

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
March 9, 1983

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Standing Committee on Crown Corporations

ASSISTANT CLERK: — Mr. Sveinson, from the standing committee on crown corporations, presents the second report of the said committee which is as follows:

Your committee has agreed to the annual reports for 1981 of the following corporations:

1. Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan;
2. Saskatchewan Computer Utility Corporation;
3. Saskatchewan Development Fund Corporation;
4. Saskatchewan Forest Products Corporation;
5. Saskatchewan Government Printing Company;
6. Saskatchewan Minerals;
7. Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation;
8. Saskatchewan Oil and Gas Corporation;
9. Saskatchewan Power Corporation;
10. Saskatchewan Telecommunications;
11. Saskatchewan Transportation Company.

It is your committee's intention to complete the examination of the 1981 reports of the following crown corporations during the next session of the legislature:

1. Agricultural Development Corporation of Saskatchewan;
2. Crown Investments Corporation;
3. Municipal Financing Corporation of Saskatchewan;
4. Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation;

5. Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation;
6. Saskatchewan Government Insurance;
7. Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation;
8. Saskatchewan Housing Corporation;
9. Saskatchewan Water Supply Board.

MR. SVEINSON: — I move, seconded by the member for Saskatoon Nutana;

That the second report of the standing committee on crown corporations be now concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Mr. Speaker, in my absence yesterday, for which I would apologize to the House, the public accounts committee report came up and was deferred. I would ask for leave of the House to deal with the report of the public accounts committee at this time. I will not occupy much time in the House. At the conclusion of my remarks I will be moving, seconded by the member for Saskatoon Mayfair:

That the second report of the standing committee on public accounts be concurred in.

By way of introduction, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate members of the public accounts committee in their diligence and their interest in the work of the public accounts committee.

We met 20 times which, I gather, is at least a record for modern day meetings. No one, I think, searched the records exhaustively, but it appears that 20 meetings is some sort of a record. We also called before the committee 30 departments, also an unusually large number, and I would remind Mr. Speaker that all this took place in a year when public accounts committee meetings, and I'm sure crown corporation committee meetings, were difficult to come by because the legislature met and adjourned so frequently this year. So I think it is a testimony to the interest the members had in the work of the public accounts committee, and their diligence, that we were able to accomplish this not inconsiderable feat of reviewing the work of the departments so thoroughly.

I may say as well, the attendance of the members was good. Not once during the entire 20 meetings did we ever have a problem with a quorum. The interest of the members was such that we usually had to discipline ourselves to bring the conclusions to a halt or we never would have got finished with the work of the committee.

Part of the time was spent dealing with what I would call the attest function, that is the comments provided by the provincial auditor that the practices of the departments were not being conducted in accordance with sound accounting practices. (A department or a crown corporation might leave blank cheques laying around where

employees could come by them, and those were some of the things that we might deal with, would also deal with questions of overpayments and so on.) and that occupied some of our time. I think the committee felt we dealt with all of the management letters sent out by the provincial auditor that in any way merited attention.

A goodly part of our time, as well, was spent in what I call the comprehensive auditing function. Members will be familiar with the controversy which has gone on for some years now with respect to whether or not comprehensive auditing should be adopted. Let me define comprehensive auditing as moving beyond the attest function, and dealing with the question of whether or not the money was spent in a manner which was efficient and effective, and whether or not the department met its goals in an efficient and effective manner.

Members should be clear that the committee has always had the power to engage in that sort of inquiry. It is only the provincial auditor who does not. I'm not at this point in time going to get into the question of comprehensive auditing. Members will recall that we deferred the issue for one year. I suspect that we will be bringing in at least an interim report at the end of the next session, Mr. Speaker. And I may deal with the question of comprehensive auditing more fully then, but at the moment it's somewhat academic since I don't think we'll be dealing with it. I will simply say that I do not see the logic in having a committee which spends a good deal of its time on the comprehensive auditing function and prohibits the provincial auditor from serving his complementary function.

With respect to the comprehensive auditing function, we've reviewed the affairs of a number of departments and crown corporations. In some cases, our inquiries led to some results that I think we were impressed with. I discovered, for instance, that the last ratio on the loans given out by Sedco is rather good. It would be regarded as rather good even by a commercial bank. And that was of interest to me. I discovered, as well, on the other side, that there had been some overpayments in social services. I'm not raising this in any partisan fashion; I think the problem did not arise with the current administration. It was apparent, as well, though, that the problem wasn't being solved, and we asked social services to return in four months time with a report on their progress in dealing with the problem of overpayments.

I think this illustrates what public accounts is all about. It is really not terribly relevant how large or how small the problem is. It is even less relevant whose fault it is. What is relevant was that there was money being wasted and that it was a problem that apparently could be solved. We hope to see to that, and we see this as our function.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I want to move, seconded by the member for Saskatoon Mayfair, that the second report of the standing committee on public accounts be now concurred in.

MR. GLAUSER: — Mr. Speaker, I want to preface my remarks with a thank you to the Deputy Clerk who provided clerk services for this committee. Her assistance and guidance were most helpful. I would also like to mention the auditor and the comptroller who, with their officials, gave very helpful assistance.

I have alluded to the remarks, which the member for Regina Centre has made throughout my observations, so I will just leave it to those as I carry on.

Mr. Speaker, I found it somewhat less than rewarding serving on this committee over

the past nine months during which time we reviewed the operations, as the member opposite mentioned, looking at 30 departments of government over 20 sittings. I agree with him that this perhaps is a record. The reasons for my disenchantment with the function are that, one, we are looking at expenditures that are past history, and were made, in a number of instances, not always with the best interest of the taxpayers in mind.

Secondly, another observation I would make, Mr. Speaker, is that I do not believe there is enough onus placed on management for accountability of the funds that they are responsible for disbursing. Mr. Chairman, the chairman of public accounts, the member for Regina Centre, has recently expressed on a few occasions his thoughts as a strong — I think it's strong — proponent of comprehensive audit — a view, I would dare to say, that he would not have expressed under the previous administration. Well, Mr. Speaker, here again I say that even with comprehensive audit, I doubt very much if the irregularities will come forward in the manner in which they should. If they did, I'm not too sure the auditor would have a job very long, because that is what happened at the federal level. Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not see the problem of controlling government expenditures so much as an auditing function as I would relate them to the lack of decisions based on sound business principles and not for political expediency as did the previous administration, and decisions that were managed in a less than professional manner.

When public hearings with the Department of Revenue, Supply and Services were held, during the discussion of the central vehicle agency, the chairman of public accounts remarked, and I quote:

I can think of areas in government where we waste a lot more money than in the central vehicle agency. I can't think of an area where the public is more sensitive about it.

The reason the public is so sensitive about it is because this is the waste which they suspect winds up in the public servants' pockets. I think in the minds of many of the public it is one thing for the government to waste money. They expect that in their cynical fashion.

Well, my reaction to that, Mr. Speaker, is that I cannot accept that the taxpayers of this province must forfeit their hard-earned income to support a wasteful government.

There is no question, Mr. Speaker, that there has been in the past (and we are talking about 1981 now, not since we came to government) mismanagement, overexpenditures and waste of public funds.

Let us look at the examples, Mr. Speaker, of those three areas. Why would Sask Housing Corporation speculate with \$394,000 of taxpayers' funds to purchase 74.27 acres of land at Cut Knife for \$5,300 an acre, when in the city of Regina at that same time, you would expect to pay approximately \$2,200 per acre for the similar usage? Cut Knife had a need for approximately 18 acres of land to support housing construction. Based on the previous five years one then could calculate that they have land for the next 75 years on which to build homes. And the list goes on, Mr. Speaker. What kind of management would allow \$8.2 million in overrun in housing construction in DNS and \$7 million in housing payments in arrears? Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, why was there not more attention paid to the collection procedures in the commercial accounts, where we are now looking at approximately \$2 million in possible write-offs?

And, Mr. Speaker, we now are just beginning to address the problem of \$2.5 million in shortfall in the public servants' and teachers' pension plans — billion, excuse me. Well, while I agree, Mr. Speaker, it has no immediate implications, serious problems will arise over the longer term if we cannot find a way to reduce this debt. Well, why has this debt been ignored through the good times you people said you had? I'll tell you why. You were too busy purchasing land, farmland, taking equity positions in enterprises and developing industrial parks that should have been left to the private sector.

On another matter, Mr. Speaker, while this one did not cost the taxpayers any money in this province, I was a little alarmed that when we did the review of the rentalsman, we found that there were 1,500 unsettled cases of the return of security deposits. That is strictly a case of mismanagement.

Turning to social services, Mr. Speaker, the committee learned that the management letter from the auditor reported on the need for the department to clarify the status of payments under The Saskatchewan Assistance Act. The answer by the assistant deputy minister to questioning on this matter admitted this was a critical issue that is now receiving attention, and the member for Regina Centre has alluded to this.

The chairman of public accounts said, and I quote:

It's certainly being given a very considered approach then, because there was a problem when I was involved in this process some couple of years ago.

Mr. Speaker, we could be looking at considerable sums of money here, and I cannot understand why something was not done two or three or more years ago. Suffice it to say that the now Minister of Social Services has instigated an investigation to get to the root of the problem.

Mr. Speaker, there are more revelations that I could refer to, as learned in our proceedings, but I understand there are other members who would like to speak to this motion.

However, Mr. Speaker, before doing so, I would like to remind the opposition that they have made much of dismissals, as we heard when going through the Attorney General's estimates and others.

I might add, Mr. Speaker, that the line of attack has not escaped most ministers, and since those ministers will have to answer not only to the public, but also the scrutiny of public accounts, it is incumbent upon them not only to search for, but to find the people who will be most co-operative — competent people who are equal to the challenge of making this the most effective, efficient and compassionate government that this province has seen. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Speaker, I will be brief in my remarks. I join with the other members of the committee in thanking the Clerk and the auditor and the comptroller for their work and for their assistance in the number of meetings that we had. Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to go through the whole report; it's fairly lengthy. I am confident that the present administration will take steps to rectify the problems that have been outlined in this report.

But I would for just a moment, like to dwell on items 16, 18 and 19.

Item 16, Mr. Speaker, deals with SGI. When we were going over the year-end statement (and Mr. Speaker, this is the year end for 1980) of SGI, it became apparent that SGI had been suffering substantial losses both in the AAIA fund and in the general insurance section. When we looked over the statement, the December 31, 1980 statement, we found some interesting financial wizardry.

We noted for instance, Mr. Speaker, that the AAIA in that year had lost some \$20 million, and that the general insurance had lost some \$4.8 million. In order to rectify that problem, SGI obtained an interest-free loan from CIC of \$38 million. Now, Mr. Speaker, the total losses to SGI were approximately \$25 million, but the loan from CIC was \$38 million. The effect of that, of course, was to, on paper, show that the province of Saskatchewan's equity actually increased in SGI by \$13 million. Mr. Speaker, there was some wizardry there. I suppose if you want to define the equity as an increased interest-free loan from CIC, you could do so, and in fact, it was done.

The significance, though, Mr. Speaker, was that in light of 1980's results, if you look back to the comparison on the same page in 1979, you would note that the losses in the AAIA continued in 1980, and they had been suffered in '79; and one questions the management and the decisions made in those years to correct those losses.

Mr. Speaker, you will note that we went through a number of departments, some crowns, some agencies and some commissions. I was not satisfied with the answers that I got from SGI on what steps were taken in the year under review to correct an obvious management problem in SGI. I fully trust that the present management and minister of SGI will do a better job.

Turning, Mr. Speaker, to number 18, or item 18 in the report, which deal with the economic development loan program of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, we had the Department of Northern Saskatchewan before the committee for some time and it took some time, I might note, to get information from that department.

It became apparent to us in the economic development loan fund and from figures given to us by the department that there was very little in the way of good lending principles being used in that fund. The figures that we were given from the department would indicate that the principal and interest outstanding of loans under that fund, as of March 31, 1981, were some \$2,665,000. The allowance for the doubtful accounts as of that date was \$1,943,000.

When we went further into some particular loans because, Mr. Speaker, we were obviously taken aback by the figures, we found that there were sizable loans that had been given out six or seven years ago that have not had one penny on principal or interest paid to them and are totally written off. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the list is fairly substantial. Mr. Speaker, what is brought to mind here and what we asked the department to try and clarify for us was what the purposes of the loans were, what kind of criteria they used for lending money, what kind of collection procedures were used and what kind of security was required for different types of loans.

Well, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, the result of those questions was that this was really not an economic development type of fund at all. There was very little that could be put down as a criteria to be used for lending money. The write-offs obviously are high. The

object of the exercise was obviously to create jobs in northern Saskatchewan which is a very justifiable objective if you can achieve it. Obviously this program was not achieving it. Many of these loans were not well based. There was a lack of management skills up there that doomed most of these things to failure before they even started. It was, in fact, no better than a glorified social assistance program up there, called an economic development loan fund.

Speaking lastly, Mr. Speaker, on another subject dealing with the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, there are other types of grants given to individuals and organizations in northern Saskatchewan. We went through a number of them; we went through all of them. The question was asked of each type of grant, what the purpose of the grant was, what success ratio there was, what types of people would get it — those types of questions. We never did receive a satisfactory answer. You may note that we are recommending that the government review the policies in regard to these grants. We are also recommending, of course, on the economic loan fund that the whole thing be reviewed. I am confident, Mr. Speaker, that the present administration will take a more realistic look at this, will look at the objectives which no one argues with, and will come up with a better program to meet those objectives. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Speaker, I guess this is my eighth year on public accounts, and I must for the first time say that the officials were willing to give us information. I wonder sometimes why. Maybe it's because there's a change of government, and the officials were not being told by their representatives on the committee that they couldn't give the full and adequate answers, as seemed to be the past behavior in that committee. The two members that just spoke before me alluded to some of the problems that we discovered during public accounts. Let me pick upon one particular comment made by the member for Regina Lakeview about SGI.

It was discovered during the questioning period that it was questionable if they even met their own standards when they did some of the things they have done in the past. Those things that they did in the past are going to cost the citizens of Saskatchewan dearly because . . . They didn't follow their own rules, see, is what the indication was. The indication of the playing around with the loan to make it equity capital and so forth, is a good example of the little bit of fudging that seems to be done to make the numbers look great. We got into the same issue and suggested, did you not forward plans to make sure that you wouldn't be, and that you'd break even. We seem to . . . (inaudible) . . . the 1978 election where there was a figure change. Why? Because of an election, not because the numbers indicated that that's what they should do, but it seems to indicate, if you read the verbatim, that they were concerned with election rather than the actual sound management of the corporation.

Now, it seemed to indicate in many other areas, Sask Housing was indicated by the member for Saskatoon Mayfair, just the soundness and the reason for making the decision they made. Was it sound business sense? Was it for the betterment of the province? Or were they playing some interesting political games?

I'm not just sure which one, but knowing the past history of the former government, the obvious one I would take was playing games.

You know, we got near the end into something, and I assume we will have permission to bring it up in the House later. I was very concerned re a Golden Acres situation that developed in Moose Jaw with Sedco, and if all guarantees were taken in. I will paraphrase the chairman of the committee who said that we want to make sure that in no way is there any doubt in the public minds that any member of this Assembly should be treated any different than the rest of the public. That's in the verbatim, and it should be treated fairly. At the Golden Acres we have found out that there was a loss, roughly \$100,000, but we also found out that the guarantees were not fully lived up to by all members. We don't have the exact amounts yet, and we are supposed get them before July, I understand. At that time, and on our next report hopefully we will comment that things were done properly or improperly, because it has a reflection on the members of this House.

The chairman spoke about comprehensive auditing, just gently touching it. I sat on that committee when we were stonewalled, basically stonewalled, when we wanted to just have some people come in and speak to us about it. And we were refused that permission.

Now all of a sudden — I don't know if it was an election that caused it, or that they had just done their soul-searching and discovered they were totally wrong, or we have a chairman who was in dispute with his own government when they forced us not to let us have it. I'm not sure which way it is. You should be ashamed of that. You didn't want it when you were in government, but now that you're in opposition, it's the greatest thing that was ever invented. I don't know what's wrong. Somebody has changed your attitudes over there.

Let me make one other comment that wasn't touched upon, and I think all my years in public accounts I kept getting into these airplanes in DNS that there seemed to be games played with, and once again we got into it, and there seemed to be games played with. Hopefully, during the debate we also learned of many little things of accounting practices. It looked like they're being cleaned up, and the comptroller is working on them, and so forth. To that, I compliment them. Anyway, Mr. Chairman, the report is basically the report as it is. I am supporting the report. My concern is that an open government, as this one will be, gave answers like theirs didn't.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you. In rising to close debate on this, I don't intend to respond to each of the comments made by the members opposite, except in a general way. I want to echo, before I forget it (that would be a gross injustice), what was said about the staff who served us on that committee. We were served diligently and well. All of those who were associated with us — the half dozen or so who came regularly for the committee meetings, the untold others who worked behind the scenes — served us well. On behalf of the committee, I want to thank our Assistant Clerk of the Legislative Assembly and the others who worked with her.

One of the things we had, which is not common, is that we had a training session last fall. The experts who came from at least three different jurisdictions — Ottawa, Ontario, and Victoria, I think, was the third — all had one standard bit of advice for us. And that is that if the proceedings degenerate into partisan scandalmongering, you are going to go wasting everybody's time, and nobody will be interested in it. You will have a difficult time completing the work of the committee. We got that from everyone.

I may say to the credit of all concerned that we didn't spend all our time scandalmongering. I'm not saying that that didn't happen, but it did turn out to be a pretty pointless activity. I can't think of a single so-called scandal which earned one column inch of space. The reason for that is there were usually two sides to the story. These things are usually more complex than we tend to make out.

I'm not going to comment on each of the comments made by members opposite. I would not deny that the administration of the last government was perfect, just as I do not believe that yours will be perfect either. I think, in office, each of us do our best with respect to administration. All of us fall short of some mark of perfection.

I would just mention a few of the so-called scandals which tend to hit with a thud when they hit the floor. The purchase of all the land at Cut Knife — it turned out that they had to buy a parcel of land, and that was all that was available — a parcel of a given size. They couldn't buy five acres, because nobody wanted to sell them five acres near where they wanted. And thus that "scandal" failed to take flight.

Similarly, with respect to DNS, it was apparent that there was another side to the story. The risks on those losses were high, but as the officials explained, that was a known quantity. If the DNS had followed good banking practices, probably no loans would have been given, given the area and the degree of sophistication of the people who lived there. They were high-risk loans when they were taken.

I know members may wish to disregard the facts, but I suggest a thorough reading of the transcript of the public accounts committee lays to rest many of these so-called scandals.

I want to close just on a note on comprehensive auditing. The member for Rosthern, who I rather suspect in his soul of souls supports comprehensive auditing, stated that this government had come into office wanting to maintain an open government, and perhaps to some extent has succeeded. I must admit I did not sit on the last committee; I cannot testify about the officials who came, and thus I'll cast no aspersions on them. I may say that with one or two exceptions aside, which I won't mention, I found all of the officials to be candid, and genuinely attempting to be helpful. With some rare exceptions, I did not find officials who were attempting to cover up anything.

So to that extent at least, I'll grant that this government has achieved some degree of openness. I only hope that the pressures of office do not rob you of the idealism with which you entered office. When you were in opposition, you were in favor of open government, comprehensive auditing. It is said by cynics that in politics the actors change but the roles never do. When you were in opposition, you wanted comprehensive auditing. Now that you're in government, I hope it's more than just the actors that have changed; I hope the role has also changed. And I hope when you're in government, you'll bring to bear on the affairs of this government the idealism that you had in opposition. And I hope you adopt comprehensive auditing, and do not attempt to cover up the mistakes that any government made up of human beings is going to make.

I think it's important to our credibility as elected officials. One of the things that undermines our credibility is the feeling by the public that there is an incredible amount of waste in government. No doubt some of it exists, but a lot of it is just mythical. The affairs of this province are managed in a lot better fashion than most of the public suspect. I suspect that if we had comprehensive auditing, and if we had an evaluation of

how well the government was managed, I suspect that all governments would fare in the public eyes a lot better than the public would expect.

So I say to members opposite, I think it is in your own interest — it is in our interest as elected officials that the public see and have a method of evaluating the management. I think the public will be pleasantly surprised, and our credibility as elected officials and as people who are supposed to be managing the affairs of the public will be enhanced. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: — It's my pleasure today to introduce to the Assembly two guests seated in the Speaker's gallery, Mr. Robert Desramaux, director of support services of the Canadian House of Commons, and Mr. Jacques Sabourin, director of the parliamentary reporting services of the Canadian House of Commons. These gentlemen are here with us today to observe our television system, and the Legislative Assembly *Hansard* production. Please join me in welcoming these members to our Assembly.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Inquiry Centres in Swift Current and Lloydminster

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I was asked a question by the member for Shaunavon, and I took notice and it was a question directed to me as a minister of Sedco, responsible for Sedco. I quote the question as being: we understand the inquiry centres in Swift Current and Lloydminster were closed; can you tell us when and why, and how many people were affected? Yes, Mr. Speaker, the office in Swift Current was closed. It was closed on February 1 of 1982, when they were still in government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — And as to the why, well, I'll have to let him answer his own question. As to the Lloydminster inquiry centre, yes, Mr. Speaker, it was an office that was officially opened on June 15, 1981. It was closed on June 30 of 1982. And, in fact, there was no one attending the office. It was an office that had no telephone, and the calls were handled by members or employees out of Saskatoon who went there once or twice a week to look after any calls that were left on the telephone, as a telephone answering service. It was closed down because the cost of that office at that time was about \$9,000 plus another \$1,500 for initial renovation costs, so that was why it was closed. And there were no jobs affected.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Industry and Commerce. It's my understanding that these offices that were in existence in both Swift Current and Lloydminster served a very useful purpose in answering inquiries of individuals who were interested in getting loans through Sedco. I wonder if he will confirm the date that the Swift Current office — the last day that it was open I believe he said was some time in February — but I would like him to confirm for me the last date

that a Sedco individual attended that office, and when, in fact, was the last time that that office was functioning.

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I would presume that the last day anyone attended the office . . . Because it was closed on February 1, 1982, I would presume that it was prior to that date that the last employee would have attended that office, because it was no longer there. We still service the area, Mr. Speaker, as we do the Lloydminster area, with employees from Regina and/or Saskatoon. And the inquiries are made the same way as they've been made: through a telephone answering service that was actually answered in Regina and Swift Current at the same time. The answering service was connected to both cities, so whenever a call came through it was picked up in either Regina or Swift Current. The same applies to the other side. The service still continues, and as for the service it provides, I'm sure that it hasn't deteriorated; it probably has improved.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, I would just like to get a confirmation that after February there were no individual Sedco people attending the inquiry centre in Swift Current or Lloydminster.

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I've given my answer. If there's any difference in the answer I've given as to the actual facts, I'll take notice and check out to see if in fact anyone has been to Swift Current since that time.

SGI Office Building

MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Industry and Commerce, the chairman of SGI. Mr. Minister, as you will be aware, there have been a number of statements made and allegations into the suitability of the SGI office. "The SGI Tower Said Costly Inefficient," says one headline. Another one, "SGI Building Said Inefficient and Expensive."

I just want to say, Mr. Minister, that under attack by these statements is the previous board and the previous management, and I understand that. But it seems to me that also under attack is in fact the integrity and competence of the professional architect who provided the services. My question then to the minister: is it the intention of this government, having terrorized the civil service, to now commence to attack for your own political purposes private professional people outside of government who have happened to provide services to the former government? Are you in fact, for your political purposes, prepared to destroy the reputation of private professionals as you are in respect to the allegations of the SGI building?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Speaker, I didn't know I was capable of terrorizing anyone. The question that the member brings forth was discussed quite thoroughly in crown corporations this morning. It was made very clear that there were no aspersions cast on any individual, and the member knows that full well. The statement that was made by the management was made as a matter of opinion as to the design and to the effectiveness and the cost efficiency of the building. The figures were in fact provided to the hon. members this morning in crown corporations. If he wants them repeated, I would have to do so by memory — but I can do so.

MR. KOSKIE: — New question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, you just indicated that there are no aspersions against the integrity of any professional services. I would like you to indicate how you square that with what is reported to have been said by Mr. Black,

the president of SGI, and I quote:

During a session of the legislature's public finance committee, which is examining the SGI books, Black said the architects appear to not have had the corporation's needs in mind when designing the building.

I want you to square the fact that there is no attack upon the integrity and the competence of the architect in light of the statement of the president of SGI.

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well, to begin with, Mr. Speaker, I have no intention of being held responsible for items written in the newspaper or any other media for that matter. I indicated to the hon. member this morning that I do not hold responsible any architect or professional person when directed to design something that they asked for. If there is an aspersion to be cast on anyone, it should be cast on the previous administration and the previous management of SGI. They asked for what they got; they got what they asked for. It's as simple as that.

MR. KOSKIE: — A supplement to the minister. Mr. Minister, you are alleging all the responsibility . . . (inaudible) . . . to the management and to the board. Here is the further statement of Mr. Don Black:

Its furnace is also not right, according to Black, who said the electric boiler is also expensive to run and too big.

That is a criticism set forth by Mr. Black. I ask the minister, in his opinion, would that be a decision of the board or would it be a decision of the architect and the engineering.

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well again, Mr. Speaker, I gave those answers in crown corporations this morning. In fact, if he wants them repeated now, the energy conservation commission in Saskatchewan has ruled that if we were, in fact, to replace the boiler that's in the building today, we would be able to pay the total costs of, I believe, about \$900,000 in eight months. So I leave that for the judgment of anyone who wants to consider whether or not it was in fact a good system to begin with, or whether in fact it should be changed today, when it can be said that anew one at the cost of \$900,000 would, in fact, pay for itself on heat savings costs over a period of eight or nine months.

MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Minister, I would like to ask you: can you indicate who did the evaluation of the SGI building upon which your statements and Mr. Black's statements are premised?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well, I'm not too sure what the question refers to, but I'll elaborate a little bit on some answers about what the member is alluding to, I think. As an example, the present administrative costs of the building (I'm referring to the maintenance and the heating costs, etc., of the building) are double that of any other building or the average of the buildings owned by the Government of Saskatchewan and administered by the Minister of Government Services. The net costs in the other government buildings — we have many of them in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker — is about \$5 per square foot. The SGI building downtown stands at over \$10 per square foot.

MR. KOSKIE: — Hardly answered the question. Mr. Minister, you and your general

manager at SGI have been making certain statements in respect to the deficiency alleged in the SGI building. I would have expected that before you start making statements in fact, you would have it evaluated. I'm asking you: who did the evaluation on which you are making your statements?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well, if the member is asking for names, Mr. Speaker, I will take notice of the question and provide them. I don't know who did it at this point in time. The information was provided to me on the basis of facts.

MR. KOSKIE: — I have a new question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, reports that had been made, and statements that had been made by the general manager of SGI, and the subsequent statements made by the architect, are contradictory. And I want to say that if the minister has nothing to hide, is he prepared to lay before this legislature for our examination the report on which he is basing his allegations as to the deficiencies of the SGI building? Is he prepared to lay it before?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Speaker, the member makes the statement that the two people don't agree. Well, I can honestly believe that no architect would criticize his own work. I'm sure that your statement is true in that respect. As for the request made by the hon. member, again I will have to take notice on that.

Department of Rural Affairs

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Premier in the absence of the Minister of Rural Affairs today. I can understand why he would be absent. On Monday, in the legislature, there were at least eight questions directed to the Minister of Rural Affairs and he refused to get up and answer any of them. Mr. Premier, less than 24 hours later, in Saskatoon, the Minister of Rural Affairs made a statement that the reorganization plan which was mentioned on Monday was ridiculous, and it was proposed by some bungling bureaucrats, and was not even considered by cabinet.

Could you tell this House, Mr. Premier, do you agree with that statement that was made by your Minister of Rural Affairs?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, I would say that I don't recall everything that was in *Hansard*, and I wasn't here Monday, but what I believe was said was that the reports were speculative in nature, and you were cautioned to the fact that they were speculative in nature, and when there were any major changes coming down with respect to organization or reorganization that the House Leader or the Premier would be making those statements. Now, I don't know what more I can add to that with respect to the speculation about reorganization of several departments and crown corporations and so forth. So it is speculative, and I'm not going to comment any more on a brand new organization until we're prepared to do so.

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the Premier. You're just mentioned that all the questions of Monday were speculative and any reorganization may be speculative. Well, the Minister of Rural Affairs says quite plainly that there will be no reorganization within his department. He said that at SARM in Saskatoon. Will the Premier agree, or will the Premier at this time tell the House that there was no presentation or no proposal put forward to cabinet, and no consideration of dismantling rural affairs was made by cabinet, or by any committee of cabinet?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — I can say two things. One, that I can hardly comment on the accuracy of speculation made by the media on something that's going on internally in the government. Number two, with respect to rural affairs, I don't believe that the minister said yesterday that there wouldn't be a very large increase in the size of rural affairs. He just said it's intact today the way it has been for years. Our reorganization may include lots of things, but that's speculation. And when we're ready to announce it, we will.

MR. LUSNEY: — Question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, I would only like to read out a statement that was made by your minister, and it says:

At no point in time, and I stress at no point in time, did cabinet ever consider this ridiculous proposal.

The proposal was that there would be a dismantling of rural affairs. Is the Premier saying that there was no such proposal considered by cabinet at any time?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — I can't add any more than this is speculative, and the media speculation of what may be going on internally in examining departments and crown corporations. The minister stood up and said the department is still intact, and if it's going to be subjected to any type of reorganization, or organization along with anything else, we'll announce it in due course. I never expected any other minister to say anything more than that, or any less than that. To say more would be speculating, because certainly cabinet hasn't made a decision on the reorganization. So it wouldn't be fair to comment any more than that. It is speculation, and we will deal with it as a piece of speculation when we're ready to announce formal modifications, we will maintenance.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Premier, your Minister of Rural Affairs dismissed that as a ridiculous proposal with no foundation on Tuesday. Why wouldn't he tell the House that on Monday?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — I have said subsequent to then, and I believe the Acting House Leader said at the same time, that reorganization — Acting Deputy House Leader — the reorganization would be announced by cabinet, by the Premier, Deputy Premier, or somebody in that category, and wouldn't be announced piecemeal by five or six or eight or 10 different cabinet ministers . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . We just announced the department's intact . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. It's very clear that the Minister of Rural Affairs announced that the proposal was ridiculous, and therefore not going forward. Why wouldn't he announce that in the House? If your proposal is that you're going to announce the proposal by the premier, why do you have one minister unannouncing a part of it, and are other ministers free to unannounce part of the proposal?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, frankly, what would you expect? Would you expect this minister to say that the Department of Health is still there, that this minister is say the department of internal government affairs is still there, that SGI is still intact, that rural affairs is still intact, and this minister is going to announce that there's another one intact? They're all intact and they're here, and I'll announce when there's any change.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Premier, I would have expected the minister to stand up and announce something, but as it turned out, he was totally unable to announce even his own name.

The question I ask is this: if in fact the proposal was by your minister designated as ridiculous on Tuesday, why wasn't it ridiculous on Monday?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, I don't really think I have anything more to add. It was speculation, and in place of the Premier, the person next in charge says if there's any announcements coming out we will be making them at my level or some other level, and anything beyond that is pure speculation, and there's no more comment, and that's it.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, a supplementary. It's very clear that that rule you just enunciated did not apply to your Minister of Rural Affairs, because he made an announcement yesterday. He made an announcement that the proposal was, quote, "ridiculous" and not going forward. Now that's an announcement.

Now what I want to know is: are other ministers equally free to make similar announcements with respect to the reorganization proposal?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Other ministers are free to make the announcements that they do have their departments, that they're still there and they're operating and they're functioning. They're running fine. And if there's going to be any reorganization in the Department of Health, in the Department of education, or in the Department of Rural Affairs. I'll be making the announcement, and they're free to tell everybody here that their departments are still functioning and doing well, and I can't add any more to that.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — One short question, Mr. Premier, if the proposal with respect to reorganizing rural affairs is ridiculous, is the proposal with respect to the reorganization of culture and youth equally ridiculous?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, it's all speculation. It's all speculation, and until we announce any reorganization, that's all it is. And, when we announce it, then it will no longer be speculation, and we'll know, if and when there's any reorganization, what it will look like.

Resignation of Wallis Cousineau

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Premier. It has to do with the resignation of the acting deputy minister of government services, Mr. Wallis Cousineau. In going through the orders in council dated February 25, I notice that Mr. Cousineau will be given a severance payment of \$17,500. The question is: how does someone who resigns his job qualify for severance pay?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, it's my information, that we have had, and many administrations can have, resignations with severance — lots of them; it's typical.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder how this fits with the formula that was arranged for employees who were dismissed by the same process (order in council), signed by the same individuals (chairman or minister in charge,

president of the Executive Council, Grant Devine), cancelling people who have been employed by the government for many, many years, giving severance pay in the area of \$10,000, \$12,000, when an individual who has been with the government since early in 1982 was given a severance of \$17,500 when he resigns his position. How do you justify that — the use of taxpayers' dollars in what I say is a cover up and a scapegoat being made of an individual to cover up for the mishandling of a department by a minister?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — The settlements with respect to severance are based on a combination of the person's longevity, in terms of the position they've had, how long they've been there, and what they agree to as a fair settlement.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I have a list of a number of individuals and severance pay that has been paid out to individuals by the Premier, signed in the same manner, people like Menna Weese, five years experience, settlement 14,000-and-some-odd dollars. How do you explain that an individual, who isn't dismissed, but resigns, is paid a considerable amount more when he's been there only eight months?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, I would be quite prepared to look at the settlements and the severances of all kinds of people for comparisons — Mr. Dombowsky, Miss Randall, lots of people — to make the comparisons to show that there is both experience and position and what they agree is a reasonable settlement.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — New question, Mr. Speaker. When Mr. Cousineau came to employment with the Government of Saskatchewan, he was given \$7,000 in moving expenses to come here to work for the government. Is he now being required, as part of this agreement, to pay back this \$7,000 that he was given eight months ago to come here?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — I'll have to take notice. I don't know.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

1982 Annual Reports of SGI

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, in a few moments I will be tabling the 1982 annual report of Saskatchewan Government Insurance.

Mr. Speaker, this government has been under attack for the past several days for the actions which have been taken by SGI. We have been criticized for staff layoffs. We have been attacked for the budget reductions. We have been attacked for the reorganization. If you can believe it, we have been attacked for proposing the smallest rate increase for licence insurance in many years. The catastrophic performance of SGI outlined in this report has only one source, Mr. Speaker, and that is the members opposite.

They will say that we must bear responsibility for SGI's operations for more than half of 1982, and it's true, Mr. Speaker, it's a responsibility I accept proudly for the actions that this government has taken since April 26 that will result in a future for SGI. That is the point of this statement, Mr. Speaker, SGI might not have had a future if we had not gained office when we did.

What we found in May was a disaster. It was a portrait of a corporation out of control. In

short, Mr. Speaker, we found almost everything, except a concentration on the essentials; on profitability and on serving the people of this province in a responsible effective manner.

The financial report gives a bleak picture. But it is more than that. 1982 was a terrible year for SGI. I would not be exaggerating if I said that if SGI were in the private sector, there would be a serious concern for the company's future. The financial report, Mr. Speaker, shows that SGI's general business operations lost nearly \$40 million in 1982. Mr. Speaker, that's an astounding number, the largest loss in its history — a number that dwarfs the other 36 years of profits and losses. A portion of the losses are a result of catastrophes in Saskatoon and Prince Albert, but it was a very small portion.

The overwhelming loss, members will quickly see, was in assumed reinsurance — a loss, Mr. Speaker, of over \$32 million. Previous warnings pointed out that SGI would be saddled with a continuing liability. We told them to prepare for it. Mr. Speaker, we were ignored. Instead of the truth, instead of an admission that their blunders in the international insurance market cost Saskatchewan taxpayers nearly \$40 million since 1973, instead of acting to see a corporation rapidly approaching bankruptcy, we were presented with the most incredible concoction of half-truths and bald-faced absurdities this Assembly has ever seen.

Despite what the opposition will claim, the loss on assumed reinsurance didn't just appear last year. SGI bought it way out of that contract two years ago. Its liability didn't end then. We pointed that out and were ignored. The losses were there, Mr. Speaker, but the SGI's political masters kept the figures artificially low, and hoped that no one would notice until after the election.

Members opposite have claimed and will continue to claim that there are good years and bad years in the reinsurance business. Mr. Speaker, SGI lost \$40 million in assumed reinsurance operations since 1973. Those were good years; the thought of a bad one is absolutely terrifying. Shortly after taking office, a thorough examination of reinsurance operations was undertaken by a board committee, assisted by outside consultants. Our worst fears about the magnitude of the loss were confirmed. Accounting for it properly, produced a serious loss in 1982. That is the figure shown in the annual report. Although it appears in 1982, it cannot be forgotten that the loss is almost entirely due to the bad deals signed by the previous administration.

Mr. Speaker, there is no reason . . .

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I have great difficulty in following how this could possibly be conceived to be a ministerial statement. The minister has now gone on for five minutes with a lot of political rhetoric, and I'm just wondering whether or not this is to be what can be expected from ministers in giving ministerial statements in this Assembly from now on.

HON. MR. LANE: — I just ask by way of precedent, the Speaker to consider, I believe, an approximately eight-minute ministerial statement by the former minister of education, Mr. McArthur, a couple of years ago. That seemed to be accepted as well within the rules for a ministerial statement.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I might also address some comments on this. A ministerial statement is supposed to make an announcement of some importance. This is unprecedented in tabling an annual report to make a seven-minute statement. Mr.

Speaker, this is unprecedented. There's no announcement here; it's a lot of political rhetoric.

MR. SPEAKER: — The information that we have dealing with ministerial statements is fairly brief and I'll read it to you. It's paragraph 262 from *Beauchesne's*. It says:

Statements by Ministers have now been given a recognized place in Routine Proceedings. The Standing Order is specific but considerable latitude has been left to the Speaker to set limits on the participants. The Speaker has emphasized that both the Government and Opposition contribution should be brief and factual. The purpose of the ministerial statement is to convey information, not to encourage debate.

I believe that the member is bringing information to the House but I would ask that you follow the second portion of it and that you be brief and factual in the information that you bring, not to encourage debate.

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will attempt to do exactly as you've asked and I will try to base it on the facts as we see them for the corporation.

Mr. Speaker, there's no reason, given competent advice and good management, that the reinsurance area cannot be profitable for SGI and we have acted to ensure that success. The same holds true for any other line of insurance SGI currently sells. I would also suggest that to be profitable, the corporation must operate efficiently. Part of the problems were organizational. They were immediately addressed after we took office. A study was undertaken by two of my colleagues and if you will permit me, Mr. Speaker, I would like at this point to thank a couple of those members, the member for Saskatoon University and the member for Regina North East. Many of the actions that we have taken stem from their report, which is part of the tabled report, Mr. Speaker, and many more are in the planning stages. I would like to publicly thank those two members for their efforts and their real contribution to building a strong and profitable SGI.

The annual report, Mr. Speaker, also shows that the auto fund had a fairly good year in 1982. There was a \$10 million profit. However, Mr. Speaker, even here we were confronted by yet another example of the behavior of the former government. We were repeatedly told about how the auto fund and general insurance operations were separate and distinct. That's what they said. But that wasn't how they operated it, as we found out after taking charge, and reflected by the statement.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan drivers had in fact been subsidized the ill-conceived programs of the NDP through the fee that SGI charged for administering the auto fund. SGI, Mr. Speaker, has an obligation to administer the auto fund in an honest, fair and efficient manner. I am proud to note that our government, Mr. Speaker, has ensured that the auto fund will no longer subsidize general insurance business. We've removed the unfair, unnecessary gasoline tax, and it means a reduction in income but it can be made up through improved efficiency. We've also established a public utilities review commission to ensure that the future rate increases are responsible and justifiable. The annual report demonstrates that even without the full impact of the gas tax, the auto fund earned nearly \$10 million in 1982. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, we inherited an NDP deficit of \$22.5 million which must still be eliminated. That, and a 14 per cent increase in the cost of claims, made it necessary for the corporation to recommend a rate increase of 6.7 per cent, which was the lowest in a number of years.

As critical as we've been, Mr. Speaker, let me assure all members that we believe it is possible for SGI to become a profitable corporation. We are committed to it achieving this goal. With proper management and the right people SGI can become financially strong and fundamentally profitable. Mr. Speaker, I'm very optimistic about SGI's future. It has a vital role to play in the provincial economy. But as I mentioned earlier, the survival was a close call. Fortunately, there is now responsible administration in charge of SGI, one that is capable of dealing with the real problems facing SGI, and facing this province. However, Mr. Speaker, there is more to this report than just story of financial catastrophe for SGI. This report should be seen as a symbol, a symbol of what the NDP did to this entire province while they were in power. It was a record of . . . Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table SGI's 1982 annual report.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I want to begin by congratulating the members of government caucus. You people have a remarkable stomach to be able to clap after that. Mr. Speaker, I want to say in response to what we have just been put through, this minister has set a number of precedents in recent days that your colleagues have had more dignity than to follow. I hope this House never sees another such exhibition in this House. I hope we never see this again.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to say that I was revolted this morning in crown corporations to see the minister and his officials doing everything they could to discredit this crown corporation. Mr. Minister, you have done nothing since you took office, but you have bent every effort to discredit SGI. I'm not sure how much time I'm going to be allowed. I'm sure I won't be allowed as much time as you were, but I could give you a number of examples. Let me confine myself to the report itself. I will suggest, Mr. Minister, that when this annual report is examined before the crown corporations, the transcript will show that you have made every effort to make the affairs of this corporation look as bad as you possibly can.

I would begin by reminding the minister that SGI isn't the only company who suffered some losses, and I'm quoting from your own document, *Radiant*.

Royal Insurance lost \$126 million. The Co-operators, which SGI is the bigger company of, lost \$33 million. Lloyds lost \$28 million. Commercial Union lost \$51 million.

I think I'm accurate in saying that only the Royal Insurance Company of that group is larger than SGI. But of course none of that was mentioned in that diatribe we just finished having. That might not fully discredit the corporation; and that is your goal.

I will suggest, Mr. Minister, that when this report is examined, it will show that you have set up an inordinately large fund for unexpected losses, far larger than anything that's been set up in past years. It can have only one result — to exaggerate the losses of the corporation.

You were critical, Mr. Minister, of the amount of revenue that accrued to SGI from the auto fund. I would remind you, Mr. Minister, that that split was set in a government which I think you were once supportive of — the former Liberal government. I would remind you, Mr. Minister, of your last annual report, the only one we have. I didn't have it in time to make these remarks. I'd remind you of your last annual report in which you indicated that that split was set by order in council 1235 — 68. Nothing that the former

government set. And that wasn't mentioned, because that might not fully discredit the SGI, which is all you have attempted to do since you've become minister.

I could go on, Mr. Speaker. I will make a prediction that the losses you refer to with reinsurance are largely made up of losses which are not yet fully reported. And you didn't mention that, because that might not have fully discredited SGI. I could go on, Mr. Minister, I am not going to abuse the rules of this House as you just finished doing. I will say, Mr. Minister, that your stewardship of the SGI will no doubt go down in history as the darkest hour that corporation has ever been through in its 40-year history.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MOTION

Hours of Sitting

HON. MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day, I wonder if I might, by leave of the Assembly, move a motion that:

Notwithstanding rule 3(3), there shall on Wednesday, March 9, 1983, be a recess from 5 o'clock p.m. until 7 o'clock p.m., and that the sitting shall be continued from 7 o'clock p.m. until 10 o'clock p.m.

I move, seconded by the member for Regina North.

Motion agreed to.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Premier Receives Vanier Award

HON. MR. LANE: — Again, before orders of the day, if I may, there is some indication that perhaps this will be our last day. I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate the Premier of Saskatchewan for being awarded the Vanier Award. It's presented by the junior chambers of Canada for outstanding young Canadians in the areas of health, economics, politics, sports and culture and those who make a contribution to the fabric of Canada. The Premier was awarded the Vanier Award last weekend, I believe, in Toronto. The award was first presented in 1967. Only two other provincial politicians have been recipients of the award: the long-serving premiers of Ontario and Newfoundland. Mr. Speaker, I believe that all hon. members will wish to join with me in congratulating the Premier on being the recipient of this very prestigious award.

HON. MEMBERS: —Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 10

Item 1 (continued)

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, when we terminated our examination last evening. I had just begun to ask for some details on the program services but generally about the staff throughout the Executive Council. I am wondering whether the Premier can give me the names of all persons who are or have been on the staff of the Executive Council at any time since May 8, 1982, and I will say excluding people, if it's convenient for him so to do, whose salary is \$2,400 or less per annum.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure, but I believe some of this information may already have been asked for and those questions may appear in the blues. I will, and have asked my officials to assemble the appropriate information and send it across to you as soon as it is available, and clearly, according to past practice in this House.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, that is satisfactory with me, so long as we don't close the vote before I get the information and have an opportunity to ask follow-up questions on it. I think the Premier must understand that I'm not asking for a simple data bank of information, but I wish to ask a goodly number of questions on who was hired and who wasn't hired. I have given the Premier advance notice that I would ask this question, just yesterday morning. It would have been assumed by his staff in any case that I was going to ask about the transition committee and the other items. So it's fine with me, so long as we are not closing off the item. I have lots of other questions I can ask, and am awaiting the conveying of the information.

It may well be that I can assist somewhat by going down some lists that I have, and ask whether a Mr. Gerry Baragar of the Premier's secretariat is on your staff.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, rather than deal with individual cases, name after name after name after name, we are and I have committed to pull the information together on whoever has been or is now on my staff. I will provide that information, but I'm not prepared to go through name by name by name by name, because I don't have the name by name now.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Well, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, I'm going to ask name by name by name by name, and if you want to say it's not in the public interest, fine. With all deference, I think that's the only appropriate reply if you don't wish to reply. If you say the material isn't available, then we'll make our own judgments, but I'll ask about Mr. Gerry Baragar, Mr. or Ms. Gerry Baragar — is that person a member of the Premier's secretariat?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — I will endeavor to confirm whether they have been in the past or are today.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — My problem, Mr. Chairman, is that I want to ask a series of questions, and that is a perfectly normal process by which one examines estimates. I am surprised that the staff that the Premier has do not have this information but I'll ask another question then. Is Mr. Derek Bedson a member of your staff?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — I believe that the member will know that I introduced Mr. Bedson yesterday, sitting with me as one of my assistants. I just want to make the point that it

takes some time to pull together the information on the people who have been working for Executive Council, and who are now working for Executive Council. I will provide that information as quickly as I can, and it may take a matter of days to get that information.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — We'll just ask slowly then. Is Mr. Derek Bedson a member of your staff, and if so, when did he join your staff?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Bedson is sitting here beside me, and he is a member of my staff. The date of when he was employed, I don't recall, but I will endeavor to get that information as well as his qualifications and other information pertinent to all the members of my Executive Council, past and present, as soon as possible.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I wonder if you would give me the salary of Mr. Derek Bedson.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, I said I will gather all that information and present it to the hon. member and to the legislature. I'm sure that he doesn't doubt my word that I will get that done, and I will provide it.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I've no doubt that the Premier would provide me with that information, but I'm asking it in the committee. We have a recording system here and it's very useful to have information on the record. That is an entirely appropriate function for members of the legislature, and I ask the Premier, does he not know the salary of Mr. Bedson?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — I don't know it offhand, but it is a matter of public record, and I'll put that information together with each bit of information on each member of my staff in a package and present it to you.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I am asking for the information here in the committee so I can make follow-up questions. Clearly, if I get a package then I will not be able to follow up if the package does not arrive when the committee is sitting. It was for that reason that I indicated to you yesterday morning a line of questioning which I wish to proceed with. I propose to proceed with it, and you will have to make such judgments as you feel appropriate.

With respect to Mr. Derek Bedson, you are telling me that you do not have available to you to tell to this Chamber what his salary is?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — I'm saying a couple of things. That is a matter of public record. I believe it's in an OC, and you have access to it the same way as I do, but I will provide it along with every other person's salary and statistical information and qualifications in a package all at the same time, as quickly as we can get it together and provide it.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, I thank you for the offer but I'm asking in the committee. I'm asking in the committee because I want it on the record of the committee. I believe that the public are entitled to know, on the record of the committee, what Mr. Bedson's salary is and if you are saying that they are not entitled to know that, you're entitled to make that statement. I don't agree with you and I'm asking and if you say that you don't have the salary of Mr. Bedson here, I am absolutely amazed. I have sat in that chair with my books for estimates. The information was readily at hand, and I'm sure it is at hand, and I ask you to tell the House and the committee what Mr.

Bedson's salary is.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, I can't add any more than I've already said: that I am prepared to pull all the information together and provide it in considerable detail, and do it for everybody. I think it might be fair to point out to the hon. member that he might have been able to do it in the past had he gone through year three, and then year four, and then year five of a particular administration, when he's in the full run of government. Clearly, I have never been Premier before. This is a year of transition. We have people coming in, people going out, and we have lots of different people doing different things — examining what the role of various departments are, and so forth. When I get all that information together, and all of the qualifications of the people we've had coming and going, I will present it to the hon. member with all the details.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Well, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I don't think there's any point in getting into comparisons about 1972 when it was our first major session, and 1983 when it's your major session. I think nothing is accomplished by that, although a look at the records, such as they are, will indicate that answers were provided. I take it then, therefore, that the Premier is unwilling to provide the salary of Mr. Derek Bedson to this committee. The Premier is unwilling at this time to provide the salary of Mr. Derek Bedson because he alleges that he does not have it with him.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, I'm only saying that I'm unable to provide them all at this time. I think it would be most helpful if I had all that information together, and to provide it at the same time, rather than bits and pieces of information.

I believe if I go back to April 17, 1979, you were asked the same question, and you didn't provide the information. You said you'd get it as quickly as possible and get it out. Well, I'm doing the same. It was on salaries over \$25,000, and people, what they did, and so forth. I believe it was the leader of the opposition who asked for that at that time, and you said that "people have moved around, and in and out, in different jobs. We will have to do it either by person or by title or by both" — and cross-reference it, I think is what you were getting at. And that's what we're going to have to do.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I inform the committee that yesterday morning I advised the Premier that I would be asking for the following information: the names of persons who are, or have been, on the staff of the Executive Council at any time since May 8, 1982; the salaries, remuneration, and perquisites of such persons; the qualifications of such persons; the names of all persons who have, or have had, contracts of personal services for services rendered, or to be rendered, since May 8, 1982; and the rate of remuneration, and the totals of remuneration to each such person paid, or contracted to be paid, since May 8, 1982. I will simply go down the list and if you wish to decline each one, that is fair enough. That will be your responsibility. Gerry Barager, is he or she an employee of the Premier's secretariat, or has he or she been an employee of the Premier's secretariat?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, I can clearly see the strategy of the member, Mr. Chairman. I will say I will provide all of the information together in one package, and as he calls forth the names that he may have I will say I will have the same response for that individual, and we'll just carry on.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, will the information be available before this committee terminates its deliberations on the Executive Council estimates?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — I will commit to providing the information as quickly as possible, but I can't put a time frame on it. I'll work together to pull the information into a package that includes everybody that has been in, and still is, and provide it as quickly as I can and have it as accurate as possible.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, is a Mr. Kevin Booth a member of the Premier's secretariat?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — My standard response will apply.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Is the Premier not aware of whether a Mr. Kevin Booth is employed in the Premier's secretariat?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — My standard response applies, Mr. Chairman. I'll provide it all at the same time.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Premier, is Sheila Brucker an employee of the office of the Premier? Does she work in your personal office?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — My standard response applies, Mr. Chairman. Sheila Brucker, as the hon. member knows, is my personal secretary. But I will provide her qualifications and background, the same as everybody else, when I get all the information together.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — The Premier does then recognize her name as somebody who works in the Premier's office?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Yes.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Turning now to the electoral office, does the Premier know whether a Mr. Grant Chamberlin is an employee of the electoral office?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — My standard response will apply, Mr. Chairman.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, am I to understand that the Premier does not recognize the name of Grant Chamberlain as one of his employees?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, all I'm trying to do is keep this in context with respect to the fact that I'm going to provide the information in a package rather than one at a time. And we haven't got all the package together, so my standard answer applies: that I will provide the information and the detail on the individuals when I have it accumulated.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, would you provide the information that you have gathered so far that would go into this package that might assist us, because it might deal with a good number of the names I have in mind.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, I'll provide it all at the same time, not in a piecemeal fashion, and include everybody that, as far as we know, has been employed and still is employed — all at the same time.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, is Ann Duckett an employee of the Premier's office?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — My standard answer applies, Mr. Chairman.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, do I understand from that that the Premier does not recognize the name of Ann Duckett as an employee of the Premier's staff?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — No, it doesn't mean that, Mr. Chairman. It just means I'm trying to keep it in context, to provide them at the same time.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, what objection does the Premier have to telling us what he now knows about Ann Duckett?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, I just believe it would be much fairer to the public and to the employees if we did it all together, rather than a bit at a time or an individual at a time, and so forth, as a comprehensive package of the qualifications, the experience and everything else of the individuals in Executive Council. That's what I'm going to try to do as quickly as I can. I don't now have all the information on all individuals. On some individuals, I might not have it complete, so I want to have it complete and go with it all at the same time.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, would the Premier be prepared to acknowledge whether or not particular people work for the Executive Council, leaving the question of qualifications to be included in the package? I understand that it will not be necessarily true that he would have all the qualifications of the employees at hand. Is the Premier telling us he does not have available to him a list of the employees of the, let us say, administration branch?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Pardon me, Mr. Chairman. could the hon. member repeat the last part of his question?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Is the Premier advising us that he does not have a list of the employees of the . . . I'll ask it this way: would the Premier tell me whether he has available to him at this time a list of the employees of the administration branch of executive service who make up the subvote "personal services," \$1,727,670?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, I believe that the hon. member appreciates the fact that it does take some information to put together all the requests that he has on this. As well as the fact that he put me on notice by saying, of course there'll be questions on other subjects, and, as Premier, you know that it can virtually encompass anything in the administration. So it's not that we haven't been on call — we have; and it's not that we haven't been doing a little bit of homework, examining the entire administration. That goes without saying.

Perhaps it would satisfy the member for now if I could identify the list of names that I know are on staff. I believe that most of them probably are in the telephone directory. We can go down the list, and they're clearly employed. Some may have gone, and some new ones may have come in recently. But I can't provide more information with respect to the qualifications and/or the salary, and I am not capable of doing that today. I'll put that package together. But if he wants, I will endeavor to get the list of all the people that, as far as I know, are employed to date — I suppose you could even get their telephone numbers — and provide them just within the hour, if that would be reasonable.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, I think that might be very helpful. I think I'd better ask a couple of other questions to see whether I can give additional information as to where questions will be directed.

Are there people who have had contracts of service to serve the Executive Council who are not normal employees of the government, but who have contracts of service which are something more than casual? I am not talking about temporary, as typists, nor am I talking about someone who may come in to fix the furniture; but contracts of service providing for substantial periods of personal service to the Government of Saskatchewan, and whose contracts are administered by the Executive Council.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, for a period of 10 months, Mr. Chairman, there have been some people — or likely could have been — moving in and moving out; and some on a possible contract; so that it's hard to know whether they're casual or permanent. It's perhaps a bit of a grey area. But I will state that I'll endeavor to bring those that have been on contract, or those that will be, plus the appropriate information together in the package, as part of the employees of Executive Council.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, I'm anxious to find out the general modus operandi of the Executive Council. Accordingly, I will ask: how many contracts of personal service have there been under which the Executive Council has paid or is legally committed to pay amounts in excess of, let us say, \$20,000 since May 8?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, I'll reply by saying, I'll pull together that information and provide it to the hon. member and the House when I have it together.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Minister, approximately how many people would have been employed by Executive Council on a contract basis, i.e., not regular members of the public service, who would have been receiving a remuneration of \$20,000 or more since May 8?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — I'm just not sure of the answer to that question. Again, I'll endeavor to pull it all together and provide it to the hon. member.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I will start at another level then. Approximately how many persons would have contracts of personal service under which amounts have been paid or are liable to be paid where the amount since May 8 would exceed \$75,000? There can't be a large number of those, I would trust.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, I'll endeavor to check that and pull that information together and provide it to the hon. member.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, I think it is likely that the Premier could give me the names of persons who have those sorts of contracts of employment. I wonder if the Premier can recall the names of any person who has a contract of employment with the Government of Saskatchewan, of personal services, under which he or she is entitled to receive a substantial sum of money. I am not now asking for full lists; I am asking whether you can recall any names.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, I give my standard answer. But let me add, if somebody comes in for a matter of weeks or a couple of months or so forth, and they're paid so

much an hour for a particular task or so much a day for a particular task, I certainly haven't sat down and figured out if that's worth 7 or 8 or \$10,000 a year, or whatever it is, or \$70,000 a year. I just don't have that information. Some people may have come in for a short period of time because it's a transitional thing; others may have come in for longer. If they lasted a whole year, then I would probably be able to calculate a year's salary. No more. It's been a period of transition with a lot of people coming and going. I think that's fair to say. So, we're pulling it all together and we'll provide it in a package.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I am surprised, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, that people are dropping in and working for a while, and they're entitled to 20 or \$25,000, and I'm surprised that you can't recall them if they find themselves in that category, but I'll make another threshold of 50,000.

Can you recall anybody who is working on a contract of service who would be entitled to receive for the period since May 89 as much as \$50,000?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — No, I can't recall knowing whether somebody that's been here for four months or five months or six months has got in excess of \$50,000 in that time period, and I will endeavor to provide the information, which will be the accumulation of the time that they're here, or when they were here, what it was worth, and provide it to the hon. member.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, did you have an organization known as a transition committee, a body known as a transition committee?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Yes, sir, we did.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, would you tell me who were the members of the transition committee and who are the members of the transition committee?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, the Deputy Premier, the Hon. Eric Berntson, was the lead minister in the transitional committee. Under his discretion he would have various people come into the transition committee and do various functions and examine positions, and so forth, and the mixture of the committee would change from time to time. He was the lead minister responsible. Unfortunately, he's not here today. He's in Saskatoon at the SARM convention, but the transitional committee was headed by the Deputy Premier.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, would the Premier be able to tell me what other persons served on the transitional committee — not necessarily a complete list. Can you give me the names of any others who have served on the transition committee?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, the permanent members were Mr. Berntson and Mr. Andrew, and beyond that they would ask people to join them, making various decisions whether they were with respect to crown corporations or the Department of Agriculture or health or policy or programs, or, if you will, taking hold of the administration and getting their hands on the reins of the administration. So it involved people from time to time that would deal with boards and commissions, maybe finance, maybe agriculture, maybe whatever, and they would come and go. But the two permanent members were the Deputy Premier and the now Minister of Finance.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, who served as staff to the transition committee?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, I think it would be fair to say that I will consult with the Deputy Premier to get a list of anybody that was on staff, that he would consider to be on staff with him, either temporarily or for a longer period of time, in the transition committee, and provide it to the hon. member.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, I am happy to have that and would be happy to ask questions following the receipt of the information. Could the Premier give me any of the names of his staff who are, let us say, covered by this subvote 1 — the 44.4 people covered by subvote 1 who may have worked with the transition committee?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, that is a large number of people, and again I think I would have to consult with Mr. Berntson to know in total what people that he would have involved from time to time on the transition committee. I believe there are 30 or 40 people maybe under that category, I don't know . . . 44.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, could the Premier name any of the 44 who may have worked with the transition committee?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, I may or may not, but I think it would be fair to all the members that may have been involved if I confirmed them all with Mr. Berntson, and provided them in a complete package so that he knows that people have been involved and that we can confirm that, as opposed to me speculating as if in this week somebody was involved in that committee and then another week somebody else was involved in that committee. So he's in the best position to say, "These are the people that are involved," and I'll put all that information together and provide it to the hon. member.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, the staff are not Mr. Berntson's staff but your staff, and I'm asking what they did. You're asking the legislature to vote the money for them and I'm asking what services they rendered to the public. You have told me that there was a transition committee. I didn't ask you for a complete list of all the people who worked with the transition committee; I asked you to name any of the members of your staff that you knew of and, if you can qualify that, who worked with the transition committee.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, clearly the objective of this questioning is to get accurate information. That is my objective — to provide accurate, complete information to the hon. member's questions. The transition committee is an internal management system, if you will, in a period of moving from one administration to another. There may have been several people from time to time working with that internal management mechanism to get the job done. Now to provide accurate information of how that might have worked in terms of who was involved from time to time . . . I think it would be only fair if we did it right and provided that kind of information in a complete package after consulting with the Deputy Premier.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, I have no objection to your consulting with whomever you like. I am frankly shocked that your senior officials don't know, for example, whether a Mr. Gil Johnson has ever worked with the transition committee, because that's certainly what you're telling me. You can't name a single

one, a single one of your staff who has ever worked with the transition committee. If I've got you wrong, will you name at least one of your employees who has worked with the transition committee?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, I don't see the benefit in naming one, then another one, and then another one, if we haven't got the complete information. It's likely we've just been through this exercise before in terms of the names and the qualifications of the people that are with Executive Council. I don't think there's any real benefit by going at it sort of one at a time and picking them if we don't have all the information, and come to find out that this one individual worked with the transition committee and another individual didn't. And Mr. Berntson can confirm that. So, I mean, clearly a lot of people in Executive Council would visit with Mr. Berntson. No doubt about that . . . (inaudible) . . . Whether he considers them on the transitional team, that's the question, and I think it's fair if we ask him that, and provide the information in a package.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, I'll ask the question another way. Of the people who have worked with you in the administration for which you and your deputy minister are directly responsible, how many of those people have spent much of their time working with the transition committee?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, how much is much? It's extremely difficult for me to define the hours that somebody might have been on a particular committee that was an internal management mechanism, from time to time on various kinds of things which may have included boards and commissions, or agriculture, or health, or crown corporations, and so forth. I mean, we'd have to have a track record and a clock so you'd punch in and punch out, and I just don't have that information. But I'm willing to put it together to the best of my ability in consultation with the gentleman that headed up this mechanism, and provide it to the hon. member.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, would your deputy minister, who I take it is Mr. Bedson for these purposes (and correct me if I'm wrong), would he know what his staff was engaged in during the past 10 months? What work his staff was engaged in.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — If I believe I understood the question right, Mr. Chairman, yes, clearly the deputy minister understand what activities are going on under his jurisdiction. If you were asking for a job description, I am not prepared to give job descriptions at this time. And I'm not prepared at this time, if I can anticipate perhaps the next question, of the responsibilities of members of my staff from time to time in the transitional committee. Again, I'll go back to my standard answer that Mr. Berntson will, with my help and his co-operation, provide that information in detail to the hon. member.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, I ask about an employee by the name of Gil Johnson and ask you whether he spent time working with the transition committee and whether he is included in the 44.4 employees covered by subvote 1.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, Mr. Chairman, clearly that information in detail will be brought forth with the complete package.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, I understand what the Premier is saying, but I do not wish at this time to delay all the questions and delay the committee until I get this package and examine it. If that is the wish of members

opposite, then that's up to them to decide that we lay aside our consideration of this material until we've had an opportunity to examine the material the Premier puts forward. I wonder whether or not that would be satisfactory and, in order, I think, to test the House on it. I will move that the committee rise, report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

Motion negatived on the following recorded division.

YEAS — 6

Blakeney
Lingenfelter

Koskie
Lusney

Shillington
Yew

NAYS — 34

Devine
Birkbeck
Taylor
Lane
Rousseau
Sandberg
Hardy
McLeod
McLaren
Garner
Klein
Katzman

Duncan
Schoenhals
Boutin
Bacon
Tusa
Sutor
Sveinson
Sauder
Glauser
Meagher
Schmidt

Smith (Moose Jaw South)
Hopfner
Rybchuk
Gerich
Maxwell
Embury
Myers
Zazelenchuk
Baker
Dutchak
Folk

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, it seems clear from the vote that members do not wish to delay the proceedings until the information is provided. I'm in the difficulty of having questions which I think ought to be asked based upon the information I receive. Accordingly, I will have to persevere and see what results may come from the questions.

With respect to the transition committee, on what basis were decisions made to discharge employees?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, in a broad, general fashion, I would say people were let go if the decision was made that their services were no longer required by the administration.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — That I assume would have been the case. Then, I will phrase the question this way: on what basis was it decided that the services of individual employees were no longer required by the administration?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — It was a question of our judgment.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — And what considerations were considered by those who were exercising the judgment? I'll leave it at that. What considerations were taken into

account when these judgments were made?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, the general sense. The considerations were good judgment and common sense, and applying those to the best of our ability and the individual's ability, and making those decisions on the jobs that had to be done.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I'm not now inquiring into what the qualifications of the persons making the judgment are, whether they had good judgment or common sense. I am asking what considerations they took into account with respect to the discharged employees. What qualifications were sought, or were sought to be expunged?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well Mr. Chairman, it is clearly a judgment call, and it's based on the best judgment that individuals can make, and it's bringing as much common sense to bear on each individual situation. I'm sure the hon. member knows exactly what I'm talking about.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, I'm sorry, I don't know what you're talking about. It's obviously a judgment call on the part of the person making the judgment, but he must be considering some aspects of the person who is being judged. I'm not asking about the common sense of the person making the judgment; I'm not asking about the judgment call; I'm asking about what attributes of the person being judged were thought to be relevant in making the judgement.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, clearly those attributes that we thought were relevant to the situation, and in our case we used the best judgment given the situation and the individuals, and the particular instance at the particular time. There may be many variables.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Could you give some instances of some of the attributes which you thought were relevant?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — No.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Well, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, Mr. Premier, we have seen a goodly number of people who at least superficially had substantial qualifications to serve the people of Saskatchewan, whose services were terminated. Now there obviously was a reason for that, and a reason so that people made a judgment that notwithstanding their superficial qualifications, there were some less desirable attributes, and on balance, therefore, their services ought not to be retained. I am asking for some indication of the less desirable attributes which were identified by those making the judgment.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, I would think, Mr. Chairman, that the variables that were considered would be the same variables considered or criteria used by the former administration in 1971, or many other administrations. It would be along the lines . . . For example, a cabinet makes some decisions based on its best judgment. I would find it extremely difficult to define all the areas and all the elements that might go into that decision. We ask for the best judgment that we can get from men and women, and I don't think that I can elaborate any more.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, that answer illustrates a problem I have in asking questions to the Premier. I ask him. "Can he give me one instance?" He replies, "No, because I cannot give you all the instances." I ask, "Can you

tell me one person who worked with the transition committee?" He says, "No, because I can't tell you all of them." I am not asking for a total package. I am asking for one of the attributes, and we can deal with them one by one, that might have been considered which rendered these superficially qualified people no longer qualified to serve your government.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, I provided, or I said I would provide just as quickly as possible, the names of the individuals that are employed currently in Executive Council which may or may not be perfect in that some may have been removed and others maybe very recently hired. I said in terms of the responsibility of looking at new staff or the changes in staff, we use as much common sense and good judgment as possible. I don't think I could elaborate any more in saying, "Here is the list of individuals, here is the list of my staff. Their backgrounds and other things with respect to their qualifications and salaries I'll provide as quickly as I can pull them all together. " I believe that that is the kind of accurate information that the on. member would like to have.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I will do my best to ask for the information that I would like to have.

With respect to the persons who were removed from senior positions with the Government of Saskatchewan, to your knowledge, were representations made for the removal of any public servants by interest groups, by people outside the government who requested the removal of a given employee?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — To the best of my recollection, no, I can't recall having seen or read or heard representation from special-interest groups for the removal of individuals.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, does the same answer hold for people outside the government? For these purposes I will say and outside the . . . Outside the government I will leave it at that. Are you aware of any representations by persons outside the government, for the removal of senior public servants?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I may have received, or members of cabinet may have received unsolicited letters or calls or suggestions about how to run the government, including the people in the government. But, I can't add any more than that with respect to individual situations or those that may have written on an unsolicited basis to a member of cabinet or to me saying, "You should run DNS in this fashion" or something else in another fashion. There may have been, I don't recall them specifically, but clearly there could have been.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Well, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, we're having something less than definite reasons. We have had one advanced by the Minister of Government Services that was woman's intuition which led to one decision, and that at least is some basis for judgment, and it is clearly the most definite one we've had to date and so I must assume that intuition, male or female, was the governing factor. Could I ask the Premier whether a list of contributions to political parties were studied by any of those people who were using their best judgment, to use your phrase?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — I have no idea.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — So that is neither confirmed nor denied, if I may put it that

way? Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, did a Mr. Dave Black serve on your staff at any time between may 10 and the present date?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — We will provide that information to the member as soon as we have it together.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order! The Executive Council is under estimates, and that is what we are trying to do.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, did a Mr. Ian Disbery serve at any time on your staff?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, I have to give my standard answer. But, again, if I could just quote from the hon. member, 1979:

Now the question is the names, the salaries, the responsibilities and qualifications of all the employees of Executive Council earning \$25,000 or over, '78-79 actual, '79-80 estimate. Okay, there are some explanatory notes because people moved around in different jobs and we'll have to do it either by person or by title or by both.

And they weren't provided because you had to go and get them. Well, again Mr. Chairman, I'll get all the names of those that may have been involved, or may not have been involved, or were involved for a short period of time or a longer period of time, and put them all together and present them to the hon. member.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, are you denying that you know that Ian Disbery was a member of your staff?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — I'm not denying or confirming anything. I'm saying that I'll provide a complete list of accurate information to the hon. member, when we can pull it all together, with who was there, and for how long, and their qualifications, and their salary. And you can have it — but I don't have it.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, I understand what you're saying, and I thank you for the offer of providing me all that information. What I am asking is whether you will give us any information in the interim? Is there any purpose in proceeding with question about who is on your staff when you are, let us say, unable to give us the salary of Derek Bedson? I've asked you for the salary of Derek Bedson, and you are saying you don't have it. Notwithstanding the fact that he sits beside you, you are unable to give it to the committee.

Please understand, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, that giving me the information is not the same as giving it to the committee. It does not appear on the records of the committee, and it is in no way available for further reference. If I ask a question, and you give it on the records of the committee, then it is there, and it is facts that all of us can refer to in the future. So it is a different thing to say that you will give me the information. And I ask again: are you telling me that you do not know whether Ian Disbery was a member of your staff?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — I'm not denying or confirming that Mr. Disbery was a member of not a member of my staff. I'm just providing the information according to the traditional

and past practice in this House. And I'm sure the hon. member understood the rules completely when he gave his answer in 1979, and subsequently got the information later. Because he said, "There are some explanatory notes because people moved around in different jobs, and we'll have to do it either by person, or by title, or by both" — and at a later date provided the information. I'm doing the same thing as the hon. member did in terms of providing the information as accurately and completely as we can.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, I think you are not aware, you have not perused the material. There was no refusal in 1979 to ask individual questions. There is here a clear refusal to tell the committee whether Mr. Ian Disbery is a member of your staff. And I ask you again: is Mr. Ian Disbery — has he been a member of your staff since May 10?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — I want to make it very clear, Mr. Chairman, that there is no refusal to provide information. In fact, the objective is to provide accurate information, as to timing, and length, and qualifications, and salary of the individuals that you have asked for. But I don't have it all today and when we have it, you will have it.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, in the meantime we have to conduct the committee, and in the meantime I ask you to give the information which is readily available with respect to your senior employees. And I ask you again: is Mr. Ian Disbery a member of your staff?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, we said that we would do the best we could this afternoon to get you a copy of the telephone book that has the list of the people that are on my staff. Perhaps we can go from there as quickly as possible. It's as close as the nearest telephone book, and we can provide that, and I said I would do that as quickly as we can.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, clearly to provide us with a telephone book does not put anything on the record, and I asked you, for the record, is Mr. Ian Disbery . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, if that's the best information you have available — you obviously have to get information from where you can get it — and if your staff can't improve on the telephone book, then by all means use the telephone book. I asked you: is Mr. Ian Disbery, for the record, a member of your staff?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Chairman, let me read into the record again what the hon. member has asked for: (1) The names of persons who are or have been on the staff of the Executive Council at any time since May 8, 1982; (2) The salaries, remuneration and prerequisites of such persons; (3) The qualifications of such persons; (4) The names of all persons who have or who have had contracts for personal services, for services rendered or to be rendered since May 8, 1982; and; (5) The rate of remuneration, and the totals to each such person paid or contracted to be paid since May 8, 1982.

He goes on to say, -Mr. Chairman, "I will wish to inquire about persons who have served on the transition team or as staff to the transition team, whether or not they may have been formerly on the staff of some agency of government or other executive council," and he goes on, Mr. Chairman, to say, "There will of course be questions on other subjects as they occur to you."

Now, clearly, that's a lot of information. There are a lot of people and changes, and as you have pointed out, sir, previously, by different people, it's almost a matrix of people,

of cross references, of who's been there and for how long and what their qualifications, and so forth.

I can provide you today with the existing people's names that we have. It's public knowledge and it's in every telephone directory in the building. But the qualifications and other things that go with them, or if they had been on staff, and now that they're in some other department or if they're some place else — I don't have all that information together yet, but when I have it I'll give it to you.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Premier, I thank you very much for that, and in the meantime, until this information is available to the committee for examination, I would like to ask you some questions about some key members of your staff who you will undoubtedly know and will not need to gather a great deal of information on to answer a few questions.

I will ask about a Mr. Jack Harrington. Has Mr. Jack Harrington been at any time a member of your staff?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — We are quickly putting the list together, and the list will be available in just a matter of minutes.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I take it then that at least with respect to the names of key employees, some way will be found to retrieve those names . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, this one says Dave Black, Ian Disbery, Reg Forsythe, Garnet Gorven, Jack Harrington, and so on — Scotty Livingstone, Terry Leier, Jim Petrychyn. You've heard of Jim Petrychyn . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, Mr. Premier, would you advise the House whether you are aware that Mr. Jim Petrychyn was at one time a member of your staff?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, my standard answer would apply. Whether he was or was partly or was part-time or longer will be part of the information that I'll put together. I'll send across a list of permanent positions in, I believe it's executive, total Executive Council for the hon. member, the Leader of the Opposition.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.