was involved in transferring money from DNS down into the main budget of health, which he now claims is a major increase that he has gone and fought for for health.

I think that the members for Cumberland and Athabasca will have words to say about how that whole increase took place, and the very simple fact is that the minister did very little other than add on money which he took out of another department. Many of the people in the North are being left out in the cold, so to speak, as a result of that action.

Mr. Minister, I wonder if you could give me a list of the employees — the personal staff you have in your office — as well as their salaries?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Well, I'd be pleased to give you a list. But I just want to correct a few of the errors that you've obviously been putting forward here. You mentioned a few things, and I can agree that you should perhaps bring forward these things. But I would prefer if you were accurate when you brought them forward.

You mentioned that there has been no change in the drug plan since coming into the department. Now, that is not correct. The formulary was revised July 1st. Also, just for your information, to show that we deal with the issues and are concerned, there is a total review of the drug plan in Saskatchewan taking place at this time, and that is designed to improve the service for the people of Saskatchewan.

MR. VICE-CHAIRMAN: — Excuse me. The minister is trying to respond to the answer and when members interject it's very difficult to hear him. Let the minister answer the question. The question was given to him. Let's have the answer.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. You know, when you have trouble being heard, I don't know if they should be quiet or I should speak louder. But maybe we can both work that out.

Going back to the drug plan, I just want to point out the number of products in there; on July 1, 1982, there were 1,532 products — that was January 1, 1982; July 1, 1982, 1,557; January 1, 1983, 1,566. So to show that, you know, what you're saying isn't absolutely correct. I wanted to let you know this.

I was discussing the level 4 beds. Well, I want to tell you, and again if you're up to scratch in what's going on in this province, if you realize what my colleague, the Minister of Social Services, has been doing, that this government is not taking an ad hoc band-aid approach to level 4 beds, that we're looking at a co-ordinated approach . . . I can assure you that that will result in better service to senior citizens than what they had been subject to in the 10 years previously.

You mentioned about no increase to the city health departments. Well, I want to tell you that there was a 34 per cent increase. That was a real increase, not the promised political posture that you had offered them before the election.

I just want to tell you that if it's such a meagre increase, I have had very few, if any — I believe no — complaints from the city health departments.

Maidstone. I want you to know that I met with the Maidstone Hospital board at the SHA conference in Saskatoon, and discussed their concerns. They have written tome, and I am in the process of going to be meeting with the Maidstone Hospital again. We do not put out a whole bunch of programs that we're going to build hospitals like you did — \$104 million in an election year. Your record in hospital building was \$19 million over 10 years, about \$1 million a year. Then came an election year — \$104 million. We're taking a realistic approach to hospitals. We are not holding out the spectre of a new hospital to communities if we cannot provide that. I think that is the type of administration that the people of Saskatchewan want. A word that you should learn, boys — straightforward up-front negotiations. That's what we're doing in hospital building.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — You're wanting to know about the staff . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, I wouldn't forget your questions. It's sometimes hard to decipher what you're really wanting, but we have this. Staff in my office, that was the question. Yes, I have Mr. Krishan Kapila, who is a special assistant to the minister; Jacqueline Acton, an executive assistant to the minister, and Sharon Andrews, an executive assistant to the minister. That was what you wanted, the support staff in the office. Is that correct?

AN HON. MEMBER: — You'll send that to me with their salaries?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I most certainly will.

AN HON. MEMBER: — If it's over two digits though, you might have a little problem.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Larry, you'd never know what they were if it was over one.

Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I wonder if you could tell me the names of the persons who are on secondment to the department at the present time. How many people would be in that position?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Your question is the number of people on secondment to the department? My information is that we do not have any at this time.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Can the minister inform me how many positions in the department — I believe the total number is around 2,300 and I can check here — but how many of those positions which are listed here are vacant at the present time?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Roughly speaking, around 230. That's approximately 10 per cent. I think traditionally it has run about 9 per cent.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Minister, can you inform me how many individual employees in your department would have CVA vehicles assigned to them as personal vehicles?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — The answer to that, Mr. Member, is just one car assigned to my deputy, Mr. Fyke. There are some other cars out in the program delivery, but other than that, just Mr. Fyke.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I wonder if the minister would mind sending me a list of the number of times the executive aircraft has been used by himself and staff within the department. I don't expect you to have that with you, but if you would send me that list.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Would you clarify the period of time that you want that for.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — May 8 to date.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Certainly we'll do that.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — As well, I would like the number of chartered rights for the same group of people, yourself and the department, if you would give me that, and passengers.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Yes, we will do that.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Another thing that I would like to have is a list of the so-called entertainment budget that your department would have, anything that would be over \$10, I suppose, in the bill, the receipt for entertainment within the department or in the minister's office.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — There should be no problem in providing those expenses for the department. They've got to clarify some numbers, but we'll get those to you.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I wonder if the minister would confirm sort of a time limit as well on when this information . . . I should have asked you that to start with, but is a two

week period long enough to get this information together? What I want to know is how soon I can expect, as we are asking questions throughout estimates, how long it will take to get it. Two weeks will be fine if you can give me that assurance.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Yes, that seems like a reasonable request. We will comply with that.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Chairman, the minister went on at great length about the former government's role in building hospitals and supplying the hospital needs of the people of the province, but he didn't go into any great detail about how many beds he has built in the province and opened since the day he took over almost a year ago.

I know that there are a number of requests around the province for hospital beds, and I think the minister has had ample time to show what his concern is for the construction of hospitals in the province of Saskatchewan. He was about to attempt to explain the construction of a hospital at Maidstone, or the lack of the hospital being constructed there. I'm just wondering if he can inform this Assembly how many beds to date have been built and opened in the province since he became minister. Not ones that were built and he went out to cut a ribbon, but how many were planned and built by the department and himself since he took over on May 8?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, I would be pleased to send you more detailed information as to what happened in each project. Since coming into office we've approved projects for Nipawin, Lloydminster, Melfort, Yorkton, Cut Knife, and also the package 3 at the Pasqua, renovations to the University Hospital, and numerous — I would estimate about somewhere in around the 30 level — various winter works projects in hospitals spread all around this province. Now, I will give you the actual beds and what is done. If you want more detailed information on each of those projects, I'd be only too pleased to supply it. We'll send it over to you. They're in the planning stages and going ahead.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — That's a very interesting list. It almost seems like I've seen that list before somewhere. I can't exactly recall when but I think it was around a cabinet table when we set down most of those places as being locations for hospitals. It's reminiscent of the list of 133 nursing home beds that the Minister of Social Services has announced about 20 times since becoming minister, which are exactly the same ones that had been in place, and planning done on, and architecture done, prior to the election. I think that very soon projects like the rehab centre in Regina, the Maidstone Hospital, and some new projects thought up by this government will have to come into place and come into play, and that the minister will get some money out of cabinet in order to meet the health needs of the people of Saskatchewan on his own initiative, and not live off the previous government's announcements and try to take credit for them.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Well, I just have to go back to what I said at the beginning. Perhaps you didn't quite grasp what I was talking about there, but I did say that last year the government that you did represent pledged \$104 million in capital projects. The 10-year record before that was \$19 million. Now, if that doesn't look like election jiggery-pokery, I don't know what does. Now, we have come along and the difference here is that this government has gone to Nipawin and said, "There it is — delivered;" gone to Lloydminster. "There it is — delivered." Now, that's a lot different than some pledge of this one and this one and this one, all around Saskatchewan, to try and gain votes that obviously, no matter what your forecasts were, didn't work out.

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Minister, in light of the fact that the recession was happening all around Canada and unemployment was significant, the idea of the Department of Health spending \$104 million would have done wonders for the economy. We actually could have been involved, in a provincial state, like your Premier has been talking about, by not participating in the recession. Now, the question I have: have you considered, or are you looking at, some hospitals in the province that have been built in the early 1900s — you know, way back when our small towns were settled — that are laid out on three and four floors? I'm thinking of a hospital that has the emergency treatment on the fourth floor, and the whole main floor on the bottom is offices and receiving and places where patients don't get involved — you know, the administration has used it.

The hospital in Gravelbourg, for example, St. Joseph's Hospital, is owned by the Grey Nuns hospital — the Grey Nuns association is involved in it. Now, they've put together a reasonably good package. They've been working on it. They've been doing their studies. They've got an excellent administrator. He's just doing fantastic work. I've been sitting in on a lot of meetings over the last two years. They were to the place where they were making a submission for some funding and for a joint effort to work on that. Have you looked at that in the last recent while, and what is the status of that hospital?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Well, I think you started your question about do we look at hospitals that are older and administration on the fourth floor, or something of this nature, if I recall what you were saying.

I want to assure you that we are looking at the total hospitals in Saskatchewan to see if there is need for replacement, if there can be renovation and how these hospitals can best serve the needs of the people in their communities. I think, in particular — one would have to realize that job creation programs, capital works are important — we also have the responsibility of using the health dollars to assess the total, and supply the total health needs of the province of Saskatchewan, which is just not hospital construction.

But to be specific about your question on Gravelbourg, I can report at this time that officials of my department have met and discussed with Gravelbourg, but there is nothing concrete, or no proposal at this point in time from them — planning for \$16,000. That's as far as it's gone at this point in time.

MR. ENGEL: — You said \$16,000. Is that all you're doing, just giving them a little money to finance the study they've done? You're not looking at any renovation or construction there at all?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — That doesn't mean that we are not looking at any type of renovation. We are going \$16,000 for a study to see what needs to be done. To me that makes sense. You do the study first to see what's needed, and go on from there.

MR. ENGEL: — As I pointed out, they set up a special committee to study it. That happened as long as two years ago. They drew out a very detailed prospectus. I looked at that; I sat at meetings with them over a period of time, and it's to the place now where I think you've got to say that, look, they've legitimately studied their needs. The future development of that building is in jeopardy, and \$16,000 issued isn't going to replace a door, let alone go at doing what needs to be done there. It's more like a million-dollar project that we're looking at, and we're very anxious that you give it some serious consideration.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Well, I just want to point out that I think in this last year and at this time of economic restraint in Canada, I would put our government's capital construction up against any other province in Canada. I want to just ask you a question. If it was two years ago, and up until eight months ago you were on the side of the government, it seems funny why something didn't get going a little earlier.

MR. ENGEL: — Well, I made this very obvious to you, Mr. Minister. I believe that the groundwork has to be done before you undertake a project, and I'm saying that the studying is done. This isn't one that you can say, "Now, we're going to review and have them study and give them some more money." I'm glad you funded the study that they've done, and that they finally got that \$16,000. I appreciate it.

But what I'm saying now is, take a look at this study — it's an expert study. They've got as good a staff on there as any of your staff. I'll stack the administration of the hospital there against any staff and any administration in Canada. They're doing an excellent job, and they've got some money backing that the Grey Nuns are prepared to spend. We could increase employment and job opportunities along with it, and provide some excellent health services. So I really wish the minister would consider that.

I have one more series of problems, and I will admit that since I've been elected, way back in the early '70s, Mr. Minister, in the small communities like Rockglen, and like Lafleche, and some of these towns, they have a small hospital, but they don't have a facility for providing levels 1, 2 and 3 care. We have some decent beds established that you can say are nursing homes, and this is why I'm raising this with you, because you're an understanding minister.

The problem is, if you go to social services, they say we can't touch it because it's a hospital. And you go to health and they say we can't touch it either. I think we should be looking at some global studies saying that in some communities a joint venture is a good thing, where you use the same plant to provide health care and nursing home care.

I've been trying to promote that since 1971 and I will admit that I've been defeated in my own government and my days of sitting on that side. I haven't been successful in promoting the idea that there should be some joint efforts where the same kind of plant, the same kitchen, will provide the services, the same nurse on duty. They're always telling me that one R.N. isn't enough to be on duty in these small seven, eight-bed hospitals, and that it takes more staff. If they have 10, 12 patients to look after, you'd provided a better operation . . . (inaudible) . . .

Are you planning on studying that kind of a situation, and would you look at some of the work we've done down there? And would you listen to some of our hospital boards that are very interested in receiving some help along that line?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Well, I'll go back to your previous question, just to indicate that there has been no proposal come in from Gravelbourg yet. The next stage following the study is that they would come forth with a proposal, and should that be coming, we will give it consideration.

I want to thank you for saying that I'm a considerate minister. I think you're rather a considerate fellow yourself at times. And I know you have some difficulty on the other

side, and though we have 58 I think I could find another desk if you'd like to come over. There's a new day in Saskatchewan and I think a better day that happened on April 26. So we could talk afterwards if you maybe want to make some changes here.

I think that you made your suggestion on the combining of the trouble between social services and health. I think that you made that sincerely and you feel that way. I would say that I think that is something that this government is going to be looking at. My hon. colleague and I have met with numerous communities around Saskatchewan, just on this topic. We are attempting to work as close as we possibly can and provided we can do this, I would hope we have your support if we can address communities along the line that you have outlined. However, I want to say that it is the intention of this government that that desire and that request should come from that community, rather than a couple of ministers coming out and saying, "Hey, you have to do this."

MR. ENGEL: — That sounds very good because I just met very recently with — I believe he's still the mayor of Rockglen . . . I might withdraw that statement, maybe he's just on the town council. But they've been asking me, "How do we put this together?" And I said, "I'll raise it in estimates when we have a chance to talk back and forth." And the right way would be to talk to you and you'd orchestrate bringing the two departments together and we could bring a delegation in. That would start the discussion on that basis. Because they've been talking about that a long time.

I know that in Rockglen they got approval to build a rental accommodation unit, you know, where people just live in. And there were people down there that fought that thing for years, saying they didn't want to build it there because they had room and wanted to attach it to the hospital because they felt they needed level 1, 2 and 3 care more than they did just more rental accommodation. But in that community in particular, there's been some strong concern way back since the early '70s. They have some severe needs. I've been writing letters to the Minister of Social Services in particular. When you go down to a place and there's people looking after somebody that can't take care of themselves any more . . . So if you can assure me that we can bring a delegation in sometime, maybe early in the next session, that would be very nice.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I can assure you, Mr. Member, and I think if you asked around the province of Saskatchewan, you would find out that since becoming minister, I would guess that I've met with at least 80 communities which I think is quite a few. And that would be about eight a month, or something of that nature. And certainly Rockglen are welcome to come into my office and discuss this with me.

MR. YEW: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I note in our estimates that you have under section 22 and section 25 certain program allotments for, specifically speaking in section 22, northern health services, an allotment of \$1.6 million, with respect to health services for northern Saskatchewan. The question here is: with respect to the community health worker program, is this program being emphasized, continued in its present form, or has it been expanded, Mr. Minister?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Chairman, do I take it that we're moving down the numbers now or are we still staying on 1?

MR. CHAIRMAN: — The way we've been doing it, they ask a question on any point on item 1, and then when we are examining it we go through the items very quickly.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — That's fine, but he specifically asked for a subvote, Mr. Chairman.

MR. YEW: — Mr. Minister, my understanding was that you could ask any questions under any subject of the estimates, and I was asking in respect to the community health worker program. Is that program being maintained at its present level, or does the minister see an expansion of the program?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I just wanted to know if . . . That's fine. We're on item 1, that's just fine and dandy. I was in the North as you well know and had a good visit there, and acquainted myself to some degree with the needs of the people. I met the community health workers. I would say that I was impressed with that program, and although we are talking about this year — the estimates of this year as you understand — there certainly is no cutback in that program, and I think they are doing a good job.

MR. YEW: — With respect to the situation, Mr. Minister, with respect to the situation in Sandy Bay last fall, I noted from correspondence I received from the then health nurse in the community that the provision for housing was quite unfair on the health nurses situated in that community. They were rather shoved aside in that there were no adequate housing facilities, living accommodations for the health nurses.

I believe there was at one time two health nurses. Possibly I believe there were supposed to be three. But anyway, we use the figure two. But during the crisis of the community when they were faced with some illness, the children had to leave classes, could not attend classes for the fact that there was some illness due to water contamination, etc., some hepatitis, whatever. At the time of this incident, the health nurse had resigned, and therefore it left the community with entirely no health nurse services. Is that situation still the same, Mr. Minister, or have there been replacements for the two health nurses that were in Sandy Bay at the time.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — On my visit to the North I did go to Sandy Bay and I did see the housing facilities there. As I recall, there were two apartment accommodations and one was a trailer, and I don't think the trailer was quite as good as the apartment accommodation, but we are aware of the situation in Sandy Bay.

You mentioned about the sickness that took place, and I think that was during the last session and we had a question on it. I assured you that it was being monitored and the medical health officer was going out there daily. Now, in regard to the nurses at Sandy Bay, the positions are vacant but we've had applications and they've been screened and interviews are taking place on March 15. Following the filling of those positions with, I hope, successful applicants on March 15, we will be looking further at the housing situation there, because we do realize that housing is an important part of recruiting and keeping people in northern Saskatchewan.

MR. YEW: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I understand then that those vacancies will be filled with other personnel — registered nurses. Will it be just one nurse, a community health nurse, or will two or three vacancies be filled?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — What we'll be getting is one nurse 4 and two nurse 3s, and I omitted saying before that although they've been vacant, we have servicing by other health nurses in the North coming in. We're looking after the situation and I feel confident that we'll have those people in position.

MR. YEW: — Getting back to the hospital in La Ronge, Mr. Minister, I wonder if you may want to comment with respect to your meetings with the town. I understand that you toured the facility, you met with the board, you met with certain town officials and you met with the chamber of commerce. I believe that all interested organizations at the local level identified the need for a new hospital, for new facilities, a dire need for such. I wonder if the minister, at this point in time, would want to confirm that there exists a dire need in the region. We're not specifically talking about La Ronge; we're talking about the region which entails Sucker River, Stanley Mission, Weyakwin, quite a number of communities in the region that do get their services from La Ronge, community health services, and I wonder if the minister may want to comment on that.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I go back to, I think, the question in the House at the last session and you asked me if I would go, and I said we would be there in January, and I believe when we were there it was the coldest day of the year. There were about three cold days and that's when I chose to visit the North, although the hospitality overcame the cold weather.

Yes, we had a very good meeting. You are correct, we toured the hospital as I said we would. We met with the chamber of commerce. We met with the hospital board, the medical staff, looked at the situation. There are a few factors there that would have to come into play in building that hospital, quite a bit of the money would come as federal money because of the native population there. There were representatives at the meeting, I think, from one of the Indian bands in the area. As I understand it there are band council requisitions that have to come forward. We discussed it and asked the local people to see if we could get these things going. So that's the stage it's at at this time because we would want to see the federal money forthcoming. I think, just added to that at this point in time, the questions today in the House pertaining to the Department of Education and the Northern Lights School Division district indicate the importance of securing federal funding.

MR. YEW: — Certainly I can sympathize with the issue in respect of the questions regarding the Northern Lights School Division at this point in time and the response we got from the Minister of Education and the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. However, getting back to the issue at hand, with respect to the hospital, I wonder if the minister would indicate to the House, categorize statistically, just what percentage of those people are we talking about in terms of federal responsibility, federal jurisdiction, and non-federal jurisdictional types of people who would accommodate this facility?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — A close figure would be about 52 per cent federal, 48 per cent provincial.

MR. YEW: — Firstly, I haven't got any specific figures or breakdown of the total population . . . to identify to us and for this legislation, and for the purpose of expediting this facility. I haven't got any specific figures either, but I understand it's the other way around. I don't know, I stand to be corrected. There are more non-treaty people in the area than there are treaty.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Well, I think in my first statement I said we were looking at about 50 per cent federal funding. You indicate that maybe the figures are the other way around, 52-48. I think we are splitting hairs. I think 50-50 is a ball-park figure, if that's acceptable to you.

MR. YEW: — I wonder if the minister would advise the House then what immediate steps

your department is taking, as well as the Department of Social Services, to identify exactly what responsibilities we have as a province and what responsibilities the feds may have as the sole people who are responsible for the treaty sector. What steps have you taken to try to identify what amount of responsibility we have in this respect?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — The responsibility for the facility, of course, is ours but we want to be assured of the federal funding. I think you would agree with that. We want to get that in place. Also, there is the problem of the social services, the level 3 accommodations, and so on. The two departments are in consultation and are going to be going up to La Ronge to meet with the people to try to ascertain the number of people who will be needing these services, and so on.

MR. YEW: — I appreciate the comments that you've made in terms of, in general, your support, your recognition that the facility is needed in the community and the region. But my question was: what immediate steps . . . I stand to be corrected, but my understanding would be some initiative should be undertaken at this point in time to try to identify the role of the federal government, the role of the provincial government, and to try to identify the process of bringing this facility about, bringing this program, this health service into the region as expediently as possible. If we're visiting the community, if we're talking in general terms amongst ourselves here, nothing is being accomplished. My question then is: what specific steps are we taking to expedite the facility to bring this hospital into fruition?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I think the first step in that has taken place, in that I would, as I said, go and visit. I did in the latter part of January; we're at the first part of March now, so it is a month away. The step that I, I think, left with the community, was that we need the BCRs to come forward so that we can be assured of the federal money. When we're assured of that, then we can start actively discussing with the hospital board.

MR. YEW: — I'll switch the subject to the area that is a real concern up in the remote communities. I'm talking about Wollaston Lake, Kinoosao, Black Lake, Fond-du-Lac, and Camsell Portage.

In terms of the food transportation subsidy program, Mr. Minister, I wonder if you can advise the Assembly whether or not your government is prepared to maintain that program and the continuity of service that is direly needed in those remote communities for perishable foods.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Yes, the program has been maintained.

MR. YEW: — I take it that it will be maintained during the next year or two, until there is improvement in communication and transportation to those areas.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — As I indicated earlier to the hon. member, we are discussing the operation of this current year to March 31. As I said, my answer stands that it is maintained.

MR. YEW: — I wonder if the minister would want to comment on a petition that was sent from Wollaston Lake identifying a concern that the food transportation subsidy was curtailed last fall. I wonder if the minister may want to identify with that petition.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I understand that Norcanair has reduced a service, and therefore

there had to be different arrangements. The food is being trucked to Hidden Bay and then is flown from there to Wollaston. The food transportation subsidy is for the flown distance from Hidden Bay to Wollaston and that has resulted in a bit of an increase. That's the information I have.

MR. YEW: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I have no more questions for the time being.

MR. THOMPSON: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I don't know whether you will answer this question at this time or not. It's regarding the food subsidy for perishable foods into northern Saskatchewan. I'm just wondering: has your department considered or are you going to implement the food subsidy into Uranium City now that Eldorado Nuclear has pulled their store out of there? They always had subsidized food through that outlet. Right now, the price is very high in Uranium City. It's a burden on not only Uranium City but also the small community of Camsell Portage. I wonder if you would indicate whether you are planning or have given consideration to adding Uranium City to that program.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — As you know, the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan made some announcement a few days ago about Uranium City. We had been looking at the future of Uranium City as a government and he did make some announcement regarding this. I will take your concern to the minister and we will discuss it. I wouldn't be in a position to make an announcement as to the future at this time, if that's reasonable.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I want to refer back to a statement made earlier by the minister. Maybe he can confirm and get me some information on it. He was mentioned that in the last 10 years of the former government \$19 million went into construction of hospitals and renovations in the province of Saskatchewan. I wonder if he would mind getting me a list of that \$10 million because my records show quite a different amount. I took a moment to go out and get some statistics on various projects over the last 10 years, and various projects in themselves would amount to more money than what he is talking about. For example, the completion of the new addition to the University Hospital in Saskatoon alone is well in excess of \$19 million. I wonder if he would get me a list so we can correct the record because I think that he put something out there that wasn't quite accurate.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Yes, I would be pleased to give you that list. It will take some time. Perhaps there is a little misrepresentation (or you're misunderstanding, on your part) of the non-crown hospitals. That's where the \$19 million was spent outside of Regina and Saskatoon. So maybe that will help you clarify your figures.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — So what you are saying is 19 million was not in base hospitals or in the next level of hospitals, but you've picked out one level of hospitals and applied that across the province. I think it's important, in using these numbers, that we know exactly what we're referring to because the numbers that I have added up quickly (and I, too, could be out 1 million or 2 million) would be in excess of \$100 million, not 19, for hospital construction and renovations over the last 10 years, and probably well in excess of \$100 million. So I just wanted to set the record straight, that in fact over the last 10 years, there was a large amount of money spent. What we are going to be insisting is that at least the new government match what has been spent in the past.

The question to the minister is that I am wondering certainly whether he will do better than that in the future. As well, there were statements made prior to the election that the present government thought that Saskatchewan placed about eighth in health care in

Canada. I wonder if he can tell us where he now thinks the province is in terms of status in Canada at the present time.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — In regard to your hospital statement, there was 112 million outside the city of Regina — 10 million over the past 10 years outside the cities of Regina and Saskatoon. That's what I was referring to.

With regard to where do we measure, I must indicate we've been in power for 10 months. I don't know if there's been any measures done, any evaluations of dollars, but I want to indicate to you, very seriously, that maybe just total dollars isn't the complete way that you evaluate health care. I think we have made some substantial improvements.

I want to indicate to you one in particular, and that one was at St. Paul's Hospital. I don't know what the plans of the government opposite were, but I know from your past record it was probably to gouge and to squeeze, and to take over St. Paul's Hospital. They had diagnostic equipment there that, well, it didn't come off the ark, but it certainly wasn't modern. I went through there and I saw that and I was appalled. I'm no medical person, but I saw competent people who told me, "Look at what we have to diagnose with in one of the main hospitals where the kidney transplants . . . (inaudible) . . . take place." So what did we do? We came back here. I took that concern to the government, the cabinet I belonged to, and we came up with \$1 million for new equipment right there and then. I can tell you, you go to St. Paul's Hospital and ask them if they aren't pretty happy about it. And that is coming up to number one.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well, how the tune has turned in 10 short months from the time when that member for Indian Head-Wolseley would stand in the House and preach about how the dollars and cents were how you classified hospital care in the province of Saskatchewan. In fact that's what his statements were based on when he said Saskatchewan was eighth in Canada. Ten months later he has been converted to another line of thinking where dollars don't matter in health any more. It's an interesting change of tune.

I would like to ask the minister if he can give me a list of people in the department who have been released and terminated since May 8; if he'd give me a complete list and the severance that has been paid to those individuals.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Well, I would be the first to admit that once you get into the operation and you see ways. . . I didn't say dollars weren't all of it. But service, my friend, service is the component that is important. And then I've become the Minister of Health and maybe someday if you aren't too old and you change parties you may get that opportunity. And you will see when you are on the inside that if you really are sincere and use your dollars wisely, there are ways that you can improve the service. And that's what we're trying to do, and I should say that I think Saskatchewan people are very pleased with the way we are doing it.

You asked me about dismissed people in the department. David Kelly was let go with a severance of \$24,032, and Maura Gillis — that severance is still being negotiated. There is no figure at this point in time.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I wonder if the minister can tell us the reason for the dismissal

of David Kelly. Was there something that he was doing, or his education? Was there something lacking in his work performance that made you, or led you to believe, that he should be replaced? And also, can the minister tell me where that individual is working at the present time.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Well, I think it was just the government policy that we would not require the services of Mr. Kelly. He hasn't advised me where he is working, but I do understand he is employed in another province.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well, it's interesting that the minister, simply as a matter of policy, decided to dismiss an individual who was very highly qualified. He had an MBA from Harvard, and momentarily, after being dismissed from Saskatchewan, was hired by the Alberta government as associate deputy minister in the health department.

And I'm wondering if the minister can tell the people of Saskatchewan how that works, that a person with this kind of qualification, doing an excellent job in the Department of Health, is dismissed by this government and the people in Alberta, the government there is wise enough and forward-looking enough to pick him up very quickly, and he is now running very ably a major department, or a major part of a department in the province of Alberta.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — All I can say, in reply to that, to the hon. member is that as I said previously it was government policy to let Mr. Kelly go. As far as Alberta, who they hire or what they do, I have no control over that whatsoever.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well, when you say it was a government policy, I just want to follow that a little further. Who actually signed the dismissal of David Kelly? Can you tell me that?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — It was the cabinet that made the decision, and it was the deputy minister who informed both of these two individuals in writing that their employment would be terminated.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Can the minister tell me in detail, was it an order in council that dismissed David Kelly?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — It would be an order in council terminating his appointment.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Do you know, and can you give me the information of who the individual would have been who signed the order in council dismissing David Kelly?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I don't recall at this time, but I'll find that out for you.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I just would like to leave that issue but make the point that it seems highly ironic that having campaigned on a slogan of bringing home the children to Saskatchewan one of the first things that the new government did when they sat around the cabinet table was to dismiss a large number of very capable individuals, not only in this department but in many of the crown corporations, who had grown up, been educated, and many of them became very professional in the Government of Saskatchewan only to be summarily dismissed after the Conservative government took over on April 26. I think this was a breaking of trust with the people who voted for you in that group which will be remembered for a long, long time. I can honestly say to you that we on this side of the House will not let you forget that, and that

little deed will come back to haunt you at some time.

Mr. Minister, I wonder in the area of dentistry if you can give me some information on . . . I have a letter here from an individual who attends a college of dentistry in Saskatoon and in part he asks the question, and I'll quote:

To begin with, of primary importance, I would like to see an end to the admittance of U.S. graduates and the practising dentists into our province. I understand that some immigration may be necessary for a good neighbor policy, but I would like to bring to your attention that graduates from Canada who want to practice in the United States have to write a national board exam, state board exam and a county board exam, while those dentists coming to the province have no such regulations to meet.

Can you tell me the system that is set up, if a dentist, let's say from Montana, wants to come to Regina to work; what process do they have to go through?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Well, a couple of comments regarding the attitude of the public and so on to dismissals and this government. I would just simply say that I think the other day in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, the public spoke. And I don't see them just too upset. But maybe you interpret that differently.

Regarding the dentists, a dentist from the United States — and I should say that this policy hasn't changed; this is the same policy that was in effect prior to April 26 also — if he's licensed in Montana, can apply and enter practice here in Saskatchewan. I should indicate too that we are ranked about ninth in the ratio of dentists to population. However, I want to say at the same time that this issue that you raise has been expressed to me. I did go and have a meeting with the dental students, a very good one, at the University of Saskatchewan. They brought this concern forward, and it's under consideration as to whether some changes should be made.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Another question that this individual raised to me is the issue of fourth-year summer elective program, and in part he says:

As it stands, the government pays for half of the student's salary if he works as a dentist in rural communities.

They are requesting that that grant be extended to include those students that are able to get summer employment with dentists in the city. I wonder if any consideration is being given, or has been given, to including those fourth-year dentistry students who are working in the cities of, let's say, Regina or Saskatoon, to extend the program to them as well.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — The reason for that I think being previously introduced was to try and entice young people into rural Saskatchewan so that they would establish practices in rural Saskatchewan. But we will take your suggestion that you bring forth from that student under consideration.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, a third point that they raised with me was the issue of the \$25,000 grant used for students in setting up a practice in rural Saskatchewan. Has there been a change in policy since May 8 in that area?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — We're continuing to process payments to those that have been awarded. But there are no new ones being awarded at this time.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Chairman, I think maybe I wasn't listening closely enough to the minister. Are you saying that that program has been, in effect, cancelled by your government?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Yes, that has been terminated. We feel that it has done some of the things that it was designed to do. As I said earlier in my remarks, there are priorities; there are competing demands in health care, as you well understood. We feel that this has satisfied its needs, and it is terminated.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Chairman, this is something that I believe the minister was attempting to slip by the people of Saskatchewan, because I haven't heard it mentioned anywhere before that the \$25,000 grant for young dentists who are opening up in rural Saskatchewan that had been available has been cancelled. This is a new wrinkle in the restraint program that this government is exercising in terms of dentistry in the province.

Not only are we seeing four-year-olds being made to pay for, let's say, cuts in oil royalties to large multinationals, but we're seeing grants for young dentists out of the University of Saskatchewan being cut off as well.

I would just like to say that we are very adamant that the minister do what he can to see that this granting program is reinstated. In places like Lanigan, and I believe in Shaunavon, young dentists have come out — and my colleague from Assiniboia mentions Gravelbourg — and used this grant to set up a practice. And in some cases it makes a difference to whether or not a dentist will come to a small community. One of the main things that a person coming out of college has to look at is the fact that setting up an office and equipment is very costly. Without that grant, I think you'll see a lot fewer dentists coming to rural Saskatchewan. I don't know how this fits with the overall strategy that the Conservative government has for developing and maintaining the rural communities.

I don't think that it will sit very well when this becomes common knowledge out in rural Saskatchewan. I just wonder if the minister will comment as to how much this program cost in the last year that it was in operation?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I just mentioned that there was no attempt to slip this by anyone — getting the figure of what it cost — but it was conveyed in writing to the dental surgeons. They knew this was happening, the college of dental surgeons. In my meeting with the students at the University of Saskatchewan we discussed this, so there was no attempt to slip it by anyone. It was well known. We are looking for the figure right now of what the cost was for that. Yes, I have those figures for you. For '80-81 the actual payment was \$94,663, and the estimate for '82-83 is \$95,000.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well, Mr. Minister, in light of the fact of the relatively small amount of money that is involved, and yet with the very significant impact that it would have on two or three communities each year in the province in terms of whether they had a dentist in their community or not, I can't see why in the world you would allow a program like this to fall by the wayside at the same time as the former minister of mineral resources were able to get \$50 million cuts to oil royalties in the first couple of weeks in cabinet.

I just would like to impress upon you the importance of maintaining that kind of programming, especially you who are a rural member and know well how the impact of having a dentist in the community affects the main street of the community. And you can use the example, I suppose, of Indian Head or Shaunavon where, if the dentist isn't there, the people will then drive to Swift Current or Regina and do their shopping, and it definitely has an impact on the whole economy. I'm sure that many business people in these small communities will be interested to know that this program has been done away with, because I know that in Shaunavon there was a group who lobbied the government when we were in power to see that that grant was forthcoming. It has a big impact with the business people on Main Street. I would just like to ask you again if, in this coming budget, you would take a moment — and that's all it would take — to initial your name to \$95,000. In a department the size of yours, that's all it would take. Would you consider doing that so the four or five communities who will be affected next year, negatively if it isn't put back in, will be allowed to have a dentist because of this program?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Well, in all due respect, I think I have as good a read of rural Saskatchewan as the member does. I come from a rural area, as you say, and I've seen that there are dentists in the towns in my constituency. I haven't had any complaint. They are all served by dentists, and, you know, in this department we listen to what the people out there are saying, and I have not had any requests asking for this establishment from a community in Saskatchewan.

MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Minister, I want, first of all, to address what you indicated was a policy which you were establishing in the Department of Health, and that is a policy whereby the hospitals would retain the profits in the amounts which they hadn't expended and this would help to create efficiencies of management. I want you to expand on that. But I am, first of all, very surprised that in the Department of Health you have announced a policy whereby the hospitals can retain, as you indicated, the surplus; the Minister of Social Services, in the day care, has a recovery program of taking back any surplus.

I wonder whether the Minister of Health, first of all, can indicate whether that is in fact policy, or is he just looking at it, or is he just getting headlines? Can he indicate how it is consistent with the announced policy, an implemented policy, I may say, in the Department of Social Services — the recovery program?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I want to indicate that that is something that we're looking at. I believe that that is the way of having people run things efficiently. I don't really agree with the other . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, if you'd wait I'll tell you. If you want to interject we'll have a little fun yelling back and forth. What is your choice?

What I was going to say to you is that if you can maintain that level of patient care — and I think I said early in my remarks that service and patient care are the important criteria — and if a board should be able to manage their affairs in such a manner that they have a surplus, then we are looking at saying that they can retain that surplus. I would think that the way you fellows rewarded people for efficient management was to take that surplus back. So therefore, in my mind, that just indicates that you should run out and spend it. It doesn't look like wise management, in my mind.

Now, as far as . . . I think you said day care, but I don't think . . . It was home care, yes. I think you had an opportunity to question the minister in her estimates. I'm sure she

must have good and sufficient reasons to decide what she's doing. I'm not going to indicate that she doesn't know what she's doing in her department. I say what I'm planning to do in my department. I hope I've explained it to you.

MR. KOSKIE: — I'm pleased to know that the contradictory approaches can be taken and each minister can stand up in this House and say it's in the interests of efficiency. One recovers the money; the other says he's going to leave it.

Actually, what I want to ask is a follow-up to that. Can you indicate to us, in the year under review, the number of hospitals throughout the province that had a surplus?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — We'll have to do that for '81-82, because we couldn't account for this year. It isn't completed yet. It's going to take some work, and they will work on that for you. '81-82 is okay? Does that satisfy you? They will work on that, so I don't think there's any need to wait for that. It's going to take some time. We will send it to you, and I will entertain more questions while that is going on.

MR. KOSKIE: — Obviously the information would lend itself to further questions if I had it, but I think that I want to go on.

My colleague from Shaunavon was discussing the construction of hospitals throughout the province, and I also understand that the Minister of Health took it upon himself, and presumably the credit, to announce a new formula for the share that the province would put in in the construction of the various hospitals throughout the province.

But I want to ask the minister. I know, as a member of the treasury board, that the Department of Health, prior to the April 26 event, had in fact an approved new formula. From what I have read from the press releases, I believe that the formula which has been adopted by the minister is in fact the New Democratic Party formula when they were in office. Could you indicate whether you adopted that very good formula?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Well, I guess it just goes back to what happens in a democracy. You talked about it. You started talking about it April 1 or something, about the date when all of a sudden somebody thought maybe we should do this. I want to tell you that the difference is that we implemented it, and people are building hospitals under it now because it has been implemented by a Conservative government.

MR. KOSKIE: — I take it from what the minister indicated that he indeed followed the formula which we had approved. Could you indicate yes or no, or what variations?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Yes. You know, that's rather a funny question. I suppose we brought in the same formula. That's all you wanted? It's the same formula; sure. You did the odd thing right, but not enough to win an election, boys.

MR. KOSKIE: — I just wanted to say on this that the minister has been fortunate and many of his colleagues on the front benches are fortunate because we left a precedent in a budget which, I think, was impossible for the minister to vary. But I will look to the future for the new initiatives of this government.

My colleague was also discussing dental care throughout the province. There was a project which was, I may say, approved by the former government which was in Wadena — the Wadena dental project. And, as I recall, it was in conjunction with the

university. There was discussion of setting up in the area of Wadena a dental clinic, if I may use that word. Could the minister indicate whether he is proceeding with it or what has happened?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Very simply, we scrapped it.

MR. KOSKIE: — Well, that's interesting. I suppose what we have seen so far then is the scrapping of the assistance to dentists getting established in smaller communities — the grant. We have seen a dental project which was being established for another rural community in a short-term Tory seat (because once his constituents find out what this government is really about, I know that they will come back to our fold). We have seen just in one area, then, the scrapping of a project which was in conjunction with the university, which was a model that could conceivably have spread throughout the province to provide services — the grants to establish them, major cuts in that area. You indicated, Mr. Minister, that you scrapped the program. I would like to know: can you give the reasons why you scrapped it?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Most certainly. We have, and I answered very plainly to you that we scrapped that program. And as I indicated in my introductory remarks, there are many demands in the health field, and one has to sort out priorities. Obviously that wasn't a priority — that program.

But I want to indicate to you many things that were. I've pointed out to you previously about the money that was infused into St. Paul's Hospital, and gratefully appreciated. We've discussed previously the new construction formula that has allowed six or eight new hospitals to go ahead in this province. We put \$153 million into approved non-invasive cardiac care services in Regina; \$500,000 into an ambulance service that was falling apart under your administration, which you had divided hither, skithier and nigh through this government.

I want to tell you, and I go back again: you mentioned something about the people of Indian Head-Wolseley, well I'll tell you I'll take my chances with the people of Indian Head-Wolseley. I've defeated the same guy that you ran twice in a row, and I'll do it again if he has enough guts to put his name on that ballot paper.

But let me tell you, let's go back to just a few weeks ago, to a city in northern Saskatchewan named Prince Albert, where you had a nine-vote majority, and I think it was close to a 1,000-vote majority for this government after the polls closed. Now if that isn't telling me that the people of Saskatchewan are satisfied with the health care delivered by this government, with the other programs delivered by this government, either I'm out of tune or I don't know what you fellows are thinking about. Because certainly the people of Saskatchewan are very satisfied with the Devine government in all aspects of this administration.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KOSKIE: — I want to say that our case is being built step by step to return to power. Each and every minister that comes before this House is laying the grounds for his self-destruction. They have often used as an example Alberta and what was going on there, and what I want to ask the minister is whether he has any desire, or whether he has any intentions to follow the steps of the Minister of Health in Alberta, because this is what he is looking at. Hospital minister Dave Russell — that's Tory Alberta. And listen, Mr.

Minister:

Hospital minister Dave Russell says it's time to look at making patients pay user fees when they go into the hospital in Alberta. Russell said Monday he's floated the idea before and didn't get much support. He said with the government and the hospital boards facing tight budgets, people will start to look at user fees as an option.

This old Tory philosophy — I want to know whether the Minister of Health in this province will stand up and categorically deny that he will ever in his tenure as minister introduce any user fees.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I want to indicate to the member opposite that again I think you fellows should take off your glasses, as it is clouding your vision, and see what's going on in this province. You're not following the lead of Alberta. We have a dynamic, a visionary, a young and clever Premier that is directing this province in a vein that has never been directed before, and I tell you once again that the people of Saskatchewan are more than pleased with what we're doing. And there will be no way that the cabinet of Alberta will dictate or indicate to the cabinet of Saskatchewan the direction that we should be taking. If Dave Russell wants to say he needs fees in Alberta, he has every right to do that, but I want to tell you that as Minister of Health in this province, and the representative of this government, we have no intention of introducing any fees in Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KOSKIE: — I want to go another step further. I want to ask the minister that many of the provinces with Tory governments have premiums on medicare. Ontario, over \$600; Alberta, \$200 or \$300 — in that range. I would like to ask — I don't want the speech about whether you're going to copy — I want to know whether your policy as minister is that you will guarantee to the people of Saskatchewan that there will be no premiums instituted in respect to health care in this province. That was a user fee and premiums I'm talking about.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — My answer holds the same as it did for fees, that we have no intention of premiums. I see that you quote other Tory governments. I guess you'd have a hard time finding many other NDP ones, thank goodness, in this country.

MR. KOSKIE: — Throughout the health system in Canada, and the federal government have been pushing and pushing hard; the Minister of Health and Welfare, Monique Begin, has been negotiating in respect to their contribution — a commitment from the provinces in order to establish the principle of universal health and medical care, that is to eliminate the extra billing (if I may use that term) by doctors.

I want to say that Monique Begin is prepared to proceed with that as a prerequisite to the supplying of the money to the provinces. The former minister of health supported that principle very strongly. I wanted to say that when he was minister of health, there was around 2 per cent of the doctors throughout this province who were charging extra billing.

I want to say again, I look with dismay at what is happening throughout Canada, and again I look to the richest province, again Alberta — 40 per cent of the doctors are extra billing. What I want to know is: what is the position of the Minister of Health in so far as establishing a policy which will prevent the freedom of doctors to do as they will, so far

as extra billing?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Very interesting to see the close ties and connection between you and Mme. Begin. You seem to have a lot more knowledge of what she is doing than I do. We were in contact with her department this morning. We have no indication. Then of course I think you fellows and Trudeau and Begin have always been rather close together and I can see that the wedding is still taking place. I wonder where you get these little tidbits of information from Monique Begin. We know just where you're lining up. The same place as you ever did; kind of the quasi-Trudeau boys, eh!

However, regarding extra billing, it's about 2 per cent in this province at this time. It's not causing a problem so I don't see any need to get really excited about it. As I say, you seem to know something that your friend Monique Begin is going to do that I don't know about.

MR. KOSKIE: — I want to tell you that on this issue, I had also the opportunity of meeting with a former Tory cabinet minister, the little mayor who is running for the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party. And I want to say that his position was not that federal funding would not be provided unless the provinces in fact insisted upon no extra billing. He was opening the gates, and of course I will support the principle that is being supported by Monique Begin.

I am telling you that if we hadn't got rid of that little mayor as the federal health and welfare minister within that nine months, the whole health and social programs of this country would have been eroded. They had a major study on, and I want to say that in my view, his position was not to support in the same way that is being adopted by Monique Begin. And you should know what the position of your Tory counterparts is. And I want to say that if you want to get rid of extra billing and make universality, just like with the crow, there's enough Tory governments that certainly can take on the medical professions and guarantee what Emmett Hall said should be provided to the people, universal care without extra billing, without premiums and without user fees.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Well, just a point of clarification. You seem to know an awful lot about Monique Begin and you're very close to her and I just want to inform you that I don't know if you're aware that the Hall report was commissioned by the little mayor from Toronto, David Crombie.

MR. KOSKIE: — In respect to the whole review before the implementation of medicare as we developed here in Saskatchewan, you know, the little mayor was not around in politics at that time when the federal government commissioned Emmett Hall to review it and make recommendations, and as a result the federal government adopted it long before he came into the scene, long before. What they used Emmett Hall for, and ask your deputy about this, was a slightly different question altogether, so get your answers straight.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I was just asking my deputy and I don't know if you realize there are two Hall reports. The second one was the one commissioned by David Crombie so I think that you better do a little bit of homework yourself. On the extra billing, you know, it seems to me that you had 10 years to do something about it. Did you outlaw it?

MR. KOSKIE: — I want to say that within 10 years when there was an NDP government here in Saskatchewan that commitment was given to the people, the doctors of this province knew it, and we had, basically, no extra billing. What I am concerned about is

the weak philosophical position of the Tory party opposite exhibited by their colleagues across in eight provinces, their very meagre attempt, and the erosion of the principle that we developed here of universal care. That's what I'm concerned about. We didn't have to do more. We had universal medical care during our term of office.

I want to just turn to one other matter on which I would like a report, Mr. Minister, and it's a specific item — the northeast council on alcohol and drug abuse. I know, Mr. Minister, that you have met with this group in Tisdale. I don't think I have to necessarily go through the proposal. They have been good enough to provide me with a copy of it. The essential thing is that they want to expand the facility and the program in the northeast, and centred in Tisdale, by the using of the nurses' residence, Tisdale Union Hospital . . . (inaudible) . . . The Tisdale hospital nurses' residence is what they are making the submission to: they could set up this program, utilize this building, and what they needed was some funding. I want to say that that is an organization.

I want to say, too, that the strength . . . I agree that that's not necessarily dollar values that can really equate what the health care was during our term, because we have people like this northeast council of alcohol and drug abuse, people in Saskatchewan volunteering the providing and the distribution of health and social services in this province, unequalled with any other province in Canada. And none of those are taken in in deciding that it is an integral part of the service. Anyway, I want the minister then to bring me up to date on whether he has approved this project — the status report, if you would. I want a little detail.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — You want a little detail? I'll give you a little detail. The little detail is that extra billing at one time under your administration was higher than 6 per cent, for a little detail if you want it.

However, getting on to the alcohol commission, I met with those people. I was up in Tisdale. As I said, I've met with a number of groups — open government, listening to people. They put forth their presentation which obviously you have a copy of, and that's just fine and dandy. Since that time the executive director of the alcohol commission, Brian Kearns, who has been up there, looked at the facility, and talked to them. The alcohol commission, the board of the commission, is looking at all these requests. It isn't just Tisdale. We have them around the province where the board is looking at these, and within the next few months we will be coming down with a long-range plan. I shouldn't say on building facilities, but establishing facilities; that may be using existing facilities and renovating them to meet the need.

AN HON. MEMBER: — We don't want to hear you, either.

MR. PETERSEN: — Nobody wants to hear me? Oh, I'm on. Mr. Chairman, I would just like to clarify one point. The member for Quill Lakes brought up a proposed dental care program for the town of Wadena. The way that it came out here, I'm led to believe that it had been implemented.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order. You have to direct your comments to the minister.

MR. PETERSEN: — I apologize, sir. My question to the minister is: the dental care program at Wadena, had it been okayed? The program had been developed. The consultation with the town had gone through. Was there an agreement reached, or was it merely another election promise?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Your answer to that is that there had been some discussions that had taken place, but there was no agreement that had been implemented.

MR. KOSKIE: — I would like to ask the minister whether the establishment of the dental project in Wadena, to his knowledge, had been approved in the health budget.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — As I understand, it was in the '81-82 budget. There was some legislation that was needed that was never passed; it was put in your budget that never was passed, and as I said to you previously, it was the decision of my department to not proceed with it.

MR. KOSKIE: — All I want to leave on the record is that I was involved in the treasury board and the review of the Department of Health, and I want to say that that project was approved by the New Democratic government prior to the . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

I just want to make one more comment, Mr. Minister, coming back to the question of extra billings. I have here a Wednesday, April 28, 1982 article, and in respect to extra billing, the Premier had this to say — your Premier: “Extra billing is a right that doctors have fought for. If the scheme is properly financed, there is probably no place for extra billing.” Now, on that basis, I want to ask one further question. Will the minister undertake, in view of that statement that extra billing is not necessary — it's a right of the doctors in accordance with your Premier, but it will not be necessary if there is sufficient funding — to give a commitment that he will see to it that there will be sufficient funding so that extra billing will not be needed?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Going back in history a bit you'll realize that extra billing was a right which was negotiated with the doctors of this province in 1962 by what we would call the CCF government of the day. Extra billing today is at one of the lowest levels it has ever been. Your question of more money and so on, I think, is a bit hypothetical, so my answer to you is this: this government honours agreements that have been made. I'd like to remind you that the agreement made to allow extra billing as a right of the doctors in Saskatchewan was negotiated by the CCF government in 1962.

MR. KOSKIE: — I'm perfectly aware of that, and you've told me nothing. I ask you again — I quote to you the Premier of this province:

Extra billing is a right that doctors have fought for. (Agreed.) If the scheme is properly financed, there is probably no place for extra billing.

Will you agree with the statement of your Premier in your position as the Minister of Health?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I don't really see any contradiction. I just say again that extra billing is at the lowest it has ever been, so I don't see the real problem, what you're getting at here. I don't see any contradiction there. Following on your line of thought, we're into the hypotheticals, you know. We could think this in many phases. How do you react to what could be?

MR. KOSKIE: — It's not hypothetical from the standpoint, Mr. Minister, that the leader of your government has made a statement — and the statement I'll read again:

Extra billing is a right that doctors have fought for. If the scheme is properly financed, there is probably no place for extra billing.

Do you agree with your Premier?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I don't know your source, where you're quoting from, if you're taking bits and pieces of it, or what you're doing. But I do indicate again that at 2 per cent . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Is there a joke there? At 2 per cent, I don't really see where there's any problem.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — The minister doesn't like to talk about whether or not funding arrangements of the Department of Health have anything to do with the direct billing of doctors and the number of direct billings that take place, but we'll watch over the next year or two to see whether or not, in the words of your Premier, direct billing goes up, extra billing goes up, and if we still believe that when it does go up it's the responsibility of the Department of Health to put more money in to solve that problem.

I want to go back to the dental plan which we had been talking about earlier. We have seen a number of areas that have been cut in the dentistry programming: the Wadena project, the four-year-olds project, the granting to dentists who are starting up in rural communities. What I'd like to know is whether or not you can inform us at this time as to whether or not four-year-olds will be included in the dental plan in the near future. The studies that you have done to date would surely indicate, within your department, whether or not four-year-olds will be included in the dental plan in the near future.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Well, I think you'll have to wait for those answers until the budget that comes down in the near future.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well, what you're saying then is there have been no discussions as to whether or not four-year-olds will be included in the dental plan in the year under review?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I didn't say there were no discussions. There is continual discussion within our department about all the aspects of health delivery service, as there should be, but the announcement of what this government will be doing in the next year, as you well understand and know, will be made with the next budget.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — As a result of those discussions that you have had in the year under review, what is your opinion as to whether or not four-year-olds should be included in the dental plan?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — In the past year, as you know, we've had the treatment of the five-year-olds, which we feel is probably a time in which we can do work pertaining to the baby teeth. We didn't cut the four-year-olds off entirely. They've been able to come and have consultation. I think the program has been working quite well.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well, that may be the minister's opinion, and I find it a very unusual position for a minister of health who proclaims to be in support of good medicare in the province, which of course in this case would include good dentistry for children, that they are not a priority. But I'm wondering: can you tell me how many children were involved as four-year-olds? How many in numbers are we talking about? How much money was saved by the department in the year under review by not including the four-year-olds in the program?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — 11,000 students, \$600,000.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well, I think that here again I'd like to make the point that for \$600,000, in a department of your size, to meet the needs of 11,000 young children . . . I think it's a bit of a disgrace that one of his first acts as minister was to eliminate the dental care plan for that group of children. And I think that very quickly, in this area again, you should use your influence in cabinet to make sure that cuts in those areas don't take place in the future, and that in fact expansion of the dental care program be carried out in the next budget, and that the \$600,000 that you need for it . . . If it means that oil companies get 49.5 million rather than 50 million, then I think it's a debate that you should be able to carry out and convince the people in cabinet that this program shouldn't be slashed the way it has been in the past.

Because when you look at the areas where you are cutting taxes on the revenue side . . . I'll use the oil companies again — You say it's to stimulate drilling in the province. Well, last year, under your administration, was one of the most dismal drilling records in the history of the province. I think it was the lowest level in a large number of years, and I think that the stimulation program that you instigated.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Chairman, is the purpose of this forum to discuss health or oil drilling? I'm here to discuss health.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — I would like to remind all members that we are on item 1 in health estimates.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well, I suppose that in dentistry and oil drilling there are related areas. They both use diamonds in the drilling process, and we could make the case that in relating social programs, Mr. Minister, I think you'll be well aware as a member of the cabinet benches, that there is a relation between where taxes are cut and social programs that are delivered. We could argue about that.

I think that I would just like to make the point in closing this area that you have a responsibility for those 11,000 children in the province to use your influence to see that funding is available for the dental program. We will look forward to the announcement on budget night very quickly. I hope, of the extension of that plan to four-year-olds, or the replacement of the plan the way it was under our former administration.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I realize that I have a responsibility to all the people in the province of Saskatchewan. I think I've gone through a list of significant improvements that this government has brought in the health field. I know sometimes (and you may need a little help with the SHAP plan — that's the hard of hearing) that I may have to go through it again. It's in the record; I'm sure you're capable of reading it.

I would indicate to you also that looking at other governments, I understand that B.C. waxed the dental plan right out. I would think that this government has been looking very carefully at the delivery of health services. As the Minister of Health, I am proud of the delivery that we have brought about since this government came in.

Again, I go back to say that I think the Saskatchewan people support, and supported strongly, in Prince Albert-Duck Lake just a few weeks ago. Now do we have to call another by-election to show you fellows again that the people are still with us?

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Chairman, I find it interesting that two minutes ago we couldn't talk about drilling oil wells, but now we can talk about the P.A.-Duck Lake by-election. I find a discrepancy on the part of the minister, where he feels he can debate whatever he feels like, but the opposition can't ask questions about the department under review. The double standard is a little hard to understand, but maybe not.

Another question to the minister, I would like to know whether or not any discussion has gone on between yourself as minister, or members of your department, on privatization of the hospitals in the province with companies who would come in and administer hospitals on a fee for service. Can you tell me whether any discussions have gone on with the minister, or with members of your staff?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — No, there have been no discussions on the privatization of hospitals.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Minister, I would hope that you will not follow the lead of your colleagues in Ontario who, under the health minister, Larry Grossman, have gone that route. They have hired American firms to come in and run a certain number of their hospitals. I would just like to quote from *Maclean's* about what is happening in the health scene in that area. It says:

As a result, the Ontario health ministry for one, recently urged hospitals to initiate such fund-raising programs as fitness classes to raise additional money.

And it goes on to talk about involvement of AMI, the American Medical International of Los Angeles, coming in and running the hospital at Kingston. What they are able to do there now is they've expanded the social program where you can order off a menu; you can get \$20 meals and a bottle of wine. And this company had profits last year of \$78 million.

I would just like to sound an alarm to the minister, that the people of Saskatchewan are not going to be willing to follow this kind of an operation in Saskatchewan. These kind of approaches and lobbying, which I'm sure will be done here in the very near future, because when you come from Los Angeles and you see a Conservative government in Ontario and one in Saskatchewan, you'll think that if you can make a bunch of money in Ontario, maybe you should come here and try, but to be very wary about consultation and discussions on this issue because it's something that we don't need in Saskatchewan. I'd like you to give us your guarantee that you have no intention of going this route in the province of Saskatchewan.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Yes, I also read the article that the member is holding up there. In checking, I think the only time when there was a private group to run an institution in the health care was Extendicare, hired in 1974 to run the Frank Eliason Centre. If my mind serves me correctly, that was right in the middle of your administration.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, the point is that I think what is happening in Ontario is that very major hospitals are being privatized in order that a foreign company, an American company, can come in and run and make large amounts of profit. I also would warn against attempts to run hospitals on a profit motive basis or attempt to tell hospital boards that they should raise their funds in terms of lotteries and bingos, the way that is being done in other areas of your government at the present

time.

I want to go back one step to the direct billing issue and ask the minister if he can inform the Assembly how many doctors, what percentage of doctors in Saskatchewan, direct bill at the present time.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — 2.9 per cent of the total services are extra billed.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I realize that, but that's not my question. The percentage of doctors who direct bill in the province was the question.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — 289 doctors in Saskatchewan bill for some of their services; not all of them, some of them.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Minister, what percentage of the doctors would that be?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — About 22 per cent of the doctors bill some services.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Minister, can you tell me approximately what the dollar figure would be of those 22 per cent of the doctors under the direct billing?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — The average cost per general practitioner per service is \$4.84.

MR. LUSNEY: — This average cost is 4.84?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — The average extra charge per general practitioner was 4.84 per service.

MR. LUSNEY: — The problem that rural Saskatchewan is facing with extra billing isn't the general practitioner. I don't have a general practitioner that's in the extra billing. The problem comes when that general practitioner refers my daughter for surgery. They land up in Regina and it's a specialist, a high-priced doctor that's doing the extra billing. I can show you bills that I had personally this year. I know what those bills are; they are more than \$4, Mr. Minister. I think that the specialist and the extra billing he is doing would be closer to \$50 or \$60 or \$70 in extra billing shots.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — No, for specialists the average extra amount per service is \$10.34.

MR. ENGEL: — I'm not asking about the visit, I'm asking about the surgeries and that involvement there. You can go and visit a doctor and the visit is \$35 and you pay \$10 extra billing on that. But when you have the surgery and you are running into surgery, it's quite a little number.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — With failure of outlining a specific procedure it's pretty hard for me to tell, but the 10.34 is the average. I'll grant you there will be some higher, and there will be some lower. That's the average extra billing per procedure for specialists, 10.34.

MR. ENGEL: — You haven't broken this out that you'd say, like, in the year under review, "We spent so much money," or "It would have taken so much extra to pay the entire costs." Do you keep track of when I send my bill in, and you pay me 80 per cent back? Do you keep track of what that total comes to of all the people who are being extra billed?

Have you got a dollar figure? What I was looking for, is it \$1 million or is it \$10 million?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — There is no problem with trying to give you that information. We don't have it with us right here, but if you would like that, we'll get it for you.

MR. ENGEL: — I'd like a ball-park figure.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — A ball-park figure of what that would be? Yes, we'll do that.

MR. ENGEL: — Thank you.

MR. YEW: — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, I understand that the Saskatchewan Alcoholism Commission is under your cabinet post. Am I correct? In terms of the commission itself, I understand as well that there has been a major reorganization of the commission effective from this report, April 1, 1982. This reorganization has a sector in it referred to as the regional services division. This division is now, and I'll quote from the paper:

... is to consist of the northern district and southern district, and will assume responsibility for the services provided by the community services and rehabilitation divisions under the former organization structure.

My question is this. I had in my travels last summer engaged in some meetings and formal discussions with the rehab council in Sandy Bay as well as the council in Cumberland House and other personnel who are involved with the Ile-a-la-Crosse centre and the La Loche centre. There was some discussion in those last summer and fall that the various local rehab councils wanted to have some input into the alcoholism commission by way of appointment or board member status in the Alcohol Commission of Saskatchewan. Could the minister identify if there has been any positive steps taken to accommodate that desire by the northern councils?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I would have to say, in answer to the member, that the request wasn't brought to my attention that these people wanted representation. I did put a new board in place as you know. There are new people on there. I think the board is full, shall I say. But people are on for X periods of time, and if this is a request that some of these people want to be included, most certainly for coming vacancies, we will take that into consideration, but it hadn't been expressed to me.

MR. YEW: — I understand, Mr. Minister, that there has been no formal request submitted so I will table any further questions in that respect.

Getting back to the rehab councils, there was a specific request by the council in Cumberland House to have officials from your department and yourself visit the community to try to determine programs and policy. They were trying to get some discussion going in terms of program and policy development for that area. Also, they were, I believe, appealing for some program financial support from your department. I wonder, Mr. Minister, if you have actually, or any of your officials have actually met with the rehab council for Cumberland House and what the status is with regard to their program. Is it currently in operation through financial support from your department or is it not?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I have visited the centre in Sandy Bay, as I think you realize, and the executive director, Brian Kearns, has been to Cumberland House also. And I

indicated a little earlier that over the next three months, in reply to the member for Quill Lakes, when he was asking about Tisdale (I think you were in your seat at that time), there are a number of these requests that are going before the alcohol commission and Cumberland House will be one of them that will be considered at that time.

MR. YEW: — It certainly took a long time, Mr. Minister, to try to respond to what I personally concluded was a very basic need of the area, to try to get their program maintained and run with sufficient funding, sufficient government support and encouragement. There are a number of people who lost their jobs and the program in itself is an extremely valuable service for the region. In your travels in northeast Saskatchewan, I understand you've toured the facility at Sandy Bay. I wonder if the minister might comment whether that facility is adequate or inadequate.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Yes, when I visited there, I saw the facility and I talked to the director. I just forget his name now — Mr. Bear, was it? Jack Bear, I remember him now. And he expressed his concern and I passed that on to the alcoholism commission and again I would have to say that that is in this three-month assessment that they're looking at, too.

MR. YEW: — I had a personal view and tour of the facility at Sandy Bay and I'm sure the minister will agree with me that it is a regular firetrap, a health hazard. And if the Fifth Estate or some major media firm were to tour that community and inspect the facility that exists, I'm sure it would hit a heck of a lot of negative reaction throughout the province and the country. I wonder at this time, although you've made some representation to the alcoholism commission, does the minister in any way anticipate providing for a centre for Sandy Bay to replace the existing facility that is totally inadequate?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I'd just like to say that I've asked the commission, as I replied to you earlier, to look at the facilities in the North, and I haven't received anything back from them yet as to whether they feel that Sandy Bay should be retained, or rebuilt, or what. I'm awaiting that reply from them.

MR. YEW: — One final question, Mr. Minister. What is the status in respect to maintaining and continuing with the existing rehab centres in northern Saskatchewan — the centre in Ile-a-la-Crosse, La Loche, the centre in Cumberland House, Sandy Bay, etc.? What is your position on those centres in terms of the provision of programs and the expansion or the improvement of those facilities?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I think I'll have to just reply with the same answers that I've . . . From my trip to the North, I've asked the commission to look into services for northern Saskatchewan. They are presently doing that. I have not heard back from them, but I think that's the answer that I would have to give you to that question, sir.

MR. YEW: — Pardon me. I have just one final question then, Mr. Minister. In your subvote 25, page 49, there is an allotment of \$6.5 million and it's got the stars or whatever beside it indicating that this is a Department of Northern Saskatchewan allocation, or a portion of it is allotted to the North. Has the fund in question here actually been provided to these local centres to run their programs? If in fact it has, I wonder if the minister may provide us with some written information in respect to those budget allotments.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — We'll provide you with the information to that question rather

than dig it out. But we'll send that to you, if that's agreeable.

MR. YEW: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. You mentioned in your tour of northern Saskatchewan the last time around that it was fairly cold when you came to La Ronge. I just want to warn the minister that if you don't repriorize some of your budget allocations to these dire programs that are, you know, very important to us, it could get a lot colder next time.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — You've been a real nice guy so far today, so I think I'll deal with La Ronge, and I'm sure I'm quite capable of handling whatever heat may be generated.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I have a short question before we call it 5 o'clock. I wonder in terms of the commission that we were referring to here, could you get me a list of the members, present and past, sort of, since May 8?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Those are the members on the alcohol commission? Yes, sure will.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:04 p.m.