

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
May 3, 1983

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

Hon. Mr. Schoenhals: — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure today to rise in this Assembly and to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly, a group of 55 grade 8 students from Roland Michener School in the Saskatoon Sutherland riding. They are accompanied by their principal, Mr. Carl Krause, and teachers, Jim Taylor and Darcy Kerr. They will observe the proceedings during question period today and I will meet with them at 3 o'clock for refreshments and pictures. I would like all members to join with me in welcoming this group to the Assembly today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted to introduce to you and to all members of the House, a group of students from the Regina Elphinstone constituency. They are from Sacred Heart School in Regina. They're grade 8 students; there are about 21 of them. They're here with their teacher, Mr. Smadu, and they are here to observe the question period and then to take a brief tour of the Legislative Buildings. I know that we all wish them a pleasant stay here. I look forward to the opportunity to meet with them just after 2:30 to have some pictures. And I ask all hon. Members to join with me in welcoming them. They are in the Speaker's gallery as you have guessed.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Executive Council Salaries

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct a question to the Premier, and, Mr. Premier, it concerns the written answers to some questions we raised during the review of the 1982-83 estimates nearly some two months ago. Included in this material is the fact that Gren Smith-Windsor, Clerk of the Executive Council, who makes nearly \$70,000, to be exact, 69,500; but the same material then goes on to say, 'Mr. Smith-Windsor receives an accommodation allowance. I ask you, Mr. Premier: how much is the accommodation allowance to this individual, and why is it being paid to a public servant who is earning nearly \$70,000?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know what the housing allowance may be. I'll take note of the question and provide the information during the normal estimates.

Mr. Koskie: — The second question, I'd like to ask as a supplement. Can you, Mr. Premier, explain why your government has scrapped the senior citizen shelter allowance which would affect some 20,000 seniors across the province, but you seem to have enough money to provide a public servant at a rate of 70,000 annually to be provided with an accommodation allowance? Can you explain that policy?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, this administration is concerned enough about people during a time of a national downturn to come out with a nine-point program to create jobs for the people of Saskatchewan; to spend an additional \$50 million in social services in this province over the previous administration; to come out with new housing programs; to be the only province in the country to create economic activity, the only one with an net increase in jobs in Canada; and I would ask the members opposite to point to one other province in Canada . . .

An Hon. Member: — Including Manitoba.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — . . . including Manitoba, one other province that has a record anywhere close to this administration when it comes to creating jobs and providing income for low-income people anywhere in the province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Minimum Wage

Mr. Koskie: — A new question, Mr. Speaker. I want to refer to the Premier that a person on minimum wage in this province makes about \$34 for an eight hour day. Your senior political staff are making, in the case of R.C. Livingstone, \$330 a day, J.H. Harrington, \$350 a day, and Terry Leier, \$410 a day. I want to ask you, can you justify this kind of a salary scale when you have frozen the wages of minimum wage people and labour force in this province?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I'll remind the members opposite, under their administration there were people like Mr. Dombowsky making \$160,000, and they're no longer there. I will also remind the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, that the minimum wage in the province of Saskatchewan is the highest in the country. Number three, I will also remind the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, that no other province in this country is creating jobs faster than we are. You put the combination together, Mr. Speaker, we have a bright, contemporary, well-informed administration that is designing programs to provide benefits to all Canadians if they want to come in to the province of Saskatchewan, and now this is the most popular province in the nation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Premier. The Premier has talked about job creation, and indeed there has been some job creation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — And I want to instance Mr. Tkachuk who has had a job created for him at \$350 a day as chief of staff of the Premier. And I want to remind him that the previous chief of staff received \$46,000 a year, and that Mr. Tkachuk has, therefore, achieved an increase of 81 per cent over the previous incumbent — 81 per cent increase over the previous incumbent. I ask the Premier: how does he square that with his inflation-minus-one guide-lines?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I've said many times in this Assembly, to the members opposite, that when we look at the record of their first year of transition in 1971, they brought in people on a temporary basis to make the transition from the

Liberal administration to their administration. During this time of our transition, Mr. Speaker, many people that were involved in the former premier's office were moved out. New people had to be brought in, and I make no apologies for bringing in new people and a new administration.

This was our year of transition. We have done more in one year, in terms of creating a new image for the province of Saskatchewan across the country, and across North America, putting us on the map, than has been done by the 10 years previous to that. So I am quite confident to look at our people involved in our transition, and compare them to any other administration across Canada, or indeed, theirs in 1971.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, one more question to the Premier. New question. He has talked about a transition team as if it was a short-term arrangement. He has now been in office for more than one year, one year and a day or two. Does he deny that people like Jack Harrington, \$350 a day; Terry Leier \$410 a day; R.C. Livingstone, \$330 a day; John Schaw, \$350 a day; Dave Tkachuk, \$350 a day are still in the service of the Premier, one year after he took office?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — No, they're not. Not all of them are. And that's the point of transition. And this isn't estimates. This isn't estimates. I'll bring all my information together at estimates, and I provided the information. Some people are still there as a result of transitions; some are in other positions; some are gone altogether.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is Dave Tkachuk at \$350 a day still on your staff?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Tkachuk is still on my staff.

Mr. Koskie: — Is a Mr. Jack Harrington still on your staff?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, I believe Mr. Harrington is in the hospital. But Mr. Harrington is still on my staff, and I will say, Mr. Speaker, the advice that we received from Mr. Harrington was well worth it when we look at the results in April of 1982.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — A question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. One more of your very high-paid individuals is an R.C. Livingstone at \$330 a day. I would ask the minister: since you're paying these exorbitant amounts would you indicate the qualifications of Mr. Livingstone for the benefit of the taxpayers of the province?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I believe the qualifications . . . And again, these are not estimates; I don't have the information with me. But, Mr. Livingstone, I believe, was a former deputy minister in the Government of Saskatchewan. I believe he's a chartered accountant. I believe he's been head of the real estate commission or board. He has several qualifications.

I would just remind the members opposite that if you take — maybe the members opposite could calculate it for me — if you take a salary like belonged to somebody like Mr. Dombowsky, \$160,000, you divide that by the normal number of working days, which is about 200 or 250 . . . Somebody could calculate what that is per day. And if the members would like to know what it is, I'm sure somebody here will calculate it. It's approximately \$800 a day, year after year — not even through the transition period, but

year after year after year, plus expenses.

Mr. Koskie: — A new question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, I would like to ask you whether you would see a difference between Mr. Dombowsky, who ran a multi-million-dollar corporation, and the difference between him and Jack Harrington, which is noted for being just a political hack?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, if the members opposite are saying that the members of Executive Council that advise the Premier don't have some significant impact on what goes on in terms of departments or crowns, then it's not much wonder that their operation failed, because clearly, the Premier's office and Executive Council does have an impact on what crown corporations are going to be doing, and I would think that the people in the province of Saskatchewan want reasonable expertise brought in to Executive Council, if that's where the final decisions are made in running the operation. Perhaps the problem in the past, Mr. Speaker, was the advice wasn't good enough, and that's why there were so many failures.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Premier, and it concerns Mr. Derek Bedson who is, I understand, the secretary to cabinet, getting something over \$85,000 a year. My question to the Premier is this: is it proposed that Mr. Bedson be transferred to an overseas office, perhaps the London office, and that he continue to receive \$85,000 a year as the chief of staff of a two or three person office in London?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I haven't made any announcements with respect to Mr. Bedson. I will say, with respect to Mr. Bedson, when he came in here, that he replaced two positions that were paid for under the former administration, both deputy and the clerk. He replaced both of them. So in fact, Mr. Speaker, we ended up saving money in our administration, as opposed to the expense that was in theirs.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. May I ask the Premier whether it is proposed to transfer Mr. Bedson to London at a salary of approximately \$85,000 a year, to be the chief of staff of a two or three person office?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, when I'm prepared to make announcements about my staff I'll make them, and I won't before that.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier: in light of the fact that the Minister of Social Services has taken people on welfare off of the clothing allowance and household allowance for three months after they go on welfare, do you think it makes any sense at all that Gren Smith-Windsor is getting an accommodation allowance that pays for his household operation? Can you tell me whether or not in your mind that makes any sense that someone earning \$70,000 a year would get their housing allowance paid for, while people who you are forcing onto welfare are being cut off?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I've reiterated it several times in this House, no other province is creating more jobs than we are. Tell me a province. If the members opposite know a province that has a better record in creating jobs, please give it to me, including Manitoba under the NDP administration — no other province. If we want to employ well-qualified people to design well-qualified programs to create economic activity, to be the only province in the country to create jobs, I think people in Saskatchewan would like to see that. All I can say again, Mr. Speaker, is that our record of job creation, compared to any other jurisdiction in the country, stands there as a single solitary

exception to the rule. And we're proud of that administration, and we're proud of that record.

Disclosure of Confidential Information

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier as well, and it has to do with this Conservative government's shameful treatment of confidential and personal files relating to the member from Cumberland. In this case it was an opposition MLA which Conservative back-benchers tried to systematically destroy through selective use of that file. And the public of Saskatchewan may well be asking, 'Who's next?' You have confidential income tax information.

My question to the Premier is: you warned the members not to use confidential information. They ignored your warning with the consequential damage. What further disciplinary action do you intend with respect to the member from P.A.-Duck Lake and the member from Prince Albert?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I said yesterday in this House, for everybody to hear, that in the administration and in the Government of Saskatchewan what's confidential is to be treated confidential. I said the same in caucus. The information that . . . And I also said to the members outside and to the media outside: the information that is being brought forward here was raised in the P.A. *Daily Herald*, February the 18th, 1983. I've raised in caucus several times about confidentiality, and I raised it yesterday, and I raise it today, and I said it in the House yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, let me provide the information that is not confidential, and the member opposite is chairman, he should know this. And here's what the public is allowed to know, because it is public; it's not confidential. People in this province, the province of Saskatchewan, have a tremendous reputation of being hard-working people who pay their bills. Men and women both work to pay their bills, pay their mortgages, and are known for that all across the country, indeed, all across the world.

What is public information in these accounts, Mr. Speaker, is that the former administration designed a system where even high-income people didn't have to pay their mortgages. What's public, Mr. Speaker — we've got it here in list upon list of information — is that high-income people didn't pay their mortgages. Public information, Mr. Speaker: high-income people didn't pay their mortgages. In fact, Mr. Speaker, they weren't even asked to pay their mortgage. We've got lists — 1,000, 1,100 people in arrears that didn't pay their mortgages or were not asked to pay their mortgages. People all across this province have a reputation of working hard, of paying their bills. Husbands and wives work day in and day out to pay their mortgages.

Mr. Speaker, I'll go through the information that is public, and the hon. Member knows what is public. And he can get all this information: 1,100 people under the former administration's plan that didn't even pay their mortgages or were not even asked to pay their mortgages, some high-paid people, high-income people, that didn't even pay. Well, Mr. Speaker . . . More public information, Mr. Speaker. Over 600 accounts were in arrears, and each of them was in excess of \$2,500 a piece. That's public information; the public want to know about that.

Over 10 per cent of these accounts, people didn't pay one single solitary cent, Mr. Speaker – not one cent. All over the province of Saskatchewan we have built a reputation of being hard-working, bill-paying people, except under the previous administration that designed a system, Mr. Speaker, that said: 1,100 people don't have to pay at all. That's public information.

We can talk about confidential information; confidential information will be kept confidential? Public information can be made public.

Mr. Shillington: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The Premier may well filibuster the question period if you like, because you don't like the question. But I'm going to repeat it. I am going to repeat the question since you never attempted to answer it. You warned them; they ignored it with very considerable damage to the member from Cumberland. What further disciplinary action are you going to take against these two members?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, it is not my responsibility who these 1,100 are – it's not my responsibility. The people of the province of Saskatchewan want to find out why 1,100 – one thousand, one hundred people – didn't pay their mortgages. They want to find out that. It's not my responsibility that somebody is making a high salary is not required to pay his mortgage. That's not my responsibility. That's something that happened in the past.

As early as February, it was raised in the P.A. *Daily Herald* – February. And it goes on to talk about people who don't pay their bills, and on and on about mortgages under the Department of Northern Saskatchewan as it then was. We have inherited this, Mr. Speaker, and the public wants to know who pays their bills and who doesn't.

We have taken on the responsibility to clean it up, because the public asked us to. They said, 'Open up the books and see what's going on.' We've opened them up; we find there's at least 1,100 of them that have not in some cases even been asked to pay. There's people who we've recently asked, and they'd say, 'Well, for heaven's sakes . . .' They were never even asked to pay; they didn't even know they had to pay.

Mr. Speaker, I said what's confidential will stay confidential. I said that prior to February; I said it after February; I said it yesterday; and I'll say it today – what's public, Mr. Speaker, what's public, we will make sure it is public, because they have our commitment we're going to clean it up.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — New question, Mr. Speaker. I trust the Premier is not suggesting the member from Cumberland didn't make his mortgage payments, because if you are, you may well join the member from P.A.-Duck Lake in P.A., in being asked to resign, when that allegation is proved to be untrue, as I have no doubt but what it will.

Mr. Premier, since you resolutely refuse to answer the question as to whether or not as to what disciplinary action you are going to take, let me ask you another question which shouldn't require a 10-minute preamble to no answer. Just a simple question. You say you warned them. They say they were not warned. Who's being careless with the facts?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, the facts are there are over 1,000 people who haven't paid their mortgages for years. That's the facts, and the public in Saskatchewan want to know that. The facts are that over 600 of these accounts are in excess of

\$2,500. That's the facts. That's a lot of money. That's 1,100 people who are involved and not paying in their mortgages. The facts are over 10 per cent of these accounts have never even been asked to pay — never been asked to pay. The responsibility for the 1,100 . . . We don't even know if that's the end of it. We're not even finished with the investigation. There may be 1,200. There may be 1,500 who haven't paid because of a system that was designed by the previous administration. That's what's public. That's what the public is concerned about today, and we have promised the public of Saskatchewan that we'll get to the bottom of it.

Mr. Shillington: — Well, new question, Mr. Speaker. I wish you showed the same enthusiasm for getting to the bottom of what has been perpetrated by the member from P.A. and the member from P.A.-Duck Lake. Now let me recount the facts for you, if I might, rather briefly, that have been unfolded in the last couple of days. One is that you said, 'I warned them,' and they were in caucus. Secondly, they appear to have ignored it. Do you plan to do nothing further, or do you plan to allow government back-benchers to ignore your warnings given to them? Are they all free to do that? Is it something they're free to take or leave as they may see fit, or do you plan some further disciplinary action against these two?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I believe that the member opposite is chairman of public accounts. He can get all this information. He can even go back and read the paper, the P.A. *Herald*. You have access, you can call for witnesses, you can involve every member that used to work for DNS. You can invite every one of them down.

An Hon. Member: — Jerry Hammersmith.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — You can invite Mr. Hammersmith down. You can invite anybody you want down. You are chairman of public accounts, and you can get this information. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the member can go back with his research staff, and with public accounts. He can get the information out of the newspapers. That information has been there for months.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Quill Lakes wants to uncover what went on. Well, I'll advise the member. If he wants to uncover what really went on, check with the chairman, and the chairman can invite anybody that ever worked in DNS and we'll really get to the bottom of it. Maybe there wasn't just 1,100 people that didn't pay their mortgages. Maybe there was thousands and thousands, and we'd be glad to open it up to examine it, and certainly the chairman of public accounts can do that.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Changes in Crown Land Lease Sale Policy

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I want to announce today changes in policies governing Crown land least sales, and the transfers of reassignments of Crown land leases to both family and non-family members. This government believes that, given the opportunity, most farmers in Saskatchewan would prefer to own the land they work, rather than simply be tenants on that land. Indeed, this contention has been borne out by the overwhelming success of the farm purchase program. In just four months some 3,000 persons have either been accepted into the program and are now having their mortgages rebated down to 8 per cent, or have been identified as being seemingly qualified, and their applications are currently in various states of processing with

approval in mind.

However, there are other residents who have approached the government asking that we not ignore them in their efforts to either become owners of the land they farm, or else relax restrictions on the transfer of their Crown leased land to both family and non-family members. Because this government believes that it was elected to be the servant of the people and not their master, we have listened to the suggestions made to us, and today I would like to announce policy changes of great interest to the 10,000 or so residents who live and work on leased Crown land.

To help lessees of Crown land purchase the land they farm, we have decided to offer them the opportunity to buy that land for as little as 15 per cent down, and a mortgage rate of just 10 per cent guaranteed for the first 10 years of a 15-year term. Some Crown land lessees may qualify under the provisions of the farm purchase program, and if so, may choose to use that vehicle to buy their leased Crown land. We have decided to abolish the rule that said a lessee had to wait five years before he could apply to buy his leased land. Our government feels the lessee should be allowed to buy his land as soon as he or she is financially able to do so. We see no use whatsoever for artificial waiting periods. Furthermore, artificial waiting periods mean that any increase in value of land goes to the government rather than the farmer.

Farmers should benefit from the increased equity in the land they work, not government. Crown leased land will be sold at market value. To make sure the changes in policy benefit those to whom they are aimed, namely the traditional family farmer, we have placed some safeguards to the new policy to prevent rapid sales being made for a quick speculative financial turnover.

If a lessee who has bought his land resells it within the first year after purchase, all the capital gain must be returned to the provincial government. If the lessee sells his land again with the second year after purchase, 50 per cent of any capital gain must be returned to the provincial government.

Some land that has been deemed critical wildlife habitat, environmentally sensitive land, or land that contains sand or gravel, or is otherwise deemed essential for the public good, will not be sold.

For those who do not want to buy the land that they now lease, we are lifting completely the restrictions on transferring or reassignment leases to family members, and easing rules governing the transfer or reassignment of leases to non-family members.

A lessee will now be able to have his lease transferred forthwith to a family member, whether that family member be a spouse, son, daughter, mother, father, brother, sister, nephew, niece or grandchild.

In keeping with the traditional view of the family farm, we believe in viewing the farm family in the widest possible sense, and this policy change reflects that. Many lessees who operated mixed farms, farms made up of both deeded land and Crown lease land, told us of their problems when they wanted to retire or dispose of their farms for other reasons and found a potential purchaser. The trouble here was that the farm often made an economically viable unit only when it was comprised of both the deeded and leased lands. Restrictions preventing the transfer of leased land to non-family members often meant that not only were the farmer unable to sell his deeded land, but if he did, a farming operation was fragmented into what was basically an economically

unviable unit.

The fragmentation of farming operations has been seen to be bad for Saskatchewan's agricultural economy in general. Under our new policy, the purchaser of a portion of land in a mixed farming operation will now be able to have the leased land transferred or reassigned to him from the original lessee with a minimum of red tape.

There will be some restrictions governing the transfer of such land to a non-family member. If the new operation is to be owned by one person, his cow herd or equivalent should not be larger than 500 cows. If the new operation is to be owned by two persons, then the herd must not be larger than 750 cows or the equivalent. If the new operation is owned by three or more persons, the herd or equivalent should not be larger than 1,000 cows. Once the lease has been transferred to the new owner and lessee, he or she will be able to purchase the leased land immediately at fair market value without a waiting period.

Some legislative changes will be necessary to accomplish all these steps, and our government would envisage bringing those changes before this House in the very near future. We believe that these new policy changes will be greatly to the benefit of individual farmers in this province and to the enhancement of our agricultural health in general.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I am happy that after waiting a full year that many ranchers and farmers who have been waiting and held up in terms of whether or not they put cattle into a pasture or not, finally have a lease policy. But I think it lacks a great deal of detail that they will want to know. For example, what are the lease fees going to be? How much are they going to have to pay for this land? What basis are you settling on for what you call the going rate for land, and whether or not you are not going to be charging exorbitant prices for this land when you sell it to them? And I think these questions, when you bring the legislation forward – when you see fit to do that – we will have a time spent trying to find out the details of this program.

Mr. Speaker, there are a large number of things in this release which are not said; for example, whether or not the present existing posting operation for land that will be leased will still be in place. I know that in my own area, I've had calls from at least 10 individual farmers and ranchers who have been waiting for the past year, with temporary leases having been given out last year, and whether or not you will now post that land, or whether you will indeed use your influence to see that it goes to the people who best meet your idea of who should be farming that land.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned about what I see as the lack of consultation with the many various groups who will be affected: for example, the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, the Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture, and many of the groups who are concerned about the transfer of land and the sale of it. And there's no mention made here of that type of consultation having been taken place.

And we will see whether or not the farm income will increase as a result of this program, or whether, in fact, it continues the trend that has been in place since you took over as minister. And that is a downward trend which I think you should do something about in terms of bringing in things like a fuel rebate program, or something that will help the 67,000 farmers who are now finding themselves in ever-increasing financial straits.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 36 – An Act to amend The Education Act (No. 2)

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I beg to inform the Assembly that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, having been informed of the subject matter of the bill, recommends it to the consideration of the Assembly, and I move that a bill to amend The Education Act (No. 2) be introduced and read a first time.

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

Bill No. 37 – An Act to amend The Credit Union Act

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a bill to amend The Credit Union Act.

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

Bill No. 38 – An Act to amend The Agricultural Incentives Act

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I beg to inform the Assembly that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, having been informed of the subject matter of the bill, recommends it to the consideration of the Assembly. And I move that a bill to amend The Agricultural Incentives Act be now introduced and read a first time.

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

Bill No. 39 – An Act to repeal The Mining Associations Act

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a bill to repeal The Mining Associations Act.

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

Bill No. 40 – An Act to repeal The Artificial Insemination (Animals) Act

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a bill to repeal The Artificial Insemination (Animals) Act.

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

Bill No. 41 – An Act to move First Reading of a Bill respecting the Department of Education

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I beg to inform the Assembly that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, having been informed of the subject matter of the bill, recommends it to the consideration of the Assembly. And I move that a Bill respecting the Department of Education be now introduced and read the first time.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MOTION UNDER RULE 16

Management of Provincial Utilities

Mr. Koskie: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, at the conclusion of my brief remarks I will be moving the said motion. I want to start off and indicate, Mr. Speaker, that the record of the Conservative government with respect to public utilities and utility rate increases is one of the glaring examples of political opportunism and financial mismanagement of these crown corporations. That record also stands as a testament to the failure of the Conservative government's open for business economic policy. And I want to begin by placing the performance of the Conservative government with respect to the public utilities in some context.

When they were in opposition, the Conservative MLAs hollered loud and long every time there was a utility rate increase, no matter what the size. Every utility rate increase was unjustified in their eyes. Every individual utility rate increase, according to the Conservative MLAs, amounted to a consumer rip-off when they were in opposition. And later in this debate my colleagues will be reminding the Conservative members of some of the things which they used to say about utility rate increases, so I will mention only a couple, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I guess that the current Premier has forgotten a news release which he put out as the Conservative leader — I believe it was in February of 1981 — in which he claimed that utility rate increases were a major contributing factor to inflation in Saskatchewan. He then went on to say this about utility rate increases, and I quote:

More importantly, they hurt those most who can least afford them — the low-income families, the people like senior citizens who are on fixed incomes. That the government is doing nothing to alleviate the situation is a disgrace.

This was said by the leader, the now Premier of the province.

And I want to say how this tune has changed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, how the Conservative leader now stands up in this Assembly and claims that power rate increase of more than 22 per cent being proposed, telephone rate increases averaging 19 per cent, and SGI rate increases, considering maintaining the same protection, 28 per cent and more, are fully justified. This same man stands up in this House and claims that the utility rate increase of this size are no problem at all for Saskatchewan's low-income people, or senior citizens, to our small business community.

How his tune has changed, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Here's another example of the contrast between what the Conservatives used to say about utility rate increases versus what they now say, and this one is a classic. And I refer the Assembly to the comment made in the April 14th, 1982 *Star-Phoenix* by the current member from Saskatoon Nutana, then a Conservative candidate, and I quote:

My personal concern is the senior citizens. It just tears at me to see that people who have built our province and given us our heritage are going without groceries, because the drugs that they need aren't on the drug plan.

... or that their power bill in January was so high it ate up their bowling money, or this kind of thing. 'There is no need for it.'

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is only one word to describe the change in attitude which seems to have gripped the Conservative members of this legislature, only one word to describe why a political party which once condemned all utility rate increases as consumer rip-offs now defend utility rate increases of two and three and nearly four times the current rate of inflation. That word is hypocrisy – hypocrisy, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In opposition the Conservative members cried crocodile tears for the consumers of Saskatchewan. In government the Conservatives attempt to justify utility rate increases of two and three times the size of those which they used to roundly condemn. That is the height of hypocrisy.

This Conservative display of phoney concern for the people of Saskatchewan reached its height last year. Conservative candidates promised a utility rate freeze. The clear implication of the utility rate freeze promise was that somehow all utility rate increases under the New Democratic government were unjustified, and somehow the election of a Conservative government would save people money on their utility bills.

That was the implication, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but now that little charade has all been unravelled. The Conservative utility rate freeze has been exposed for what it really was: the election year ploy by Conservatives which was intended to mislead the people of Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan consumers and businesses did not save a penny as a result of the utility rate freeze. All that has happened in that two years worth of utility bill increases have been stuffed into one year. Some freeze; some promise.

And let me say two things about the gigantic utility rate increases proposed for this spring by the Conservative government. First, they could not come at a worse time. Ask almost any economist what the key to the economic recovery in Canada is, and they will tell you: increased consumer spending.

If the Canadian economy, and the Saskatchewan economy in particular, are to break out of the worst recession since the Dirty Thirties, consumers have to be convinced to spend more. And what does this government propose in the light of that fact? To take from the pockets of the consumers massive amounts of money – 85 million extra dollars out of the people's pockets for higher power bills – that is what they're proposing; 32 million extra dollars out of the people's pockets for higher telephone bills; and 10 million extra out of the people's pockets for higher SGI rates – exactly what our provincial economy does not need as it struggles to recover from the Conservative-inspired recession.

And the second thing that stands out about the utility rate increases is that they are so unfair. The Conservative government has forced working people, municipal councils, school boards, universities, and many others, to tailor their demands to its inflation-minus-one guide-line. Now what does this government tell the same people? That their utility bills will be going up, not by inflation minus one, not by twice the current rate of inflation, but by three and even four times the current rate of inflation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we say if the Conservative government's inflation-minus-one guide-lines are good enough for Saskatchewan working people, if they are good enough for the school boards and municipal councils and so many others, then they should be good enough for this Conservative government and the public utilities. But the Premier argues that the public utilities must have a big increase this year, or else there'll be a big deficit.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan have a right to ask why. Why should these important public utilities suddenly face such large deficits? The answer is two-fold: the failure of the Conservative government's open for business philosophy, and its attempts to downgrade and hamstring these public corporations for their own political gain.

The record of the Conservatives' first year in office is clear: at SPC, Saskatchewan Power Corporation, the biggest loss in the history of that corporation – 3.4 million; at SGI, the biggest loss in the history – reported at 38 million; at Sask Tel, the smallest profit since 1966. All of this from the people who promised to bring their private sector managerial expertise to running these public corporations.

Even the annual reports of these public utilities lay it on the line, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Even the annual reports make it clear that one of the main reasons for these big losses last year was the failure of the Devine government open for business economic policies.

The SPC annual report, for example, talks about the reduced industrial revenues coming to the power corporation during 1982. Translation: business was slow. Open for Business went bust. Further, this Conservative government began to downgrade the public utilities. It began to strip them of important and profitable parts of their operation and hand them over to their friends in the private sector. The extension telephones business at Sask Tel was transferred to the private; the Souris Valley coal-mines and the coal drag-line at SPC was sold to private companies; staff dismissals at SGI. 'Let the private sector do it,' they say. That is the Conservative government's rallying cry, and unfortunately the Saskatchewan taxpayers are about to pay the price for letting it go to the private sector. Part of that price are the highest utility rate increases that Saskatchewan has ever had to endure. That is why the Devine government's first year in charge of our public utilities can only be described as a dismal failure. And I want to say, in conclusion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan, many of whom have had their wages frozen, are in a desperate position, faced by the massive increases in utility rates. Had the increased costs of such things as natural gas important from Alberta been passed on as it was incurred, these huge, massive increases would not have to be placed on the public at this time.

But more importantly, as I said, one of the essential reasons was political crassness. The Conservative Party promised the people to freeze the utility rates without explaining to them that a year down the line they would have massive increases. And I want to say that had these facts been known to the people of Saskatchewan, I say even in the Prince Albert by-election, that we would have had a member of our party sitting here. But they – very crass again – what they did is not to disclose them until a particular time. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that the evidence is clear that the crown corporations have been used for political purposes, and secondly, that there is a basic mismanagement of the crown corporations. I therefore move, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

That this Assembly condemns the Government of Saskatchewan for mismanaging the affairs of the provincial utilities and for seeking to impose excessive increase in rates of natural gas, electric power, telephones, and insurance, thereby retarding economic recovery and imposing undue burden on the Saskatchewan businesses, working people who are suffering from unemployment and wage freezes, and the farmers and rural residents who are suffering from a drastic decline in real farm income.

I so move, seconded by my colleague from Regina Centre, Mr. Shillington.

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to deal with one aspect of this motion, and it has to do with the Saskatchewan Government Insurance. I particularly want to deal with this crown corporation because this has, for many years or for several decades, been the crown jewel of the Saskatchewan crown corporations, until this present Conservative working crew came along, who have spared no effort to destroy SGI. When in opposition, the members who were present took every opportunity to criticize SGI, whether that criticism was fair and balanced or not didn't matter. It continued unabated, Mr. Speaker. It was subsequently shown that the losses sustained by Saskatchewan Government Insurance were not out of line with what was experienced by the rest of the industry. It was subsequently shown that the industry went through a very bad period. That was the private insurance companies as well as the SGI.

Of course, none of that would matter to members opposite who never care if they balance their attacks. What matters is the flash of fire of the moment. The fact that it may prove to be embarrassing, the fact that those attacks may prove to be embarrassing later on never particularly bothers members opposite. And so they continued. It was subsequently established that SGI had good management, management who brought it out of a difficult period in better shape than most of the private insurance companies. It was subsequently established that the changes in rates . . . I don't know whether we're supposed to drink this stuff, Mr. Deputy Chairman, or not. It didn't bite me so I guess I'm going to survive. The . . .

An Hon. Member: — . . . (inaudible) . . . protein drink.

Mr. Shillington: — That's right. That's supper and refreshments . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, well, wait till midsummer comes along. This stuff will be as black as that hole in the wall. And it won't be us that'll be asking to repair the water system. So if the member from Saskatoon Centre wants to raise and discuss . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order! The question before the Assembly is the motion. I'd like the member to stick to the motion.

Mr. Shillington: — I was going to tie that in to the new crown corporation on water. But I may have taken a bit long in getting to that, Mr. Deputy Chairman. I was on SGI before I was so rudely interrupted, so rudely sidetracked.

What was also established about SGI was the efficiency of the management under Murray Wallace. In fact, I think it is now accepted by the insurance industry, if not by members opposite who seem oblivious to anything that's suggesting the facts. Members opposite have an allergic reaction when they come within shouting distance of the facts on this issue . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Well, the member from Regina North . . . And this is relevant, Mr. Deputy Chairman, because it does relate to the efficiency of the management SGI had. And in effect if you'd kept Mr. Wallace, SGI would be in a lot better shape today. Mr. Wallace went on to bigger and better things in the private industry. If you people were too thick-skulled to recognize the man's ability, at least the private industry was not. And if you had kept Mr. Wallace and kept some of the management, you would not be in the . . . SGI would not be suffering some of the difficulties it is now.

What happened to this government, though, was when they crossed the House on April 26th, took their chairs opposite, it never seems to have occurred to the member from Regina South . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, and some of you are going to be a long time in crossing the floor, too. But it never occurred to members opposite that a different role was required of a minister of the crown than a critic in the opposition. Because the member from Regina South continued in exactly the same vein – the minister of SGI, supposed to be protecting that crown corporation, speaking on its behalf, attacking it. And he never quit attacking it. And he never quit falling flat on his face.

You know, the minister in charge of SGI reminded me of the coyote, the ‘Americanus coyoteus’ who chases the roadrunner. Every time, Mr. Speaker, he gets a bomb ready to throw at the coyote, the thing blows up in his face. And that, I’m afraid, has been the experience of the minister in charge of SGI. Every time he’s got a bomb to lobby at SGI, he doesn’t quite get it away quite quick enough or it goes off too soon or he steps in the leg trap. But every time he’s set out to attack SGI, he has been embarrassed. He has been embarrassed by it. And I’m going to run over some of the sterling achievements of that member from Regina South, and I know that members opposite will cheer with pride as I recite his achievements, his sparkling achievements as minister in charge of SGI.

One of his earlier success stories consisted of a car which had supposedly been repaired by SGI at an exorbitant price and had then been sold to the former minister, the former member from Regina North East. There was no allegation, I may say, and we’re all a little sensitive about this. There was no allegation by the member from Regina South of wrongdoing against the former minister, but he was suggesting that the SGI had prepared this at an exorbitant price. And I remember him saying on TV, ‘I’m going to get to the bottom of this.’ Well, somebody did, because somebody bothered . . . One of the members of the fifth estate bothered to call the claims office, who had a readily available explanation for the repair of the car, and that’s the last we heard from the ‘Americanus coyoteus’ as the bomb blew up in his face. But the member from Regina South wasn’t finished. Oh, no. No, no, he was after the roadrunner. He was going to get the roadrunner. So he had new plans – never quite gave up, never quite gave up.

One of his subsequent acts was to file the annual report on a day when they were embarrassed about a number of the other issues, filed the annual report and in a step which is unprecedented, the House was subjected to a 10-minute diatribe about how SGI had been mismanaged. I repeat again, for the benefit of the members opposite, that one of the functions of a minister of a crown corporation is to speak on its behalf. And if a minister criticizes a crown corporation, there is simply no one to defend it.

What the minister failed to point out, what was subsequently pointed out in crown corporation was that the accounting system had been altered. We don’t say, you’ve cooked the books. There might be something unparliamentary about that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I’m not going to be unparliamentary. But I will suggest that the accounting principles were altered in a manner which called for an explanation which was never forthcoming.

I think it is clear at this point in time that had the gas tax not been repealed, and thus about \$30 million taken out of SGI, had you not altered the accounting system, SGI would have showed a modest profit this year, and that’s a good deal better than many private insurance companies are doing. So, once again, we’ve got the ‘Americanus

coyoteus' stepping in his own trap with the thing blowing up in his face, but he wasn't through. He wasn't through. He had more bombs waiting for the SGI ready to lob at them.

One of his more celebrated achievements was to abolish 120 positions. I get calls daily, Mr. Deputy Speaker, now from people in SGI. You know what they're doing in SGI now? Do you know what they're doing in SGI now? They're working overtime. They're going back Saturday. They're going back Sunday. They're going back Saturday and Sunday to work overtime to try and keep up after those people were released. I'd be interested in hearing from the member from Regina North as to whether or not you think that working people overtime every weekend is an efficient way to run a business. I'm quite sure the member from Regina North will admit that overtime . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I suggest to the member opposite that that is an inefficient way to run a business, and I'm mindful of the clock. When I've delivered all the pearls of wisdom I have or I am sat down by the Speaker – one of the two – I will be gone.

But the member from Regina South had even more surprises. Unfortunately the next bomb didn't just blow up in his face; it also blew up in the Premier's. He abolished the licence issuers in four communities. It was apparent from the questioning in the House he never bothered to inform the Premier he was abolishing a licence issuing office in his riding, and he did. And the Premier was subsequently embarrassed by it. I sit . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order. I must remind the member he's had his 10 minutes of . . .

Mr. Shillington: — Just getting started.

Mr. Myers: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with great amusement that I rise to speak on this resolution today, because I consider it to be a bit of a joke. But in the larger sense, Mr. Speaker, my feeling is one of great indignation rather than amusement, because I believe that this resolution brought forward by members opposite is nothing more than a waste of this Assembly's time.

The resolution tries, without success, to make a sweeping indictment against our government for supposedly mismanaging a crown utility, thereby slamming the integrity of those fine organizations and their employees.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I could make a few cases of any of the utilities within the crown sector, but I will speak briefly about only one, the Saskatchewan Government Insurance. It's highly ironic, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the opposition has chosen to use as evidence for their charge of mismanagement, the smallest increase in licence plat insurance in the last three years – 6.7 per cent for 1983. Need I remind this Assembly that that's well below the rate of inflation?

If that's not enough, just consider the record of the members opposite before they were turfed out: a 20 per cent hike in 1980 – a gargantuan increase hoisted on the backs of Saskatchewan motorists. But if that wasn't enough, in 1981, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they came back with a 28 per cent increase. Of course the opposition is quick to point to the 7.2 per cent in 1982, but it's typical of their mentality that it was timed conveniently to coincide with their election plans. We all know that that didn't work last year.

The 6.7 per cent by our government is a significant breath of relief for Saskatchewan

drivers. It's a fact that the ill-fated former government could never provide that kind of relief except, of course, in last year's election when they were turfed out. In short, Mr. Speaker, if all members were just to look at the record of the former government, they will know how serious the opposition is about this resolution. As I said before, it's a waste of time. They obviously think so themselves, as I see across the way. The AAIA was designed to provide basic insurance protection for the average driver, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and most of the time it's done so. But I might take a moment to remind all members that the average coverage is just that. The AAIA was not meant to provide total insurance protection for all manners of mishaps – every little bump, every scrape, every little bruise that a drive may encounter.

For thorough extensive protection, drivers may insure their vehicles with any insurance company licensed to do so in this province. The SGI package policy is available to them. The intent of the AAIA is to ensure that the average motorist is protected against major economic calamities. That was the purpose of the AAIA in 1946, when it was brought in by the CCF, and it remains true to that point today.

However, Mr. Speaker, times change, conditions change, and modifications over the years have resulted in changes to the basic coverage, keeping it appropriate to changing needs and economic conditions. And when this government was in opposition we were pleased to support those changes in coverage, subject to rousing debates which occurred at that time. The act continues to come under nearly constant scrutiny, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Since taking office last April that has been this government's top priority as a part of an examination of all crowns and their operations. A committee which I proudly sit upon. Mr. Deputy Speaker, SGI, the management board, and a thorough analysis of AAIA from coverage to profitability is imperative. That is the best way to make sure it remains flexible and responsible to changing times.

Our government is committed to an honest appraisal of the insurance needs of the people of Saskatchewan, and I am confident that the appraisal of this act will result in beneficial changes for the Saskatchewan motorists. Mr. Speaker, this resolution . . . The members opposite see fit to criticize this government's economic recovery program. It's obvious from this resolution, and from the way they mismanaged SGI and other crowns, that they fail to see the role of service crowns, and the role that service crowns play in this government and the economic recovery of this province. It's not a political role or a propaganda role. It's a major role – visible, substantial, a role to be undertaken in concert with private corporations.

The economic strength of this province has always centred on the small businessmen and women, and many small and scattered communities about and around Saskatchewan. And chances are, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that in almost all of those communities there is an independent insurance agent or a motor licence issuer to represent SGI. That's an unparalleled record, and one that I must take considerable pride in as a member of this government, and that more than 460 SGI agents, and almost as many communities have shown. It's a show of SGI's importance to the private sector, and that more than 83 million in commissioned dollars were poured into those communities in 1982 alone. And that's not to mention the investments, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In 1982 more than \$1 million in Saskatchewan-based SGI investments contributed to, and is contributing to, our economic recovery.

I could go on, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I won't. It's not a record to condemn. It's one that we should be proud of, and I know I take pride in it, as do all members of this government. And it's a record that the opposition should be praising too. Instead, Mr.

Speaker, this House will be subjected to further opinions of areas we should take steps in, and I would hope that we can restore the efficiency and profitability and confidence to those Crown corporations.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to amend the motion. That this motion be amended by striking out all the words after the words 'That this Assembly' and substituting therefor the following:

supports the steps taken by the government to improve the efficiency and sensitivity to market conditions of provincial utilities, congratulates the government for freezing utility rates for one year to protect the people of Saskatchewan from the recessionary procedures in the Canadian economy, and expressing its confidence in the ability of public utilities review commission to ensure that all rate increases are fully justified.

The amendment to the motion is seconded by the member from Melville. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Speaker, usually I'm pleased to rise and speak in these debates, but today I don't do it with pleasure, I do it by necessity, because I feel it's necessary to dispel and correct misrepresentation that the opposition has alleged with respect to mismanagement in our government.

Mr. Speaker, I can't believe that the opposition would have the nerve to make such an accusation when you consider their record. Mr. Speaker, I want you to consider that from 1972 to 1982, under the administration of the former government, government spending was up 1,200 per cent or 12 times in 10 years from a budget of one-half billion to a budget of \$3 billion. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, taxpayers' wages in this province in the industrial index went up 300 per cent. Prices in this province went up 266 per cent. The minimum wage went up from \$1.25 per hour to \$4.25 per house, an increase of 340 per cent. And the net result of all this, Mr. Speaker, is that the people of Saskatchewan had more money when you consider that prices did not go up as fast as wages.

However, Mr. Speaker, what happened to the extra money they had? It went to the NDP government for their excessive spending and mismanagement, and now they have the audacity to accuse us of not being able to manage the government. Mr. Speaker, the examples are blatant. In the Department of Northern Saskatchewan we have recently been told that there are 1,100 mortgages in arrears.

Mr. Speaker, it is unbelievable that the opposition would even consider complaining about our management. We should consider, Mr. Speaker, by contrast, the operations of our government in only one year. We have reduced the number of government workers by approximately 10 per cent. This efficiency was accomplished without mass lay-offs, but through attrition. We have now got a 10 per cent more efficient government in this province, and as a result we can expect smaller tax increases. As a matter of fact, we had virtually no tax increases in the former budget, the budget that we presented and is now in dispute.

Mr. Speaker, we have implemented the public review commission on utilities. This

commission's duty is to consider whether or not any rate increases in utilities are justified. Formerly, Mr. Speaker, cabinet, the members opposite, decided arbitrarily what the increase would be, so that they could decide how much profit their pet crown corporations would make. And in an election year, Mr. Speaker, they didn't have any increases, because they were more interested in votes than efficiency.

Let us consider, Mr. Speaker, that with the respect to natural gas, these are the following increases from 1975: in 1975, 68 per cent, and the increase was implemented after the election; in 1976, 28 per cent; in 1977, 19 per cent; 1978, 19 per cent, and the increase was implemented after the 1978 election; 1979, 7 per cent; 1980, 29 per cent; 1981, 12 per cent; 1982, 18.6 per cent, which was implemented prior to the massive election defeat of the former government. But after the election in 1982, we froze the rates for the balance of 1982 as promised.

Mr. Speaker, it is now 1983, and the world does not stand still, and the citizens of this province realize that, with an inflation rate in 1982 of 8 per cent, and an inflation rate in 1983 of 6 per cent, that two years inflation is 14 per cent in itself. The citizens of this province realize that eventually the rates will have to increase. If you consider the rates going from gas to the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, we have . . . The residential rates increased in 1975, 25.6 per cent after the 1975 election; 12.1 per cent in 1976; 19.2 per cent in 1977; 0 per cent in 1978 (Why? Because in 1978 there was an election); in 1979, 7.3 per cent; in 1970, 9.6 per cent; in 1981, 12.7 per cent; and in 1982, no increase (Why? Because there was an election). And because of the election and our promise not to raise the rates in 1982, it is now 1983, and we have to consider this matter.

Mr. Speaker, when you consider that for the past eight years in this province rates have been going up anywhere from 0 to 25 per cent, and usually in the range of 14 per cent, that an increase in 1983 is not unreasonable and is not mismanagement.

With respect to telephones, Mr. Speaker, we go back as far as 1953, there was a 13 per cent increase; in 1979, a 10 per cent increase; 1960, an 8.6 per cent increase; in 1967, a 7.5 per cent increase; 1975, an 18.1 per cent increase (again, after the election); 1977, a 9 per cent increase; 1978, an 8 per cent increase; 1979, a 6 per cent increase; 1980, 6 per cent; 1981, 6 per cent on residences and 11 per cent on businesses. Surely, Mr. Speaker, it is not mismanagement to have annual rate increases in an inflationary economy.

Mr. Speaker, the pattern of our proposed increases is smaller than the pattern under the former government, and if anything, suggests efficiency.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, we should consider that in 1971, to pay his telephone bill, the average worker in Saskatchewan worked 88 minutes, and in 1982, to pay that same telephone bill, the average worker worked 45 minutes, or about half as long. In effect, telephones rates are half of what they used to be.

Mr. Speaker, we should also consider that the opposition continuously talks about the minimum wage, but for a minimum wage earner in 1971, that worker had to work 200 minutes to pay that worker's telephone bill; in 1982 that worker has to work exactly 100 minutes to pay that worker's telephone bill, which means that worker has to work half as long, and the telephone bill is half as much as it was in 1971. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, a small increase, while it may hurt in our pockets at this time, is not unreasonable and is necessary. I submit, Mr. Speaker, that if it is not necessary the public utilities review

commission will cut it down to what is necessary.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out these facts for the members of the opposition so that they cannot misrepresent the situation in this province. They also make reference to small business, unemployment, and the minimum wage. I submit, Mr. Speaker, that with respect to small business, a lot has been done in one year. There are 67 new firms in this province. There are 23 expanded firms in this province, all in one year. In the constituency of Melville, Mr. Speaker, in the town of Balcarres, we have an example of R.W. & Sons Builders, who have moved in from the province of Alberta. Mr. Speaker, we are open for business and people are coming. This is creating additional jobs.

In our Smalltown, Saskatchewan ads, 11 towns participated, resulting in seven new businesses and 20 others negotiating to open business in Smalltown, Saskatchewan. We have implemented a student hiring program which, this year, for once, takes into account small business and their hiring needs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — I must remind the member he's exhausted his 10 minutes.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I want to add a few words to this debate, and I want to add it in support of the main motion, and in opposition to the amendment. I want to refer to some of the remarks of the previous speakers. I particularly want to refer to the remarks of the speaker who asserted that the increase in SGI rates was 6.6 per cent. On the basis of the material filed with the public utilities review commission by the Saskatchewan Government Insurance itself, the rates amount to a 28 per cent increase when we take into account the increase in the deductible.

After all, what we are doing when we are selling insurance is selling protection, and if you wish to buy the same amount of protection as you had last year, it costs you 28 per cent more, and that surely is a 28 per cent increase. You can always buy less and pay less, but that hardly represents lowering of price. And if someone says, 'I will sell you something a good deal less than you bought last year at only 6 per cent more,' you know, and I know, Mr. Speaker, that we're not paying only 6 per cent more; we're paying quite a bit more on a unit basis.

I also want to refer to the remarks of the speaker who just took his seat, the hon. member for Melville. He pointed out what has been done with respect to the Saskatchewan Government Telephones, now Sask Tel, over the years of the 1960s and 1970s, and I want to use his figures in pointing out that between 1971 and 1982 Sask Tel rates increased by about half the rate of inflation, or half the rate of wages is perhaps the better way to put it. What he said was that an average worker in Saskatchewan only needed to work half as long to pay his telephone bill in 1982 as was true in 1971. And then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he referred it to minimum wage earners and pointed out that minimum wage earners in 1982 had to work a shorter period of time to pay their telephone bill than they did in 1971. And he, of course, is right. Because of the careful management of Sask Tel during the 1970s the costs to people in this province of telephone service rose less rapidly than their wages. And that was true of minimum wage earners up to 1982.

But it is no longer true, and every member of this House must acknowledge that two things have happened since this government took power. One, minimum wages have been frozen, and two, telephones rates have gone up. Telephone rates have gone up dramatically; minimum wages have been frozen; and accordingly, the trend that was continuous since 1971, when a minimum wage earner found it easier and easier to pay

his telephone bills, has now been reversed, and we have a situation where minimum wage earners find it harder to pay their telephone bills. There's no gainsaying the figures. They're there before us. And that is a simple indication of what is happening.

There are many people in this province who are facing economic difficulty, and many people who are facing economic difficulty because their utility rates are increasing. And I want, Mr. Speaker, in the time allotted to me, to point out where the Progressive Conservative Party stood when they were in opposition, and where they stand now. And I point out that in 1980, Mr. Taylor, who is now the hon. Member for Indian Head-Wolseley, took a position of saying that there ought to be a five-year freeze on utility rates. That was in 1980. He's forgotten all about that. That was on the *Hansard* on April 9th of 1980, *Hansard*, page 1552. That has been forgotten by members opposite. And he was referring to the fact that there was a five-year freeze in Manitoba by the Lyon government. He was calling upon our government to introduce a five-year freeze. But now he's on the treasury benches, and that proposal has been forgotten.

I have here a press release, 1982, put out by the same hon. member for Indian Head-Wolseley, Mr. Taylor, calling upon the government to provide power rates for community rinks at much lower rates, much lower rates for community rinks. But members opposite now are on the treasury benches, and that has been forgotten. I point out that in February of 1981, the now Premier, talking about utility rates, undertook to list some changes in utility rates that had happened since 1978. And this is a three-year list, and he lists his horrors: telephone rates have gone up 12 per cent over the last two years. How the people of Saskatchewan would like to think that telephone rates were only going to go up 12 per cent in the next two years. How they would like to think that. But I'm afraid they've virtually gone up 12 per cent now – I believe it's 10 per cent – and an interim increase of 10 per cent, by the government which was decrying the fact that they went up 12 per cent in two years.

Then he gets right down to liquor prices. And he said, 'The price of beer went up 65 cents a dozen,' says Mr. Devine. 'But the liquor board had a net income of 61 million in the last fiscal year. It's about time they absorbed some of these increased costs instead of passing them on to consumers in a never-ending spiral of higher prices.'

That's what the member for Estevan said when he was in opposition. What does he say now? Does he say that liquor prices shouldn't go up? He said, 'No.' He now says that 61 million isn't nearly enough, and he brings in a budget which proposes to take 125 million from liquor profits – the member for Estevan, the now Premier, in a press release issued on February 3rd, 1981, under the heading of 'Grant Devine, Leader, and Gary Lane, President, of the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan.'

An Hon. Member: — But he wasn't a member of the House when he said that.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — No, the current one.

I now turn to a further position taken by the then Conservative finance critic, Paul Rousseau, the current member for Regina South. And he was decrying the fact that utility rates were going to go up. And then he said this: he would implement a one-year freeze on utility rates, and he said, 'When the crown corporations have over a billion dollars in retained earnings, there's no reason why the people of Saskatchewan have to

pay higher and higher rates for public utilities.' Now that's what Mr. Rousseau said then.

I asked: do not the crown corporations still have a billion dollars in retained earnings? If not, what's happened to them? Their financial statements say they do have it. And yet, Mr. Rousseau is saying that is no longer a reason why we shouldn't increase utility rates. He is saying, while it's all right, that's a perfectly good reason for not increasing utility rates when the NDP are in office, when the Conservatives are in office, that is no longer an adequate reason, and of course we must have increases in utility rates. And that's his position.

I have here an advertisement by the Progressive Conservative Party, talking about families having faced tremendous increases in the past years in telephone, power, natural gas and insurance rates. All I can say is that most Saskatchewan families would be happy to think that they were facing the same increases in telephone, power, and natural gas rates that they faced two years ago, or three years ago. They would like to think that they were not going to face increases of 21 per cent to 23 per cent or 17 per cent or 28 per cent, which have been applied for by the utilities when they're under the management of the Progressive Conservative government.

And I have here an election advertisement by the member for Prince Albert. This one is not Prince Albert-Duck Lake but Prince Albert. And what is his pledge to the people? Well, he's going to hold the line on utility rates. He's going to hold the line on utility costs. Well, he's not doing a very good job on that, as indeed he does the same category of job he does on a good number of other things.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — The member has used up his 10 minutes.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Embury: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm delighted to enter the debate on the motion. I must admit to being somewhat surprised to find the motion being put forward by the opposition, as it's rarely we get a chance to comment on the past history of the public utilities in this province. But given the invitation I think we should take it up.

Mr. Speaker, I think I would begin with examining the past five years of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. And one wants to look at proposed rate increases and actual rate increases in the past. I think the member from Melville had broken these rate increases down and I would just quickly give you their combined increases. In 1977, the rate increase was 36.3 per cent; in 1978, 19 per cent; in 1979, 17.2 per cent; in 1980, 36.7 per cent; in 1981, 27.8 per cent.

But, Mr. Speaker, that really isn't the full problem. Mr. Speaker, the problem and the question that the opposition has posed is: why are the utilities now in the position that they have to ask for another increase in rates? And I would point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that in those years from 1977 to 1981 the total debt of Sask Power went from \$759 million to \$1,133 million, for a 69.9 per cent increase in five years.

Mr. Speaker, that has had one devastating effect on the operation of Sask Power, and that is that the net interest expense for the corporation rose from 1977 to 1982 by 144 per cent. Now, Mr. Speaker, on the surface the rate increases in those five years were bad enough, but obviously, Mr. Speaker, what we're looking at now and in the future is

to have to assume the liability for the increase in that debt; we have to service that debt; and I may say that a lot of that debt has been picked up at higher interest rates – actually quite a lot of it was picked up when rates were very high.

Mr. Speaker, that is probably the underlying problem with the utility, and that will be with us for some time. It's a problem I think that the present board will have to grapple with. We know that there are future projects that have to be built along with servicing past debts.

Mr. Speaker, I turn briefly to Sask Tel. There seems to be some difference of opinion in how one reports increases in Sask Tel. I think the member from Melville pointed out that in 1977, for instance, there are really two rates. There is your local rate and your toll rate. Some people for convenience like to break it down depending on who they are reporting to. Some people like to combine it. I won't get into the game of doing either.

I think that the member from Melville has pointed out the increases in the five years. But I do want to point out again in Sask Tel, the figures that are not so public, and that is that the debt for Sask Tel increased from \$309 million in 1977 to \$561 million in 1981, or an increase of 55 per cent. It is really that figure, Mr. Speaker, that will affect the operating picture for that corporation for some time to come, and has caused, and will cause in the future, pressure on rates.

Again, it is a matter of when the debt was picked up; what year and what interest rate. It again will be a matter for the present board to grapple with for some time.

I turn now to one of the favourite corporations, and that is SGI. The member from Melville has pointed out, Mr. Speaker, that in 1980 there was a 20 per cent increase in the rates, and in 1981, the average increase was 28 per cent. Mr. Speaker, that is not the picture. The picture of SGI is a picture of total collapse in management practice. I go back to 1979. In 1979, Mr. Speaker, there was no change in rates in SGI. In that year, Mr. Speaker, the corporation lost \$28 million, and borrowed \$30 million from the government, interest free.

In 1980, Mr. Speaker, in obviously an attempt to make up that history of management, there was a 20 per cent increase in rates. Despite that, there was another loss of \$20 million in 1980. The corporation borrowed a further \$38 million from the government, interest free. And, Mr. Speaker, I tend to listen with some amusement with the opposition's arguments on what is the real increase being asked for from PURC (public utilities review commission). When it comes to rate increase, vis-a-vis the deductible increases, because I might point out that in the two years that I just mentioned, that in 1980, when there was a 20 per cent increase, the deductible went from \$200 to \$300. And I am quite sure, Mr. Speaker, that in 1980, the 20, the deductible increase, were not included in the 20 per cent.

And again, Mr. Speaker, in 1981, when the average increase in the SGI rate was 28 per cent, the deductible went up another \$50. Mr. Speaker, I think that when the opposition wants to complain to the government today that our increase is actually much larger because of our deductible, it might be interesting to go back and include those deductible changes in with the increases that they put into effect in those days.

Mr. Speaker, I found that the opposition's arguments just don't carry a heck of a lot of sincerity to them. I think if you looked over the three utilities – I didn't look into the liquor board; I'm sorry, I didn't realize it was a utility – but when I look over what has

happened in Sask Power and Sask Tel and SGI in the last five years – I didn't go back 10 years – I really find that the arguments put forward today, that the opposition can't understand why there may be some rate increases, ring a little false. I think that the corporate history of those three corporations in the last five years and what's happened to their financial structure will indicate to anyone who reads them why there will be rate increases required.

I would also like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that unlike past practice, the rate increases that the government wishes to have is simply proposal. In other words, these rate increases have to be justified and have to be passed by the public utilities review commission. That is obviously a new procedure in Saskatchewan. I think it's a necessary procedure so that the corporations have to justify not only their rate increases, but they have to justify them in light of their present debt loads, servicing cost . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order. The member has used up all his 10-minute time period.

Mr. Lusney: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, also very pleased to get into this debate, Mr. Speaker, regarding the motion on public utilities.

Mr. Speaker, I was interested in hearing some of the comments of the members in this House, particularly the member for Regina Lakeview. And he said that he now, or this government now, has a utility board in place or a review commission in place that will review their utility rates and whether they are required or not, and that the corporation has to somehow justify the rate increases that they ask for.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I agree that this is what the utility review commission is supposed to be doing and will be doing. But if the corporation is in a situation, the situation that this government has brought it to at this point where it is going in debt, and after one year, every corporation has gone in debt in this province, then it is not hard to realize the fact that the corporation is going to be able to justify the kinds of increases that they are asking for. It is the pure mismanagement of this government that has created that kind of situation, Mr. Speaker, and the public utilities review commission will be forced to provide or allow the kinds of increases that are being asked for.

When you look at natural gas rates, the proposed rates for natural gas through SPC of 24 per cent, or power at 22 per cent, Mr. Speaker . . . Those are utilities that are used by every person in Saskatchewan. They have restricted or put a freeze on minimum wage earners. They have set levels for wage increases to about 6 or 7 per cent. And at the same time, Mr. Speaker, what they are doing is saying that they have to have increases in the public utilities of 22 or 24 or 28 per cent. And that, Mr. Speaker, cannot be justified when you are going to put a restriction on the people that have to pay that increase in the money that they can make through salaries or whatever, and at the same time say that they are justified in allowing those kinds of increases for the public utilities.

Farmers in particular, Mr. Speaker, use a lot of power, and now with the natural gas extensions that this government is saying they are doing, they will very likely, or had hoped to make use of the natural gas. But when you see increases of the kind that are being proposed now, you are going to find an industry out there, the industry of agriculture, and the farmers involved in it, that are going to have a difficult time because of circumstances, the price of grain, the so-called Crow rate which they may

lose, which will put a financial burden on them where they will not be able to pay the kind of increases that are being proposed for utilities. That is going to make it a little more difficult for the farmers of Saskatchewan to survive, and to be able to continue farming.

It is going to be difficult for senior citizens, Mr. Speaker, who are on a fixed wage. If they are on pension and have no other income they are going to find it difficult because increases in power, in natural gas, in telephones, are going to hit those people harder than anyone else in this province. And the members opposite when they were in opposition used to criticize the government of that day, that there should not be increases in utilities because the senior citizens, in particular, would be the ones to be affected mostly. And, Mr. Speaker, today we see that these same people that were critical at that time are now saying that there should be even a heavier burden placed on these senior citizens. That, Mr. Speaker, I think we should say is really a discredit to what they were saying when they were in opposition, and what they are doing now. It's a discredit to the kind of government that they were proposing they were going to provide for the people of Saskatchewan, because they are not providing that kind of government.

Many of the members have said that what should be done is that these utilities should be providing a service to the people at cost. And what is happening today? Are these people getting, the people of Saskatchewan getting the service at cost? No, Mr. Speaker. They are saying now that the utilities, the public utilities, the corporations have to make a profit. They are not saying that they should be providing the service to the people at cost any more.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that if they felt that the corporation should have been providing that service at cost in the past, then they should be saying now, that we don't need an increase of 24 or 22 or 19 or 28 per cent. They should be saying that we are going to provide that service to the people at as close to cost as possible, simply because of the economic situation in this province at this time. The people cannot afford to pay more at this time. If we were in prosperous times, yes, the people would maybe be prepared to accept some increase, a modest increase. But at a time when everybody is suffering financially, when the pressure is on them because of the economy, this government, instead of proposing the increases, should be saying that we are going to be holding them down as low as possible. But they are not saying that, Mr. Speaker.

That is why, I think, Mr. Speaker, that when the members get up and say that somehow the situation they're in right now is the fault of the former government, I find some difficulty in believing that. The debts have been within the corporations year after year after year, and the service has been provided at as reasonable a rate as possible with very modest increases. So that is going to continue. We will not see a corporation that will have no debts, so I think it is really foolhardy of the opposition to try and say that the people are going to believe that the fault or the situation of this, of the corporation's public utilities, the financial situation they are in now is the fault of the former government, because the people won't believe that.

The situation that these corporations are in today are simply the fact that this government was not able to manage those corporations the way they said they could. They have not been able to manage them in a way that they would be able to provide a service at a very reasonable rate to the people of Saskatchewan. And they will not be able to continue blaming the former government for their trouble. They have tended to do that, and they'll get away with it for one year. But the time is going to come and I think

the time is almost there when the people are going to say that you have been a government for a year, you are going into your second year and you will not be able to put the blame on someone else, because you are in power. You have the ability to make the necessary changes to live up to what you have been saying you will be able to do. And if those changes mean that that cost is going to be transferred . . . totally to the consumers and to the people of Saskatchewan, then maybe the people should be told that this is the direction that this government is going in. It is going in the direction of putting the total burden on those people that can least afford it.

That is what has been happening, Mr. Speaker, and I would venture to say that this is the kind of direction that we are going to see in the next three years from this government in Saskatchewan. We are going to see them going in the direction of continually transferring the costs and the burden onto the people of this province. And that, Mr. Speaker, I say will be unacceptable. It will be unacceptable because the people will not allow this government to continue to do that and try to make themselves look good in the process.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: — Order. You've used up your 10 minutes.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

PRIVATE BILLS

SECOND READINGS

No. 01 – An Act to provide for exemption from taxation of certain property of the Crossroads Pentecostal Assembly Corp.

Mr. Meagher: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to move An Act to provide for exemption from taxation of certain property of the Crossroads Pentecostal Assembly Corporation, be now read a second time and referred to the standing committee on private members' bills.

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and referred to the select standing committee on private bills.

Bill No. 02 – An Act to amend An Act to incorporate The German-English Academy of Rosthern

Mr. Katzman: — I move that Bill No. 02, An Act to amend An Act to incorporate The German-English Academy of Rosthern, be now read a second time and referred to the standing committee on private members' bills.

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and referred to the select standing committee on private bills.

Bill No. 03 – An Act to incorporate the Sisters of Mission Service

Mr. Folk: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to move that Bill No. 03, An Act to incorporate the Sisters of Mission Service, be now read a second time and referred to

the standing committee on private members' bills.

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and referred to the select standing committee on private bills.

Bill No. 03 – An Act to continue the incorporation of Athol Murray College of Notre Dame

Mr. Embury: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move that Bill No. 04, An Act to continue the incorporation of Athol Murray College of Notre Dame, be now read a second time and referred to the standing committee on private members' bills.

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and referred to the select standing committee on private bills.

MOTIONS

Resolution No. 5 – Provincial Water Committee

Mr. Gerich: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to stand in the House today to move the following resolution:

That this Assembly commends the government for establishing a special committee of cabinet ministers and MLAs to hear from the citizens of Saskatchewan their concerns and suggestions about the use of the water resource, and urges the government to continue to directly consult the people of the province on important questions.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the cabinet committee on water concerns was set up because our government recognized that water management is a major concern in this province. It concerns everyone living in Saskatchewan because we all want to ensure that our water is kept clean and unpolluted, and that there is quite an adequate supply of water for future generations – water for supplying the towns and cities of this province and the irrigation system for the production of food for the ever-growing population.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, because water is such an important issue, we went directly to the people of Saskatchewan to listen to what they had to say about it, and to consult with them. Our committee wanted grass roots input to effectively examine all existing and emerging water and waste-water issues relating to the importance that water resources play in health and the well-being of the people of Saskatchewan, and the province's economic stability and future development.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we wanted to identify the water concerns of the people living in this province with the eventual goal of forming a framework for a comprehensive water resource management policy, while, of course, taking into consideration some of the broader environmental and wildlife conservation concerns. With such a policy, it would become possible for local governments, for example, to deal effectively with ongoing and future problems, and therefore eliminate dealing with these problems merely on an ad hoc basis.

As it exists now, responsibility and programs for water and waste water are fragmented and involve many provincial government departments.

Mr. Speaker, our committee, headed by Urban Affairs minister, Paul Schoenhals,

travelled for two consecutive weeks throughout the province. The committee has held meetings in Saskatoon, North Battleford, Prince Albert, Rosetown, Swift Current, Yorkton, Esterhazy, Estevan, Moose Jaw and Regina. During the course of the hearings the committee listened to many individuals and spokesmen from major provincial organizations, as well as different mayors, reeves and council members.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the committee received more than 190 briefs and listened to 200 oral presentations from interested participants everywhere. The briefs were presented in an articulate and professional manner. Attendance was high in all the centres throughout the province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the committee found that the people of Saskatchewan had a lot to say. The committee learned that the people of Saskatchewan are concerned with the delays in funding from the municipal water assistance board. Concerns were voiced regarding municipal facilities, poor quality drinking water, water source shortages, and the limitations for the expansion of sewage treatment systems. Briefs were presented dealing with irrigation. Many people said they wanted more government help, information and permits for the right to use water for irrigation purposes.

Our concerns revolved around the wildlife federation and Ducks Unlimited – concern with water conservation due to the province's semi-arid climate, and looking for better ways to conserve and manage water. There were also suggestions of providing incentives for farmers to keep water on their land.

Some groups discussed problems they experienced in having to deal with a very large number of agencies that are involved with water-related questions and suggested a consolidation of these agencies.

The people of Swift Current, Carrot River, and the Qu'Appelle Valley raised questions concerning flooding, as they have experienced such difficulties in living at the bottom of a drainage area that is often flooded.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, many ideas were brought forward by the people of Saskatchewan, to give us a better understanding of water-related issues. That input is essential for the proper assessment and management of this province's water supply and river systems, and which is critical to the future development in the areas of domestic, agriculture, industrial and recreational use.

The hearings on the water concerns in this province will result in the formation of a water management board, to ensure the development of adequate supplies of high quality drinking water, and the establishment of measures to see that waste disposal systems from different hamlets, villages and cities do not upset the eco-system of the surrounding rural areas.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is evident that the cabinet committee on water concerns, and the Government of Saskatchewan, should be commended for their work and the people of Saskatchewan for their input.

I now ask the member from Morse, Harold Martens, to second the motion. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'd like to express a number of

concerns that I have relating to the value of the people travelling around the province, and I'd like to address the Assembly today in relating some of the things that I think are important.

I first of all want to identify some of the provincial responsibilities as outlined through history and through various aspects that the former administration were a part of.

I'm going to take you to an agreement that was initiated by the NDP administration. It's an agreement that's called the Canadian-Saskatchewan Interim Subsidiary Agreement on Water Development for Regional Economic Expansion and Drought-proofing, and it deals basically with an agreement that was set up in 1974. And it deals with a number of things that I think are important, and I think that the people of Saskatchewan need to have an understanding of where we've come from, and how we're doing. And relating this to the committee travelling around the province, I think it's important that we set a base or ground rules for what we want to identify. An agreement was set up on February 11th, 1974 which says like this:

Whereas Canada and the province have entered into a general development agreement dated February 11th, 1974 under which they agree to co-operate jointly in selecting initiatives for the economic and socio-economic development of Saskatchewan; and whereas Canada and the province recognize the constraints that current levels of water supply impose on provincial economic performance; and whereas Canada and the province recognize further the destructive effects on the socio-economic and economic life of the province; and whereas Canada and the province, to support the objectives of the general development agreement, have identified a number of water development and flood damage reduction measures that can be taken to strengthen economic performance, and have agreed that there is a major need to study the scope and scale of water development that may be required to support economic growth in the long term . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that was initiated in 1974. And what have we had in water development in the ensuing years is a negative view of what ought to have been done. This agreement was later signed in 1979 by the minister of environment for Canada, the minister in charge of the regional economic expansion, and for the province of Saskatchewan, the minister of environment, the minister of municipal affairs, and the minister of agriculture. The minister of industry, trade and commerce was also there to act on behalf of the province. So we had four ministers of the Crown for the province of Saskatchewan dealing with an issue that, I think, is of vital importance.

I would like to point out some of the other things that are in this agreement that I think are important, because I really think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we had none of those things done during that time. We had almost no development during that time so it would indicate that we weren't planning on anything in water. And I think that we need to identify some of these issues as were identified by the people who travelled through the provinces, and the ministers that we had – Urban Affairs, the Minister of the Environment, the Minister of Rural Affairs, and the Legislative Secretary to the Minister of the Environment – travelled through the province and they identified those issues that needed to be addressed. And basically they were addressed by the people of Saskatchewan as being problems that they needed to have in a way to present to the cabinet that would have a measure of success.

Now in this agreement that the province of Saskatchewan under the former administration set up with the Government of Canada there were some purposes and objectives. And I think they're really good. They identify the needs; they identify the objectives. They're good but they didn't do anything with them. And I think it's an indication of exactly where the need was, the motivation to develop these kind of objectives. The purpose of this agreement is to enable Canada and the province in accordance with the objectives and strategy, in outline, to improve the potential for economic and socio-economic development in Saskatchewan by alleviating the constraints imposed on economic performance by recurrent water shortages, droughts and flooding.

Mr. Speaker, in the spring of 1982 we had a total of \$9 million go out of this province as a measure of providing freight assistance to the people of Saskatchewan for feed that they hauled into this province. Now that was signed in 1974 and they didn't have anything done by 1982. I think it's a serious indictment of what the former administration thought of the things that they signed and the things that they did.

Canada and the province agree that the implementation development opportunity shall be according to the strategy outline, and I'm going to outline some of them. First of all, to develop a strategy to improve the effectiveness of future water management activities, especially in the drought-sensitive areas. Drought-sensitive areas in the last few years have been all over this province, Mr. Speaker. In the east, north of the No. 1 Highway, we had drought problems last year. You go down south, we have them just about every year. And these things have not been addressed by the former administration. And I think the people travelling around the area, we're addressing them, we're listening to what the people have to say, and I think it was a good opportunity for them to learn of the variations that we have in the province of Saskatchewan.

Another item that they have here is to provide analysis into the availability of and requirements for water in selected areas and to undertake the construction of such water supply and delivery schemes as may be identified as being consistent with the intent of this agreement. They've had an agreement in place since 1974 to provide initiatives to develop a water supply for the city of Regina and Moose Jaw. They've had it available to them since 1974 when they initially signed this agreement. But what have they done with it? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The Minister of Agriculture is asking me to lay the wood to it. Well, I'll go down to the Souris River basin. The review . . . Here it says right here:

To undertake in Saskatchewan, in the Saskatchewan portion of the Souris River basin, the review and improvement of existing flood forecasting, warning and emergency action programs, the purchase of flood-prone lands and the construction of such flood damage reduction and channel improvement works as can be identified as being viable and consistent with this agreement, and applicable provisions of the Canada-Saskatchewan general agreements respecting flood damage reduction through flood area management.

And this agreement gave them the opportunity to do that then, but what has happened since then? Nothing. And this agreement was initiated in 1974. What have they done?

Nothing. I'll just go on to some more of the things that need to be identified with what we're doing in relation to what has been done. The management group of the people involved in the administration of this agreement

... shall be responsible for overall management and the administration of this agreement, and its duties shall include the following ...

They've listed a lot of things here, but one I want to highlight. They were supposed to

... establish advisory and co-ordinating committees as required for requesting the presence of representatives from other departments or agencies, including non-governmental bodies where it is considered that their presence would contribute to the effectiveness of the management group.

And that is exactly what our ministers and our Legislative Secretary who travel the province did. They went to these people and asked them – to the cities and the towns, the rural municipalities, the farmers, the ranchers in the area – 'What do you think you need to develop the water in your area?' And they went there. They asked them for it, and they have already begun what should have been happening as early as 1974.

Further, some of the requirements that were supposed to be met were that the capital projects implemented under the PFRA or the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act:

Contracts shall include an outline of the terms and conditions under which the province will assume responsibility for it.

When was the first time we heard about the PFRA in the province of Saskatchewan? It was after April 26th when we had the PFRA working together with the province of Saskatchewan. And I want to outline a number of things that I have thought are pertinent to this discussion. It's obvious the opposition doesn't think they are. But anyway, I want to relate to you some of the things that deal with water and the opportunity that was there, and it was never dealt with.

On March 31st, 1981, the regional economic development program of the federal government, which is DREE, issued or had a committee meeting where they identified some of the problems in relation to the activities of the PFRA who was under their jurisdiction. And we had a number of members of parliament at that committee hearing, and as we go along you will understand why I'm indicating this to the member from Shaunavon. There was a PFRA representative from Regina here, Mr. Jim Collinson, the general director, Dr. Harry Hill, and we've heard a lot about him recently.

Here's where I think I want to point out the lack of concentration by the former administration in dealing with issues that are of vital importance to those people down in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, and in Shaunavon, and the Morse constituency, and the Maple Creek constituency. I think it's very vital to them. Mr. Neil, who is a member of parliament for Moose Jaw, in speaking to the committee, had this to say:

It brings me to my next point which is the question of irrigation in Saskatchewan in particular. There is more and more interest being shown, particularly in my constituency around the Riverhurst area, regarding the development of irrigation. I appreciate that the provinces have been involved for a number of years, but I'm wondering if there is co-ordination and co-

operation with the PFRA, who over the years has developed a certain expertise. What co-ordination and co-operation is there between the provinces and the PFRA? Are you in consultation with, or is the province going its own way, and you are sort of backed away from it?

Mr. Collinson: - Mr. Chairman, I would make a general comment and ask Dr. Hill to comment further. First of all, in Manitoba we have a joint agreement part of which deals with trying to assess the impacts of drought, and what can be done to alleviate them somewhat. A similar study is included in an agreement with Saskatchewan. In Manitoba, we are about ready to get underway with a study, but in the case of Saskatchewan, we have not quite got that far yet. (That was in 1981, and they didn't get anywhere with it.)

We are also looking at some irrigation possibilities in Manitoba. In Saskatchewan, the major irrigation potential that exists there, of course, is associated with the South Saskatchewan dam project, and under the 1958 agreement there was an understanding that the dam would be built by the PFRA, and the irrigation potential on the west side, the pumping and major facilities, would be developed by the province. To date, that latter activity has not been carried forward.

And that's the implication we have as to regards to what the opposition were doing with their opportunity when they were in government, and that's wrong. Now we're going to continue, and Dr. Hill has this to say:

We, of course, work closely with the Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture. We often contribute to each other's technical work and projects that are developing. We often supply the engineering expertise, and in projects we are developing, they often supply some of the soils and other expertise.

So there's quite a close technical working relationship between Saskatchewan Agriculture and PFRA. Mr. Neil from Moose Jaw:

Has there been any discussion as to any possible watersheds where dams could be constructed for the purpose of building water supplies in Saskatchewan specifically for the purpose of irrigation, or are the provincial government and yourselves concentrating primarily on the Gardiner Dam-Diefenbaker Lake area?

And here's Dr. Hill's reply:

We have not undertaken any dam studies in Saskatchewan lately aimed at irrigation as a co-operative venture with Saskatchewan, or indeed, by others. The same is not as true in Alberta, where we are undertaking technical studies with the province of Alberta aimed mostly at irrigation, and as Mr. Collinson mentioned, the same is true in Manitoba.

Mr. Neil: - I would gather then that you would be prepared to carry out studies and supply technical assistance at the request of a province. You would not, for example, initiate on your own, say, within the province of Saskatchewan because it might be outside your competence or jurisdiction. Is this correct?

And Dr. Hill says, basically, yes. So the province of Saskatchewan was not carrying out any extensive work in relation to its water program from the time that they signed the agreement, which I indicated before, till today, or till 1982, when they had the election called. And basically, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that's the attitude that they conveyed about one of the most important functions of the potential of water in the province of Saskatchewan.

We have, Mr. Deputy Speaker, some things that I want to continue to mention that relate directly to the water hearings . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And if the hon. Member from Regina Centre would leave, there would be nobody left in the opposition.

We have had the opportunity of the Minister of Urban Affairs, the Hon. Paul Schoenhals from Saskatoon Sutherland, being chairman of the meeting that I attended, one of the meetings in my constituency, and I was pleased with the way that it was handled.

In fact, I would like to say this, and I was hoping the member from Shaunavon was going to be here, because one of the things that one of the aldermen from the city of Swift Current said to me . . . He had been speaking with a gentleman from the Val Marie area which is from the Shaunavon constituency. They were talking to each other, and he said, one to the other: 'Do you think this is just window-dressing? Do you just think they're travelling around the country just because they want to get what people feel, and then they just ignore it?' And the gentleman from Val Marie said, 'This is the first time anybody's ever travelled around and asked us.'

And he was upset that somebody would even think that we were just doing it for window-dressing. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that's an indication of how the people felt about the tour that these ministers took, and I think it's important to identify that.

The terms of reference for the cabinet committee in dealing . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . It's too serious to be cheering, Mr. Member from Regina Centre. The terms of reference for the cabinet committee, in relating to the problems, were to examine all existing and emerging water and waste water issues relating to . . . And I think that's an important feature to identify.

The city of Moose Jaw has identified the problem of waste water as an important and integral part of its relationship to the rural part of Saskatchewan, and they have set up irrigation development there. The city of Swift Current have also set up development in irrigation with their waste water, and the research station in Swift Current is also monitoring the situation there. I think it's a start in the direction where we have the cities and the rural parts of Saskatchewan working together . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

They weren't supposed to examine it. They were supposed to examine the importance that water resources play in the health and well-being of the people of Saskatchewan. And the hon. Member, when he was told by the Speaker of the House to sit down before, when he was addressing his water container, was addressing one of the problems as it relates to health, and to the various areas that this government is addressing, together with the cities and with the rural municipalities.

The other thing that relates to the mandate that the committee was given was the province's economic stability and future development.

I had an opportunity just recently to speak to a gentleman that is touring in Alberta, in regards to developing feedlots. And in relation to that, one of the things that he said was that wherever you have economic development in Alberta, in the rural part of Alberta, you have irrigation. And that provides a lot of economic stability, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That is something that the former administration just didn't find it in their hearts to develop.

Another item that they were supposed to address was to review the water issues and water management problems of a broad cross-section of Saskatchewan users. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they travelled throughout the province – 10 different locations. In two weeks they demonstrated that they were easy to get along with; they worked hard; and even in spite of the fact that we had a session on at the same time, they were out there working in the province, identifying where the problems were in relation to urban problems, in relation to the various areas like that.

They were supposed to identify problems in the following areas: in municipal, domestic, agricultural, industrial, power, utilities, recreational, and environmental interests and requirements. These were areas that they were supposed to address. In the meeting that I attended, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they did address those. And the people from the area did address those. And I am sure that they did that throughout the province.

The issues and problems must be relevant to all the major water basins of Saskatchewan, including both ground water, surface water sources for development. And I think that it's time that we identified what those people did over there in their term of service in relation to what we are doing. We're going around asking the people what needs to be done, how do you develop this area, or that area. And these four gentlemen, as they travelled throughout the province, helped to identify that role that the government of this province is supposed to be taking.

Now they were supposed to also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, assess both the current and emerging water problems with respect to the adequacy of existing physical water resources, both quantity and quality. And I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we need to continue to further address this. I know that the Minister of Urban Affairs is addressing it in relation to the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw, and I know that he's going to continue to do that.

The second thing in assessing the current and emerging water problems was the economic and financial implication of water users. Mr. Deputy Speaker, throughout the past few years we have had indications from various areas throughout the country of Canada and the United States about what the effect in the economic stability that proper water use has. In the areas around the northern United States, the relationship to the economic stability for an area, the agricultural producer gets around 35 per cent of the return of the investment, and the area surrounding gets 65 per cent of the economic benefits. In southern Alberta, in the Taber area, the ratio is 85 to 15 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to address that issue, that the people in Saskatchewan benefit when there is water development. And I think that it's very vital to the issues that were addressed by the members who travelled throughout the province.

Another area that they were supposed to assess was the existing institutional and regulatory problems respecting management, planning and delivery from current water management organizations. Mr. Speaker, they have been doing that and they are

continuing to do that.

And so with these remarks, I would like to conclude with some of the things that I think that they, as an overall wrap-up to the things that they did. The question of water and waste water management is perhaps, one of the most important issues which has evolved over the past number of years. We in Saskatchewan live in a semi-arid environment and the supply of good quality water is even more important here than in many other climates.

Upon assuming office, the new government committed to attempt to aid individuals and municipalities in improving their water supplies. This government is an open government, one which believes that input from the public, from individuals, is crucial in attempting to solve problems such as a proper water management. For this reason, the Premier of the province, the member from Estevan, announced the establishment of the cabinet committee on water concerns, a committee comprised of the Minister of Urban Affairs, the Minister of Rural Affairs, the Minister of Environment and the Legislative Secretary to the Minister of Environment from Arm River. This committee travelled to 10 communities throughout the province in two weeks and held public meetings during which some 250 written and oral presentations were made from the public. Written submissions were also accepted if mailed after hearings, and these were also received by the committee.

The results of these hearings was a clear understanding of the complexity and variety of inter-related water and waste water problems. I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, those are some of the things that need to be addressed and continue to be addressed by this administration, which is obvious to me that it wasn't addressed from the previous one. Problems such as water quality and quantity for human consumption, water for irrigation, flood control and drainage, maintenance of wildlife habitat and water for industrial use were identified. A report containing several recommendations for action will be studied by the cabinet. Already one new initiative has been undertaken, that being the announcement in the throne speech of a crown utility for water, positive action based on consultation with the public and acting on that consultation.

This type of positive action, Mr. Deputy Speaker, typifies the commitment of this government to directly consult the people of the province on important questions which affect their daily lives. And therefore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a great honour for me to second this motion that identifies this as something that's commendable by the Government of Saskatchewan.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much, thank you very much. I see I've generously been provided with another member for the opposition here. Nice to have some applause.

Mr. Speaker, when I take a look at the water today, I know just how relevant to the problem that committee was. Anybody can talk a problem to death, but it's apparent that nothing has been done and nothing will be done, and I frankly don't intend to give that committee a great deal of relevancy by talking about it. At some point in time, we may want to get back into the subject. For that reason I'm going to ask for leave to adjourn the motion.

Debate adjourned.

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 16 – An Act to amend The Public Utilities Review Commission Act

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am not going to tax the patience of the members long. The disaster has swirled around the ears of this government for long enough; I'm not sure there's a great deal that's new to say. But I do want to move this bill.

I want to remind members opposite of the history of this affair. It seems necessary to remind members opposite that this was not an NDP creation. This was a Conservative government platform, a Conservative Party platform. We said, with respect to public utilities, 'When the cabinet makes the decision, at least there's accountability, because they get elected.' You people said, 'But the discussion takes place behind closed doors.' The argument raged on; you won the argument – at least you got elected. So you implemented the bill and we voted in favour of it.

I would say to members opposite though, if you're going to have a public utilities review commission, at least make it effective. There's no point in going to the very considerable expense of having a public utilities review commission if you aren't prepared to let it make the decision.

The circus which has surrounded the increase in the deductible for SGI scarcely needs to be recalled. Suffice it to recount that the minister said that the SGI was going to ask for a 6.7 per cent increase. I say to the member from Swift Current that nobody believed that. We all began to wonder. Nobody believed that; we all began to wonder how on earth he could get away with a 6.7 per cent increase.

He was asked, outside the House, he was asked if he was going to increase the deductible. His answer was, 'No.' A couple of days later his very helpful general manager announces in a scrum outside public accounts that they are going to increase the deductible. The minister was asked again if in fact he understood it properly, and he admitted that perhaps he hadn't, and yes, they were going to increase the deductible. Having thus been led backwards into announcing an increase in the deductibles, the minister now defends it as if he was standing on holy ground.

I suggest to government members, that if you intend the public utilities review commission to control costs, they must control the service as well. As has been said so often, there is no point in controlling the price of a chocolate bar if you don't control the size. What you have brought upon your heads by this incredible incompetence that has been displayed is that you have emasculated the public utilities review commission; although I may say that the chairman has done a neat job in end-running the minister, because if the minister is going to increase the deductible, the chairman isn't going to grant you any interim increase – the only crown corporation singled out for that sort of treatment.

You have, I think, attempted, although unsuccessfully perhaps, to play havoc with the credibility of the public utilities review commission. The chairman has done an excellent job of defending his territory. You bring upon the public utilities review

commission – a very considerable expense – four firms of lawyers all dining at public expense, all involved, and I'm sure all presenting elaborate briefs, because they believe that the Minister of Finance's pockets have no bottom, and they will work accordingly.

I suggest to the government opposite that you could restore a measure of your own credibility by admitting you were wrong. You could restore the credibility of the public utilities review commission, and you could save the taxpayer a considerable expense by passing this amendment. If you hadn't been led backwards into the position you're in, you would not have done it anyway. Why not admit you made a mistake? Why not pass this simple amendment – save the taxpayers a very considerable expenditure?

With that, I will move second reading of An Act to amend The Public Utilities Review Commission Act.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Only a couple of things, Mr. Speaker. I find it somewhat strange that the members opposite after . . . what I believe . . . members opposite . . . After, I suppose, three years in opposition, constant requests for a public utilities review commission coming from the opposition at that point in time . . . Every time was it was a bad system. Every time it was not worthy to even look at; costs way too much money.

But people had the input that they fully needed, and that they were elected, and that's what had to happen. I now see the member opposite, or I take from what the member opposite is saying, is that they were wrong. They were wrong when they were in government to deny a public utilities review commission.

I take it all the arguments advanced in the numerous private members' days, the numerous arguments advanced by the former member from Regina Wascana, who used to go through a history lesson for us on the development of Sask Power, and that a public utilities review commission had no place in Saskatchewan government, had no place in Saskatchewan politics, would be the height of irresponsibility . . . I take it the members opposite have now changed their view from that. They now support it, that they have seen the errors of their ways in the past with regard to that, at least.

Now I'm concerned, and I think we all should be concerned, that now they're going to try to destroy that public utilities review commission. They're going to try to destroy it – piecemeal at a time, a chunk here, a chunk there – because they honestly don't believe in it, honestly don't believe in it. I would simply call on all the members of this Assembly not to support this particular amendment, and defeat this amendment.

Motion negatived.

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Debatable)

Return No. 1

Mr. Shillington moved, seconded by Mr. Lingenfelter, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 1 showing:

For the period May 8, 1982 to March 18, 1983: all recommendations made by the minimum wage board to the Minister of Labour respecting the provincial minimum wage.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, on this particular motion for return, it is our feeling that we should not break from past practice and it's our understanding that when this information was asked for by the previous opposition of the previous administration the information was never provided. It was always voted down, and our department hasn't changed its mind from the previous administration and they feel they have no obligation to supply this information. With those thoughts in mind, Mr. Speaker, I would urge all members to vote against this particular motion.

Motion negatived.

Return No. 2

Mr. Shillington moved, seconded by the member for Shaunavon, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 2 showing:

For the period May 8, 1982 to March 18, 1983: (1) the total number of charter aircraft rented by every department, crown corporation or agency of the Government of Saskatchewan; (2) the cost of each department, crown corporation or agency for each charter flight; (3) the starting and destination points of each charter flight; (4) the number of passengers on each charter flight; (5) the names of each passenger on each charter flight.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I'm going to offer an amendment to this particular motion. Firstly, the amendment will alter the motion in three ways, the first being the date. Return no. 8 from the last session, Mr. Speaker, provided for this information to be tabled for the period May 8, '82 to November 26, '82, and so we're altering the date to provide the information from there on. The second: section (5) is deleted because names of passengers on charter flights is sometimes unavailable and sometimes in fact confidential. Examples would be prospective clients of SMDC or whatever.

Section (3) is deleted because that information is often unavailable. Mining camp maintenance and flights often carry miners back from camp without a proper flight record being kept. In some cases a private carrier may have that information on their logs, but the government doesn't keep a record of passengers on freight flights.

With that in mind, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance, that motion for return no. 2 be amended to read as follows:

For the period November 27, 1982 to March 18, 1983: (1) the total number of charter aircraft rented by every department, crown corporation or agency of the Government of Saskatchewan; (2) the cost to each department, crown corporation or agency for each charter flight; (3) the starting and destination points of each charter flight.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 3

Mr. Shillington moved, seconded by the member for Shaunavon, that an order of

the Assembly do issue for return no. 3 showing:

For the period of May 8, 1982 to March 18, 1983 the total amount paid to the law firm of Pedersen, Norman, McLeod and Todd of Regina by any department, crown corporation and agency of the Government of Saskatchewan.

Motion agreed to.

Return No. 4

Mr. Shillington moved, seconded by Mr. Lingenfelter, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 4 showing:

For the period of May 8, 1982 to March 18, 1983: (1) the total number of television sets purchased by any department, crown corporation or agency of the Government of Saskatchewan; (2) the cost of each television set; (3) the name of each company from which each television set was purchased; (4) if tenders were let for purchase of the television sets; (5) the physical location of each television set; (6) the name and title of the official for whose benefit the television set was purchased.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — This motion will also be amended in three ways. First, the date alteration to prevent overlap. Secondly, amended to exclude sets purchased from trust fund moneys, to maintain the confidentiality of the minister-ward relationship. Third, item (6) deleted because revenue, supply and services doesn't have that information. They purchase sets for departments but don't keep track of who is using it.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance, that the motion for return no. 4 be amended to read as follows:

For the period November 27, 1982 to March 18, 1983: (1) the total number of television sets purchased by any department, crown corporation or agency of the Government of Saskatchewan, excepting those purchased from trust fund moneys for which a minister is the trustee; (2) the cost of each television set; (3) the name of each company from which each television set was purchased; (4) if tenders were let for purchase of the television sets; (5) the physical location of each television set.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 5

Mr. Shillington moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 5 showing;

For the period May 8, 1982 to March 18, 1983: (1) the total number of trips made by Executive Council aircraft; (2) the starting and destination points for each trip; (3) the names of each passenger for each trip.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — This motion's going to be amended as well, unless you don't

want the amendment. I'm prepared to deal with it either way. Because if we deal with it in the way that it's tabled, Executive Council aircraft do not exist. The aircraft are, in fact, owned by the department of revenue, supply and services, and if you want it to go this way, we'll let it go this way. If you want me to amend it, I will . . . (inaudible interjections) . . .

Okay. The amendment, Mr. Speaker, will deal with that, firstly, to change the motion to read: air services owned by the department of revenue, supply and service for the use of Executive Council, firstly. And secondly, amend the third section as it relates to names of passengers on each trip. We will provide the number of passengers instead of the names. And that is consistent, Mr. Speaker, with past practices, number one. And passengers' names on charter flights, Mr. Speaker, are confidential, because in fact, quite often passenger lists include wards of ministers, prospective clients, participants in disability programs, etc.

So, Mr. Speaker, the amendment will read as follows, and I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance, that motion for return no. 5 be amended to read as follows:

For the period May 8, 1982 to March 18, 1983: (1) the total number of trips made by executive air services; (2) the starting and destination points for each trip; (3) the number of passengers for each trip.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Return No. 6

Mr. Shillington moved, seconded by Mr. Lingenfelter, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 6 showing:

Regarding the hiring of defeated political candidates: (1) for the period May 8, 1982 to March 18, 1983 a list of all individuals employed by any department, crown corporation or agency of the Government of Saskatchewan who are defeated federal and provincial Progressive Conservative candidates; (2) the department, crown corporation or agency in which each individual is employed; (3) the annual salary of each individual.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, in its present form, I'm going to ask all members to vote against this particular resolution. There is a similar resolution on the previous session's order paper, and it as well was voted down. In order that an accurate answer could be provided as all . . . well we must be back to 1867 to deal with elections and federal governments that have turned over, and provincial governments that have turned over, and if the government insists . . . I mean if the opposition insists, they could bring in another motion setting out with some degree of accuracy exactly what it is they want — if you want it for this year, or if you want it for last year; do you want it back to 1971? If you want it for all political parties, I think that yours would outnumber ours today, but in any event, Mr. Speaker, I would urge all members to vote this one down.

Motion negatived on the following recorded division.

YEAS – 4Lingenfelter
Shillington

Koskie

Lusney

NAYS – 31Muller
Berntson
Klein
Schoenhals
Sutor
Glauser
Smith (Moose Jaw South)
Rybchuk
Maxwell
Zazelenchuk
FolkBirkbeck
Sandberg
Katzman
Smith (Swift Current)
Sveinson
Schmidt
Hopfner
Gerich
Embury
JohnsonAndrew
Garner
Currie
Weiman
Sauder
Parker
Martens
Domotor
Hepworth
Dutchak

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.