

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
May 5, 1983

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Standing Committee on Non-Controversial Bills

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yeah. As chairman of the standing committee on non-controversial Bills, I have to present the first report of the committee which is as follows:

Your committee met and I was elected as chairman (notwithstanding my lack of knowledge of the rules, and I thank you very much). The member for Moose Jaw South was elected as vice-chairman.

As chairman of the non-controversial Bills committee, I wish to Report Bill No. 23, An Act to amend The Human Tissue Gift Act, as being non-controversial.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that second reading, and consideration in committee of the whole on the said Bill be waived.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that the said Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a third time.

Mr. Shillington: — I wish to report Bill No. 24, An Act to amend The Teachers' Life Insurance (Government Contributory) Act, as being non-controversial.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that second reading, and consideration in committee of the whole on the said Bill be waived.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move the Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agree to and Bill read a third time.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, I wish to report Bill No. 25, An Act to amend The Teachers' Superannuation Act, as being non-controversial.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that second reading, and consideration in committee of the whole on the said Bill be waived.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move the Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a third time.

Mr. Shillington: — I wish to report Bill No. 26, an Act to amend The Change of Name Act, as being non-controversial.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that second reading, and consideration in committee of the whole on the said Bill be waived.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that the said Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a third time.

Mr. Shillington: — I wish to report Bill No. 30, An Act to amend An Act to provide a Superannuation Allowance to a Certain Former Member of the Legislative Assembly, as being non-controversial.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that second reading, and consideration in committee of the whole for the said Bill be waived.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move the said Bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a third time.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, I wish to report Bill No. 34, An Act to amend The Workers' Compensation Act, 1979, as being non-controversial.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that second reading, and consideration in committee of the whole on the said Bill be waived.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that the said Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a third time.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, I wish to report Bill No. 35, An Act to amend The Rural Municipal Secretary Treasurers Act, as being non-controversial.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that the second reading, and consideration in committee of the whole on the said Bill be waived.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move the said Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a third time.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, I wish to report Bill No. 37, An Act to amend The Credit Union Act, as being non-controversial.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that second reading, and consideration in committee of the whole of the said Bill be waived.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move the said Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a third time.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, I wish to report Bill No. 39, an Act to repeal The Mining Associations Act, as being non-controversial.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that second reading, and consideration in committee of the whole on the said bill be waived.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move the said Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to an Bill read a third time.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, I wish to report Bill No. 40, an Act to repeal The Artificial Insemination (Animals) Act, as being non-controversial.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that second reading, and consideration in committee of the whole on said Bill be waived.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move the said Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a third time.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, I wish to report Bill No. 41, An Act respecting the Department of Education, as being non-controversial.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that second reading, and consideration in committee of the whole of the said Bill be waived.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move the said Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to and bill read a third time.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Speaker, your committee considered the following Bill and agreed to report the same as being controversial, that is Bill No. 36, An Act to Amend the Education Act (No. 2).

Mr. Speaker: — Bill No. 36 — second reading, next session.

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

Mr. Engel: — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure today to introduce to you, and through you to this House, on behalf of my colleague, who I'm sure is sorry he's not here today to meet with these fine young people. But they are a class of grade 7 and 8 students from Admiral, Saskatchewan. They are accompanied by their teacher, Don Friesen, and their bus driver, Wally Cowan. Welcome to this Assembly and I hope you enjoy the rest of the proceedings, as you can stay. And I'm looking forward to meeting you at 2:30, okay?

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Government's Position on Pepin Plan

Mr. Engel: — Mr. Speaker, there are dozens of questions which my colleagues and I could ask today, questions about legal aid, changes to the Saskatchewan Dental Plan, the closure of Souris Valley mine, job creations, but I believe, Mr. Speaker, and I'm pleased to say that my colleagues agree that there are two overriding issues that concern the people of Saskatchewan today: number one, the Saskatchewan government's official position on the Pepin plan, and number two, the exorbitant salaries being paid to the Premier's personal staff. Since ministerial statements . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please! This is question period. If the member has a question, I would ask him to get to it. Speech-making is not allowed at this time of the day.

Mr. Engel: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wasn't making a speech. I was trying to tell you that since ministerial statements and Executive Council estimates are to be next two items of business this afternoon, I am happy to say that I have achieved the agreement of my colleagues to now move to the item of ministerial statements. I now call upon the Minister of Agriculture to stand up and tell this Assembly what the official position is of the Saskatchewan government with respect to the Pepin plan.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I take that to mean that the opposition has waived question period on the Pepin proposal. You tell me what the Pepin proposal is and I'll make a ministerial statement. Obviously the legislation isn't tabled yet and I understand won't be till next week. And I'm not buying a pig in a poke. When I see the legislation, I'll comment on it.

Mr. Engel: — Mr. Speaker, the minister's incredible statement today that he doesn't have the Pepin announcement that they're making the four changes and that there's nothing in there to prevent variable rates, there's nothing in there to remove the cap of

31 million tonnes; there's nothing in the Pepin announcement what the link will be between the grain prices and freight rates . . . So stand up here and tell us: whose side are you on? Whose side are you on? Are you the one that I have been saying you're dickering and tinkering with the Pepin plan? Or are you one of those who will stop this destructive plan at all costs?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I have over the last few months seen several news releases. I've heard several rumours. I have in fact even seen a couple of drafts of the proposed Bill to go before the House of Commons. I have yet to see the Bill, or even close to the last draft of a Bill that would go before the House of Commons. Obviously I have some concern about taking news releases and rumours as being the full story. I will comment on the Pepin plan when I see the legislation tabled, and when I've had an opportunity to analyze that legislation, and not before. Because to do so would be buying a pig in a poke, and we have no intention of doing that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Engel: — Mr. Speaker, The Minister of Agriculture is a very big fellow. He's far too big . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Do you have a question? Supplementary questions are not allowed a long lead, and I believe that I cautioned the member twice now. And I would ask him to get directly to his question.

Mr. Engel: — I have a new question. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Minister, whose side are you on? Are you with Jean-Luc Pepin and the Trudeau Liberals, or are you with the farmers of Saskatchewan? A simple, short, clear-cut question.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Well, two comments, Mr. Speaker. Firstly, I have always been, am today, and will be forever thus, on the side of the farmer of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Secondly, I want to remind all members that it was the colleagues of the members opposite that put the Liberal government in Ottawa so they could tinker with the freight rates in western Canada. And thirdly, Mr. Speaker, since we don't know and have no way of knowing what may be contained in the Pepin plan when the legislation is finally tabled — we have heard rumours that it's changed many, many times so far; it may in fact change more before it's tabled — and I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that any further questions relative to the Pepin plan, are purely hypothetical.

Mr. Engel: — New question, Mr. Speaker. Sask Wheat Pool has come out with an official position. The coalition of groups headed by Palliser Wheat Growers have come out with an official position. They've accepted the official position from Canada stating Pepin's news release that you could read. There are four issues in there — not one of the issues that we dealt with in the legislature, Mr. Speaker, where we talked about the resolution. Those points aren't covered up. Variable rates are still in his position. The \$31 million cap is in his position. It's still there. The freight rates are tied to the price of grain, which is a new position that we didn't agree to in this legislation. When are you going to make a stand saying you're either for or against? The pool made their stand. They had enough of a position to do it. Why can't you?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Sask Wheat Pool and the NFU and the commodity coalition have more trust in the federal government than I do. I don't accept at face value the news release that came out yesterday, nor did I accept at face value the many, many drafts of legislation that have gone before. I will accept at face value the legislation when it's tabled, and when I make an analysis of that legislation I will comment as to how it will affect the prairie farmers.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Engel: — Just one more new question, Mr. Speaker. The minister, by his admission today, has admitted that Pepin has changed in some of the direction he's gone — pressure that has been applied. After you sat on the fence for six, seven months the first time around, after Gilson, Pepin has changed. Why wait until it's too late, until the legislation's on the table next Monday? Why not let Pepin know where you stand? And your silence is telling Pepin and the people in Ottawa that you agree with his new proposals, and the farmers in Saskatchewan want to know if you're for or against Pepin's plan, as it is stated in the press release yesterday.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I remind the hon. member that simple tabling of legislation doesn't mean that it's carved in stone. I remind him, and your leader probably has some firsthand knowledge, of the experience of changes that came to the constitution after that legislation had been tabled in the House. And, in addition to that, officials in my department and myself almost every day are dealing with the federal government to find out exactly how the legislation will come down when it comes down. And when it does come down, we will make that analysis, and I will be more than pleased to tell you and the rest of the world what position . . .

An Hon. Member: — Sit on the fence.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Well, he says, 'Sit on the fence,' Mr. Speaker. what he's asking us to do is to buy a pig in a poke. Here we are, acting just as responsibly as we possibly can to represent the wishes of the farming community in western Canada, and he's asking us to buy a pig in a poke. He wants us to take a position on something that we just don't know what it is. And if you, sir, have a copy of the final draft of the legislation, I wish you'd share it with me.

Canadian Home-ownership Stimulation Plan

Mr. Sveinsson: — Mr. Speaker, I have a question of the minister of housing. Yesterday in Ottawa a very grave situation for those people in this country who are depending on the Canadian Home-ownership Stimulation Plan to finance construction of homes in Canada. The headline in the *Leader-Post* today was that the home-buyer grants are all but exhausted. I would like to ask the minister of housing whether he has been in touch with the minister of housing in Ottawa regarding this very grave situation for those home-builders.

Hon. Mr. Hardy: — Mr. Speaker, in answer to that question, no, I haven't been in touch with the minister of housing in Ottawa. I have been in touch with the officials here. My information is that the federal housing incentive grant that was put out by the federal government is in fact run out; that they'd only give Saskatchewan 1.5 million of the allocation; that there could be up to 1,200 applications to date that will not receive the \$3,000 federal grant, and that we, right now, have been trying to contact Mr. LeBlanc all day in fact in regards to his position, to ask him to extend the grant till May

31st to allow at least these 1,200 applications or these home-owners to get the \$3,000 grant and to continue till the end of May to allow the other ones that are coming in.

Mr. Sveinson: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister of housing how this program, if in fact the funds are not available in Ottawa, will affect those people in Saskatchewan who are depending on it in order to build a home in this province. Most of these people, as we can all appreciate, believe in private home-ownership. This program, along with our Build-A-Home Saskatchewan program, has allowed many, many people in this province to initiate a program wherein they're able to own their own house. I would just like . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order please. Does the member have a question? You're not allowed to make speeches here.

Mr. Sveinson: — I would just like to ask the minister of housing how this lack of funds from the federal government will affect those people in this province who are anticipating a new home.

Hon. Mr. Hardy: — Mr. Speaker, we did some surveys on that and it appears that there'll be a considerable number of those 1,200 to 1,500 applications that are in a very moderate-to-low income group, that if the \$3,000 grant is not in fact applied, may not be able to get a new home. The people that'd be hurt the most would be the lower income people. There would be a considerable amount of them, because it would allow, it did allow . . . With our \$3,000 grant it allowed a lot of people on the marginal income to middle income to build a new home, and if that extra \$3,000 is taken away it will certainly hurt those.

And while I'm up mentioning, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to mention that to date our Build-A-Home program has had 2,935 completed applications, to a total of \$5.5 million from the provincial government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hardy: — And we have in fact another 900 applications on review, for a total of almost 3,800 applications to date, and we expect many more.

While I'm up here too, I would ask the opposition to join with me in lobbying Ottawa, and certainly the federal minister, into extending the program till May 31st. It's certainly one of the most beneficial programs to the people of Saskatchewan, to the people of Canada. It creates many, many jobs — probably up to 7,000 or 8,000 jobs this summer in the province of Saskatchewan alone. I think it's a tremendous program — the federal and provincial government grants together. I ask them to join with me in lobbying Ottawa to extend the program to May 31st.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the minister of housing, the minister of SHC. And I ask him: in the light of the information he has given, that a good number of moderate income prospective home-owners might lose their chance to have a home because of the failure of the federal government to provide funds, whether his government will provide funds to meet any unexpected shortfall on the part of the federal government in that regard.

Hon. Mr. Hardy: — Mr. Speaker, we've extended our program till August 1st to allow for those people in the North to the frost where they can't get their basements in. We've extended it so rural people can, in fact, build homes. In fact, I was just looking. We've had over 850 applications from rural Saskatchewan, from rural farmers, to date, and there's many coming in. From now till the 1st of August is when we are going to get most of those applications. So we have done that. What we're asking now is you to join with us in going to Ottawa, or lobbying Ottawa to extend their programs, so that it will benefit those people who do need it the most.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Saskatchewan Forest Products' Lumber Yards

Mr. Thompson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct my question to the minister in charge of Saskatchewan Forest Products, and it has to do with SFP's plans to sell its retail lumber yards at Prince Albert and Sturgis, specifically with the inventory of those two lumber yards. And my question, Mr. Minister, is: is it true that the inventory of the Saskatchewan Forest Products' lumber yard in Prince Albert was sold to Econo Lumber of Prince Albert?

Hon. Mr. Hardy: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know. I'll take notice and get an answer back for the hon. member.

Lay-offs at Woodland Enterprises

Mr. Thompson: — Mr. Speaker, seeing that you failed to answer a question of such importance, and I see no reason why the minister in charge of Saskatchewan Forest Products cannot answer a question that I have just put forward to him, I direct another question to the minister in charge of CIC. And twice in the House, Mr. Speaker, I have asked him questions regarding the 90 lay-offs, planned lay-offs at Woodland Industries, and twice he has taken notice, Mr. Speaker. Today I ask him a third time: have you changed your decision, your mind on the 90 lay-offs at Woodland Enterprises in Prince Albert?

Hon. Mr. Rousseau: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know where the hon. member was when he asked the question again in the House a couple of days and I gave you the answer then.

Early Retirement for Dismissed SGI Employees

Hon. Mr. Rousseau: — While I'm on my feet, the hon. member from Regina Centre yesterday asked me a question, and I took notice and I told him I would get him an answer today. If I can find it. However, the answer is — I have it — that no employees dismissed on February 28th were eligible for the early retirement package. In any event, Mr. Speaker, the early retirement package was offered to all employees at all levels of the corporation who met the basic requirement of either 35 years of service, or 20 years service and age 55.

Mr. Shillington: — Do I understand the minister correctly to say that those who were involuntarily retired, the 120 who were involuntarily retired, are eligible for the same pension benefits as those who may voluntarily retire? Did I misunderstand the minister's response?

Hon. Mr. Rousseau: — I'll read it again, Mr. Speaker. As I said, those employees who were dismissed on February 28th of this year were not eligible. I said no employees dismissed were eligible. So, in other words, they were not eligible for the early retirement package.

Mr. Shillington: — Well, then, I'd ask the minister a supplementary. How do you justify treating them in such a differential fashion? How do you justify treating those who were dismissed, and whose services were apparently redundant on February 28 and not giving them those benefits, and yet urging others whose services are apparently also redundant to retire and giving them the pension benefits? How do you justify that discrimination against those two groups of employees?

Hon. Mr. Rousseau: — Mr. Speaker, one has nothing to do with the other one. As I said, the employees that were dismissed at that time were not eligible. They were in fact offered a very lucrative severance pay at the time that they were dismissed, depending on the length of service. And they were separated entirely, and the jobs were removed. And that's one of the reasons, as I indicated to you earlier.

Mr. Shillington: — Is it the position of the minister that the severance package was, in all cases, more generous than the early retirement benefits which they might have been eligible for had they had been released on February 28th?

Hon. Mr. Rousseau: — Well, Mr. Speaker, nothing would satisfy the hon. member today obviously. As I said, those employees were not eligible. They hadn't been there long enough. They weren't there. Some of them were there for one year. Some of them were there for two years. And those that had been there longer were offered a severance pay package, as was everyone, depending on the length of service they had been there. And that is what I'm telling you. They weren't eligible for the early retirement package that we have since offered to the others. And those that were offered, we didn't force it on them. It was voluntary. We had an early retirement package, as did the minister responsible for SaskPower, my seatmate for SaskTel, and the same thing with SGI. We didn't force the early retirement package on anyone within the corporation. It was offered. It was voluntary. They could take it if they wanted to.

Mr. Shillington: — Well, just one further supplementary to the minister. New question, I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. Both the group who were retired at the end of February and those who may hereafter retire voluntarily are basically leaving for the same reason, and that is, their services are no longer required by the corporation. You required some to leave. You are urging another group to leave, but all for the same reason because you claim their services are redundant. Does the minister not agree that redundant employees, whether they are retired involuntarily or urged to retire voluntarily, should receive the same treatment and the same package of benefits?

Hon. Mr. Rousseau: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is indicating something very sinister here, and I don't know why he should. We're not urging anyone to accept a package. For those employees who accept their early retirement, there'll be promotions from the bottom up to fill the positions that they leave. It isn't, at this point — the early retirement doesn't indicate that we are removing the job or the position. What we're saying is there are opportunities for those senior people in length of service to take in early retirement, then creating the jobs available for perhaps some of those that we've laid off that came from the bottom up and work their way back up to that position that the individual vacates today for early retirement. So the service that we're offering is not

only beneficial to the individual. It could be beneficial for new employment, as well.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — A short supplementary to the minister. Is the minister saying that none of the people dismissed in February would qualify for the early retirement scheme, because none of them had the length of service required to make them eligible? Is that what you're saying?

Hon. Mr. Rousseau: — Yes, that's exactly what I'm saying. It's the information that I've received from my officials at SGI, that they weren't in fact . . . I guess the requirement is of the 35 years of service, and I don't believe we retired anybody, or laid anyone off that had 35 years of service — number one; and number two — or 20 years service and age 55 — so I guess the answer that I have is, yes, that's right, that none of the people that were laid off in February qualified under those two criteria.

Modified Pepin Plan

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture. As you know, Mr. Minister, you have been indicating that your government has in fact been leading the fight on behalf of the farmers of western Saskatchewan in opposition to the initial Pepin proposal. I want to say now is that there is information that the plan is modified. What I want to ask you is: do you not agree that it is very important that the modified plan not be proceeded with, that early attention and early confrontation with the federal government be forthcoming from the provincial government?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is right when he says that there is an indication that the Pepin plan has in fact been modified. And I would hope that it had been modified, because the original plan was not acceptable to us, and we have taken every opportunity to advance arguments on behalf of the farmers of Saskatchewan for modification.

However, we don't know what form that modification will take until we see the legislation. And when that legislation is tabled and we make our analysis, I will be more than pleased to report not only to the members from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, but to you, and to all the people of Saskatchewan, and to the press gallery, and to the folks in the gallery, and everyone.

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Minister, I just want to say that it's very difficult to believe, if you are in fact on top of this issue . . . Are you saying that you do not have a copy of the proposed federal legislation? Are you saying that you do not in fact have a copy of the details as proposed by Pepin directly sent to your office?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Well, I don't know what kind of a relationship you guys have with the federal cabinet, but I can tell you . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . Perhaps some of my colleagues suggest it might be incestuous, but getting back to the question, I don't know what sort of a relationship you have with the federal cabinet, and if you have a copy of the legislation that's going to be tabled on Monday, I would be very surprised.

I don't. I don't, and until I get it, and until I make an analysis of it, I won't comment on what the Pepin plan may or may not do because surely even you would have to admit that it would be in the highest order of irresponsibility to buy a pig in a poke.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Passing of Mr. Norman Rosenberg

Hon. Mr. Schoenhals: — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day, I would like to bring to the attention of the House the recent passing of a long-time and dedicated public servant. Norman Rosenberg passed away on Tuesday, May the 3rd, at the age of 67. Mr. Rosenberg served as chairman of the Local Government Board from January 1978 to June 1982 and was also a member of the provincial planning appeals board.

Prior to beginning his career as a provincial civil servant, Mr. Speaker, Norman Rosenberg spent a number of years in the service of municipal government, primarily as the city clerk in the city of Melfort and also as the president of the Saskatchewan town administrators' association.

At the time of his death, Mr. Rosenberg was retired from public service but remained very active in civic affairs and volunteer organizations such as Eastview Rotary Club in Regina.

I'm sure I speak for both the municipal and the provincial levels of government when I say that Norman Rosenberg has made a significant contribution to Saskatchewan and that he will be missed. I am sure all members of the House join me in expressing our condolences to Mrs. Margaret Rosenberg and their two children, Mrs. Neil Sanft of Melfort and Dr. Bruce Rosenberg of St. Catharines, Ontario.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to add my words of condolence to those of the Minister of Urban Affairs on the passing of Norman Rosenberg. As he has indicated, Norman had a distinguished career in local government. He had been a teacher and he then was the municipal secretary of the rural municipality of Willow Creek and in 1959, he became the town administrator of Melfort in which position he continued for upwards of 17 or 18 years and then came to Regina as chairman of the Local Government Board.

He was an outstanding public servant. If I were to describe him in a few words, the words would be integrity, intelligence, fairness and sensitivity. He had a great capacity to get along with people, to get the best out of the persons with whom he worked, and to reduce any areas of conflict. That made him, in the judgement of our government, particularly suited to the position of chairman of the Local Government Board.

I join in passing on our condolences to Mrs. Rosenberg and the son and daughter. I had the opportunity to attend the service of remembrance which was just at 1 o'clock, causing me to be a little late for this afternoon's proceedings, and I may report that it was well attended by people from all parts of the community, not only from Regina, but from Winnipeg and Melfort and other places in Saskatchewan as you would expect.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE

Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 10

Item 1 (continued)

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — One or two further questions, Mr. Chairman. I had, Mr. Chairman, asked a number of questions yesterday of a more general nature, and I will come back to the ones with respect to the policy on profits of utilities, but I have some that I will start on before that.

I want to deal with some of the material given to me by the Premier with respect to the persons who work for the Executive Council, and I want to ask about the remuneration package which those employees enjoy. My first question deals with Mr. Derek Bedson. The information provided indicates that his salary is \$85,000 per annum. My question is: is that the current salary? Is there any increase scheduled for the immediate future?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Yes, Mr. Chairman. That is the current salary and there haven't been any increases and there are none anticipated in the foreseeable future.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Is Mr. Bedson entitled to the regular pension benefits and other fringe benefits?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — The provisions are almost typical. Mr. Bedson's is of such an age and his experience is of such that it doesn't readily transfer from either federal-provincial to one province to another. But we are trying to provide a normal, as close as normal, pension requirements or pension contribution as possible.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Do I take it then that he is not a member of the public service superannuation plan, either the old one, which I take it he cannot be a member of, or the new one, which perhaps he could be a member or and I don't know that? I will ask the question: is he a member of the public employees' superannuation plan, the matching benefit plan? I think I've got the right name for it.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Yes.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — And is he a member on the same terms and conditions as other employees, that the government puts up, I think it's 5 per cent, and he matches the 5 per cent?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — In a general fashion, yes. The individual pays, and we pay, or we deduct, and he makes a contribution as well.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Is it the same contribution as the other employees? I mean, the same percentage contribution, or is there a special arrangement?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — The same.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — I turn to Mr. Greg Fyffe, and you give his salary as \$59,664 per annum. Can you tell me whether that is the current salary? Has there been any increase, or is any increase scheduled for the foreseeable future, to use your phrase?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I just did a little checking, Mr. Chairman. All the information that we gave the hon. member with respect to the salaries, except for those that no longer work for Executive Council, are current. So if it was the intention to — I'm not saying it was, but in case it was — if you want to go down the list, one, two, three, four, five, they're all current. There have been no adjustments to them, and no adjustments in the foreseeable future, unless it would be for special merit or something else that we might think of. But they are current. Modifications from time to time may take place, but they're as accurate as they can be, except for those that no longer work for me or under my executive direction.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Now I understood the Premier to say that the list are the current salaries except for those who no longer work for the Executive Council or under his direction. That's what I understood him to say.

With respect to Mr. Bedson, is he entitled to an automobile? And I take it that's what the term 'executive vehicle' means.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Yes, the deputy is entitled to an option 1(c) vehicle.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — I turn to — I'll just check one, Mr. Keith Lampard, \$4,000 a month, and you tell me that that's the current salary, and that he receives no more than that.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Lampard is, as the hon. member knows, is now chief electoral officer, and there may be a slight modification with respect to the position he had in Executive Council and then the transfer to his new responsibilities. We'll get you that information in a matter of, perhaps — well, as quickly as possible.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Yes, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, you gave me an assurance that these were the accurate figures. Lampard is shown at 4,000. You say that there's a slight modification. I think it will be of the order of more than \$600 a month more, but \$500 a month anyway, and to some people that may not be a slight modification. I ask you to advise me whether or not a report is accurate which says, and I will quote:

The former director of research for the Progressive Conservative caucus under leader Dick Collver has been appointed chief electoral officer by Premier Grant Devine. Keith Lampard, who has been serving as assistant chief electoral officer since August of last year, takes over the position as chief electoral officer effective immediately (that is, March 23). His salary will be \$54,612.

Do you think that that report is accurate?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, the salary of Mr. Lampard is exactly the same as Mr. Bailey's — Mr. Dickson Bailey, the former chief electoral officer, which I believe is \$54,612. I believe this is the only exception to the rule, and I apologize to the member if in this case there is an increase from taking on these new responsibilities to the original position that he had, from 4,000 to approximately 4,551. I don't believe there are any other exceptions. If there were they would be very minor, but I think this is the only one.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm sure the Premier has every confidence in the information he gives me the second time, but I'm sure he had

confidence in the information he gave me the first time. And it was not accurate. So I'll want to check some of the others. With respect to Mr. Gil Johnson at \$72,500 per annum, is he now in your service, or has he been transferred to another department?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Johnson is now deputy minister of advanced education and manpower. I believe he left Executive Council effective November 30, 1982.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — I want to turn for a moment to one on the list. Mr. Grant Chamberlin, and I note that he's also on the list of service contracts, and I assume, therefore, that for a part of the time he was on a service contract, and for part of the time he's a regular employee. My question with respect to Mr. Chamberlin is, was he in the employ of the Government of Saskatchewan when he, in some agency other than the Executive Council, when he moved to the Executive Council, either on a personal service contract or as an employee?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, Grant Chamberlin came from the Sheriff's office in Regina, was on a personal service contract up until December the 31st and is now senior administrative assistant to the chief electoral officer.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Thank you, Mr. Premier. Now I note that he was taken on, on a personal service contract of \$200 per day. I note that in the *Public Accounts* for the years ending March 31st, 1982, he was paid by the department of the Attorney-General \$22,370, which will be something less than \$100 a day, and he was taken on in a personal service contract at \$200 a day. Was it felt necessary to more than double his daily remuneration in order to secure his services?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chamberlin had 12 years experience as assistant chief electoral officer, I'm informed — was relieved of those specific duties by the former administration, Mr. Chairman. When we brought him back in he was initially employed doing several things. When he was put in this position that he currently holds now, he could draw on his professional capacity and his professional experience in carrying out those responsibilities and his 12 years in that responsibility make him more than qualified as senior administrative assistant to the chief electoral officer.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman, I think the Premier's information is somewhat faulty about the 12 years of service as assistant chief electoral officer. I'm sure the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden may be able to help, but I doubt whether it would extend more than seven years . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, he did not. He got terminated from that position. He was offered alternative employment, having been associated with Mr. Harrington in Mr. Harrington's then political persuasion, as the chief organizer of the Liberal Party, and from time to time chief electoral officer. Mr. Chamberlin, I think, would be prepared to admit that he was the assistant to Mr. Harrington and in that position our government felt him inappropriately located, and we offered him alternative employment, which he took, and which he, I gather, retained during the period when Mr. Harrington was not acting as chief electoral officer either directly or in a surrogate way. And I am again asking the Premier: why it was felt necessary, in order to obtain Mr. Chamberlin's services, when he was already an employee of the government and getting less than \$23,000 a year, under \$100 a day, why was it necessary to offer this government employee \$200 a day to work in your office?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, I can just add, Mr. Chairman to my previous observations that, given the experience that the individual has in the area — years and years of

experience as assistant chief electoral officer — then he qualifies quite well for this position. I do believe it's true — maybe the hon. member can correct us — that he was transferred out of that assistant position to the sheriff's office, but then was brought back in to that position during the former administration's time to supervise a by-election. Now, if that's the case, it must show that people from all administrations do respect his talent and his experience. And all we're doing in this case is recognizing his years of experience in this capacity, and that's why he's offered this position at this particular level.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — I'm interested in that explanation. I do not concede the facts about what may have happened, but I'm not going to discuss the past but the present and the future. With respect to Mr. Chamberlin and the showing on your list of employees, he will now be in receipt of \$3,250 a month, which is something over — in this year, the year just ended March 31st — which will mean that he will get an increase of well over 50 per cent in remuneration since he has moved to your office, I ask again: whether or not in your judgement it was necessary to pay that sum in order to secure his services from the department of the Attorney-General.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, all I can say is reiterate, is the member was brought in on a short-term basis to assist in several duties. We paid him \$2,000. He is currently in his position with the chief electoral officer in his area of expertise. He's making \$3,250 a month, which is, I believe if my calculations are correct, \$39,000 a year. Well, for a man of his age and a man of his experience in a particular area, I don't think that's unreasonable in any jurisdiction.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Well, Mr. Minister, he's not the chief electoral officer, he's not the assistant chief electoral officer, but he's the chief administrative assistant, I think is the phrase you used.

May I come back to the question of any increases for these employees, or other employees of the government? It has been the custom — something of a custom — to provide out-of-scope salary increases effective on April 1st of each year. Can you advise whether or not any increases were made effective April 1st, or whether it is proposed to make increases in out-of-scope salaries effective April 1st, 1983?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, there haven't been any increases as of April 1st. The whole situation is under review.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Does the review involve making increases which will be effective April 1st, even though the decision may be made at some later time?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — No decision has been made about that, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — I take it then, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, that it's quite possible that in June you might make changes to the salaries which we are now reviewing, and that those changes might well be effective April 1st, 1983, in accordance with previous custom.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, when I said no decision is made, that's just what it means. No decision has been made, so I can't add any more to that. When we finally make the decision, then we will outline when it will be, and to what extent, and so forth. We just haven't made that decision.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, that is revealing in itself, in the sense that if one is not going to make increases in salaries — if you're not going to provide increases in salaries, and you have no intention of doing it up at this time, then it would be highly unusual to make it retroactive. But you are not excluding salary increases retroactive to April 1st, and I want to make that point. The salaries which we are discussing here — the salaries of Mr. Bedson at 85,000, or the salary of Mr. Fyffe at 59,600, or Mr. Johnson indeed at 72,500, or Mr. Martin at 59,600, may well be increased and may well be increased retroactively to April 1st. I must take that as being at least a possibility because you have not excluded it. You have not said that any increases will be effective at some time in the future. You have said you have made no decisions as to whether they are going to be retroactive, and that is what I understand you to say.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman we are studying the previous administration's customary practices, which included some retroactive increases. I didn't say that we would make them, but we were looking at the practice of the previous administration as it followed it year after year. I'm not saying that it . . . at what level. I'm not saying anything with respect to the decision. We are looking at the past, and we want to see what is appropriate for us and what is appropriate for our personnel. And the hon. member can speculate any way he likes, I suppose. That's his prerogative, but we just haven't made a decision. We're reviewing past practices, and see if they are appropriate for this administration.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, just to put the record modestly straight. It has been the custom to increase out-of-scope salaries effective April 1st. Sometimes that decision was made prior to April 1st, and sometimes it was made after April 1st, and the governing factor tended to be the state of the union contract between the SGEU, and that subject is now behind you. But whenever the decision was made, the understanding was that the increases would be effective April 1. That is the anniversary date for a large number of public servants, and out-of-scope. I understand you to say that you have not rejected the idea of continuing the April 1 anniversary date, and you have not accepted it, but you are studying it. Is that a fair assessment of what you said?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Yes.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — And that will apply to a salary, let us say, of Mr. Sean Quinlan of \$55,000; or Mr. Garf Spetz of \$59,000. They would be covered by that same rule. I want to ask a few questions about Mr. Glen Smith-Windsor. My information indicates a salary of \$69,500 per annum, and is that still accurate?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Does he also have an executive vehicle, a car?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Yes, an option 1© vehicle.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Does he also have an accommodation allowance, and if so, how much?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman he has a relocation allowance, and it has varied from time to time.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I refer you to the material which you supplied to me which says:

... and in answer to the question of whether an apartment was rented for Mr. Smith-Windsor, the answer is there is no apartment rented for Mr. Smith-Windsor's benefit. Mr. Smith-Windsor receives an accommodation allowance.

The question I ask you is: how much is the accommodation allowance?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, treasury board approved an accommodation allowance of up to \$600 a month. It has never been used to that extent, and as an example, in the month of April, there was \$265.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — I'm puzzled as to how that works. Does Mr. Smith-Windsor claim an amount which he thinks appropriate, or does he have to illustrate that he is spending so much for accommodation? How is that arrived at? It's up to 600 — is certainly a reasonably adequate sum of money, and I'm curious to know what ... because that after all is an extra \$7,000 a year on 69,500, that gets to be fairly a high remuneration, and so I'm asking: how is the amount paid monthly to Mr. Smith-Windsor arrived at? Is he entitled to ask for any amount up to \$600 a month, or does he have to show that some money has been spent?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Smith ... this contract, or this accommodation is a temporary accommodation. If Mr. Smith-Windsor submits a receipt and he only claims in that receipt what he can't cover in subletting as I mentioned, for example, in the month of April, it was \$265. Mr. Smith-Windsor has been travelling back and forth from the city of Saskatoon to the city of Regina. He's had some difficult circumstances surrounding his transition from one city to another, and I'm sure that the member is aware of them. And in his temporary situation to help him to accommodate his family, both there and here, he has submitted, as an example, a receipt for \$265 in the month of April.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, is that about the same amount that is submitted each month, or is that ... just happened to be a low month?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — It varies, Mr. Chairman, but it's never reached the maximum.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, since this is, I think it would be fair to say, a highly unusual arrangement, I would ask the Premier to provide me with a list of the amounts claimed, and I don't need to have it now unless he wants to give it to me now, but as I say, I think this is a highly unusual arrangement and perhaps should be understood by everyone so that any possible inferences that might be drawn from it will not be drawn.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I will get that information and provide it to the hon. member.

I think it's fair, just so, in using the hon. members own verbiage, that we understand these situations clearly. Let me just take a moment to outline what Mr. Smith-Windsor does and what Mr. Bedson does, compared to what ... (inaudible interjection) ... You want to know what Mr. Smith-Windsor does and what he's being paid for. I think that's

fair.

An Hon. Member: — No. That's not what I asked.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, that's what I'm going to provide.

An Hon. Member: — Okay. Go ahead . . . (inaudible) . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order! Allow the Premier to make his remarks.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I just want to point out, for clarification, Mr. Smith-Windsor is performing the duties of assistant cabinet secretary and clerk, and also is responsible for the Saskatoon cabinet office. I just want to point this out. The previous assistant clerk, or cabinet secretary, received \$52,404; the previous clerk received \$62,376. The total paid for those two positions was \$114,780. Mr. Smith-Windsor receives \$69,500 per annum, which is only 60 per cent — only 60 per cent of the bill to the public, for the same responsibilities.

Or put it another way, Mr. Chairman. The previous administration paid 75 per cent more for the work performed by Mr. Smith-Windsor. Now, Mr. Smith-Windsor also performs the duties that were carried on by Mr. Mel Derrick, the previous co-ordinator of the executive development program. Mr. Derrick received a remuneration of \$79,608 per annum from the previous administration. So, those responsibilities, Mr. Chairman, I just point out to the public, cost the previous administration 52,000, 62,000 and 79,000 in total.

With respect to Mr. Bedson, I could point out the deputy minister and cabinet secretary — Mr. Bedson does both — the previous occupants of those positions were John Sinclair and Flo Wilkie. Mr. Sinclair received 69,936; Ms. Wilkie received 62,000, for a total of \$132,000. Mr. Bedson receives 85,000, which is only 64 per cent of what it cost for the same position under the previous administration.

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Chairman a specific question was asked for the Premier. I wonder if he would answer the specific question.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman I said I would provide the information, and I just followed the lead by the hon. member, the Leader of the Opposition, saying, just so that we would make this clear. So no aspersions may be cast on the responsibilities, I thought I would outline the responsibilities. And I said I would provide the information.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — What does Mr. Jon Jonsson do?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Jonsson is executive director of the planning secretariat. But I just wanted to add, I believe the hon. member suggested that Mr. Grant Chaerlin wasn't employed for 12 years. The information I've received is that he started at the electoral office in 1960 and stayed until he was asked to move in 1972, which was 12 years. He was brought back to run a by-election in Lakeview in December of 1973, when Mr. Malone was elected, and then he was back to the sheriff's office and paid by the sheriff's office. Mr. Ed Wallace was assistant chief electoral officer at that time, in December of 1973. I've been given that information so that it's . . .

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — With respect to the latter, that he ran the election in Lakeview. I simply dispute that; but there's not point. Nor is there any point in disputing the fact that he was assistant chief electoral officer for 12 years, since I think he was not. He

may have worked in the office but, once again, we're not worrying about what happened in the 1960s. I'm talking about Mr. Jon Jonsson and the fact that he is in effect the director of the planning bureau. And I simply point out that that was the job that Mr. Sinclair did and that I would expect that Mr. Bedson would do that if you had the same organization. But you are paying \$5,000 a month to do something that the deputy minister to the cabinet did.

And all I'm pointing out is that this shuffling of duties simply does not indicate any saving to the taxpayer. The test is whether or not, when it's all added up, you have more people paying more money than was the previous arrangement, and you assuredly do. I trust you don't deny that and whether or not you say that A does this and B does that is of no particular consequence since senior executive officers' duties cannot be defined with that area of precision.

I could ask about Mr. Quinlan and what was the position in the previous administration that Mr. Quinlan now occupies or that Mr. Spetz now occupies, and all of this would simply not be fruitful, but if you wish to pursue it, we most assuredly can.

I am coming back to Mr. Smith-Windsor. Now you are telling me that he gets \$69,500 as a salary, he can claim up to \$600 a month as an allowance and that he has a vehicle. Does he have the ordinary superannuation arrangements? Is he a member of the public employees' superannuation plan?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Yes. In case the hon. member may have forgotten, Mr. Smith-Windsor was an employee of the Meewasin Valley Authority. He had a normal pension plan under the Meewasin Valley Authority, which was originated under the previous administration, and he continues to be on a normal pension program.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I'm not in any way suggesting Mr. Smith-Windsor isn't a valuable employee. I'm just trying to find out what we pay him, and that's a fair question. He was a valuable employee of the Meewasin Valley Authority, and he didn't get this kind of money.

I think that this is the point we're making: not that these people may not be valuable employees; it's that they are handsomely remunerated compared with previous standards. I won't ask you what he received from the Meewasin Valley Authority, because I think that's perhaps not a fair question.

But I will turn now to personal service contracts. You provided me with a list, and you gave me the rate of remuneration per day. I will take as an example, Mr. Jack B. Harrington, Jack Harrington, \$350 per day; and then you gave me the payments to date, \$84,700; and you gave me what the last date paid for was March 9. Now referring to that list, are all of the people who were paid to March 9 still on personal service contracts with the Executive Council? I can go through the list if you like. I will come back.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — All right, if the member wants to take note, I'll just read those that are still on contract. They are not that . . . Black, Garven, Harrington, Holbird, Leddy, Robinson, Rothecker, Schaw, Schimiz and Tkachuk. The rest are no longer on contract.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — I'll just go down that list one by one now. Mr. William Barry, \$200 a day — is that the same William Barry who is now an executive assistant, or some similar title, to the Minister of Education or Advanced Education? I'm not sure what title

he bears, but he's in the office of Mr. Currie. That will solve that. And you say Mr. Black is still on the transition committee. And is he still receiving \$176 a day, or is he getting a larger sum?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I'm informed that that's what he's getting.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — And we have established that Mr. Chamberlin has moved to your office. Mr. Ian Disbery, \$250 a day — he is still with your office or not? He appears not to be.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — He's no longer with my office.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Did Mr. Disbery, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, move from your office to other employment with the Government of Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I'll find out.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — We have a Lorraine Fitzpatrick, \$135 a day, was still on staff on March 9th, is she still on staff?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — No, Mr. Chairman, she isn't.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Did she leave the Government of Saskatchewan, or did she transfer to some other agency of the Government of Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I listed those that I know where they are. The others I'll endeavour to find out where they are, if they're working in the government, or if they're not. I can give some information on those that are still in my employment, but on the others I can't give immediate information, and I could probably — you know, we could take quite a bit of time with this — but I suggest I'll provide you the information on where these other people are employed, or at least if they're employed by the government or if they're not. Black, Garven, Harrington, Holbird, Leddy, Robinson, Rothecker, Schaw, Schmitz and Tkachuk are, and I can talk about those. But the others are no longer in my service.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Minister, you act as if — you say that you are unable to give this information, as if it were way back in the distant past. Now on March 9th they were in your service, and that's less than two months ago, and I don't want to press the capacity of your staff who are harried and, you assert, ill-paid, but I think that if they tried hard they could remember some of those — whether or not, well, perhaps, Lorraine Fitzpatrick or Reg Forsythe; whether Mr. Reg Forsythe, who got \$225 a day in March, is still in the employ of the Government of Saskatchewan, and I would be surprised if he were not, I may say, and I ask you to advise me whether you or your staff know.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, it's one thing to know if they're still employed. I know they're not, and that's immediate, that's current right now. To know where they maybe among up to 30,000 employees in the civil service — I'm not sure where they are, and I've said I'll get that information and provide it to the hon. member. If they're in a department or a Crown, or if indeed they've gone to the private practice, I'll get that information to the hon. member as quickly as possible.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — I perhaps have not made myself clear, Mr. Chairman and Mr.

Minister. I am not asking the Premier to say where they are. I am asking to say what agency they went to when they left his employ. The day after they left his employ, where did they go? And I must say I'm surprised if your staff do not know if somebody transfers from Executive Council to, let us say, the Public Service Commission, your staff would not know that. I well understand that they may not keep track of where they are if they move to the Public Service Commission, but that's not the question I'm asking. I'm asking the question: do you know, or do your staff know, to what agency of government people transferred from the Executive Council in the last two months?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I'll be as co-operative as I can. My staff advises me we know who is employed with us. We know who left. We can say that the majority of people that did leave are in government. But we didn't bring the information where they went in government. And I think it's only reasonable that we know what our people are doing, but I didn't put a tag, or I didn't trail, or I haven't asked my officials to track where everybody went. There's some 20 people perhaps or something there. I just don't have that information. I will get it to the hon. member as quickly as possible. I will say, perhaps the majority of them are in the public service somewhere, and we'll provide that.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — I'll try another one of these then. Mr. Terry Leier at \$410 a day. You can't have many of those so perhaps you might be expected to remember where Mr. Leier is. Perhaps he doesn't have that much visibility. Perhaps he can be easily lost; but at \$410 a day I hope there wouldn't be too many people lost. And the question that I'm asking is: does the Premier know whether, when Mr. Leier left the employ of the Executive Council, if in fact he has left the employ, whether he went to another agency of government, and what agency of government he went to? I'm not asking the Premier whether he knows where he is not. Perhaps he wouldn't know Mr. Leier, but I'll ask him those two questions: whether he is in the employ of the Executive Council; if not, did he leave to join another agency of government, and which one?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, yes, I know that he isn't working for me, and I've already said that. I believe he left December 31st, and my understanding he's in CIC.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — We're getting into a good deal of difficulty, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister. The information you provided me — and I invite you to look at your copy — shows that Mr. Leier was getting \$410 a day, and the last day for which he was paid wasn't March 9th, 1982, because the previous government was not paying Mr. Leier \$410 a day. And you now tell me that he left on December 31st to join CIC. I think that if Mr. Leier is getting paid by CIC effective March, January 1 and is getting \$410 a day from Executive Council during the same period, I think even more questions need be asked. Do you wish to change that statement and suggest that Mr. Leier was in your employ on March 9th, or do you wish to tell me that the information previously supplied had an error?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, neither one. The information is accurate. What you have there is an old bill submitted for services up until December. It was paid in March. He was no longer employed by us up until December and was working for CIC.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — So you are telling me that Mr. Leier, in the period from, let us

say, not before May 8th, 1982, to December 31, 1981, a period of, at best eight months, supposing he worked every single day, got \$78,479 for a little less than eight months on the assumption that he worked every day. That is \$80,000 . . . That's \$120,000 a year. That is certainly adequate remuneration for Mr. Leier. Am I now understanding that that \$78,479 refers to Mr. Leier's remuneration prior to January 1, 1983, and that anything he got after January 1, 1983, from CIC would need to be added to that?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, the 78,479 paid to Mr. Leier includes expenses and travel. Mr. Leier has been actively working for Executive Council in the search for chief executive officers, in the search for new executive personnel. He's been involved actively and extensively across Canada in interviewing and so forth. Now that includes expenses and travel for that period, so we believe that it's very reasonable to hire a professional person, an attorney-at-law, a lawyer, and also to have him employed in terms of trying to provide well-qualified people for the province of Saskatchewan. And many have been put in place as a result of his work. I think it's reasonable, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Perhaps we could have a little indication of what Mr. Leier's duties were for the \$410 a day. What particular people did he recruit?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, I think it's pretty well known, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Leier worked directly under the Deputy Premier, Mr. Berntson, as head of the transition committee. The role of the transition committee was to facilitate the smooth transition of power from one administration to the other. Mr. Leier carried out many responsibilities in that function working for Mr. Berntson and, indeed, for me, and was involved in looking at personnel with respect to many positions in the Government of Saskatchewan — departments, Crown, so forth.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I'm sure that's true, and I'd ask the Premier to give me just two or three instances of the many.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Two or three that come to mind are the new chief executive officer of Sedco (Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation). We have a new deputy minister of agriculture, Mr. Drew. We have the new deputy minister of advanced education and manpower, Mr. Johnson, and there were several new people.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — I'm aware of those three, and now Mr. Drew I think was . . . wouldn't have to travel far to recruit Mr. Drew because I believe he was previously located in Saskatchewan, and I believe in Regina, if I'm not wrong.

And with respect to Mr. Johnson, Mr. Gil Johnson, one wouldn't have to travel far to recruit Mr. Johnson. He was previously located in Saskatchewan. The new chief executive officer of Sedco is, I believe, from Ontario, as I recall the c.v., and so you're telling me that Mr. Leier travelled to Ontario to recruit one CEO. Can you think of any other that would involve this extensive travel that you refer to?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I don't think that I have to remind the hon. member that when you're in the selection process, you may visit with many people. We've given three names. Certainly these aren't the only three people that have ever been visited with, or talked to, or interviewed, with respect to these positions, or others. I think it's only fair to say when you finally select one, you didn't just go to the first one that you got — you wouldn't need a selection committee. Well, I mean, many people have been

interviewed — many people. I've interviewed many people, and as a result of the work done by Mr. Leier. And he's solicited people, he's talked to people, and so you look at many, and from coast to coast, and in the United States, there's many. There's probably a million Saskatchewan people that have left that want to come home, and we've tried to interview them all, but we didn't quite get there yet.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Some have done reasonably well. Mr. Leier, who has seemed to land on his feet, and several others I can mention here, and will in a moment. There is Mr. Jack Harrington, for example. He is back home in Saskatchewan after having been over in Manitoba, and not immediately, after. If one wishes, if you need to complete your file on Mr. Harrington, I can give you the pleas which he directed to Saskatchewan Liberals when he was over in Manitoba after the demise of the Liberal government in this province. But he is now back here, and doing quite well at \$350 a day. Now is he still in the employ of the transition team, or the Executive Council?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — We are currently carrying a contract with Mr. Harrington. The last few weeks he has not been receiving payment. As a result of his illness he has been in the hospital and he's been at home; he's under medical observation. So yes, he has been a senior policy adviser to the Executive Council, but he isn't being paid at this time.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — While we're busy talking about that professional and non-political public service of which Mr. Harrington is, I'm sure, an outstanding member, I want quickly, if I may, to go down this list and ask you to tell me the last date on which they served the Executive Council. I clearly had misunderstood the import of the March 9th. I thought that that meant that they were in the employ of March 9th, and clearly it does not. The last date paid for carried to me the impression that that was the date for which they were paid, service up to that time. I see that it means something else and I would ask a quick run-down.

Mr. Barry: when did he leave the employ?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — We could jump up and down here quite a bit. I wonder if I could just go through this.

Barry, the last date of service, September 30th; Chamberlin, December 31st; Disbery, December 31st; Fitzpatrick, March 31st; Forsythe, March 31st; Jermyn, June 4th, '82 — Marj Jermyn, June 4th, '82; Lambsdown, March 31st; Lampard, August 3rd; Leier, December 31st; Livingstone, March 31st; Monkhouse, June 30th; Nichol, March 31st; Petersen, August 31st; Petrychyn, June 30th; Prout, December 31st; Roberts, December 31st; Svoboda, September 30th; Todd, December 31st; Walters, December 31st; and Young, December 24th, Russell Young.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — May I then assume that Messrs. David Black, Garnet Garven, Linda Gendur, Bonnie Holbird, Michael Leddy, Paul Robinson, Harvey Rothecker, John Schaw, and Andrew Schmitz, and Dave Tkachuk are still in the employ?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Linda Gendur was a temporary typist, Mr. Chairman. But you're right. Black, Garven, Harrington, Holbird, Leddy, Robinson, Rothecker, Schaw, Schmitz, and Tkachuk are still employed.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — With respect to the people who left on March 31, I think

particularly of Mr. Livingstone, for example. Is he still in the employ of the government? Or, I'll put it the other way: did he move from the Executive Council to another agency of the Government of Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Yes. Yes, that's true; he did.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Do you know what agency he moved to?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, I mentioned, Mr. Chairman, I'd be glad to provide all the information, but it's my understanding that he is under the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — With respect to the number of persons who are here on contracts of personal service and with respect to some of the major ones — and I'll just pick Mr. Disbery at \$200 a day, and Mr. Forsythe at \$225 a day, and Mr. Livingstone, \$330 a day, Mr. Tkachuk, \$350 a day. Did they have a standard contract of service, or was there a different contract for each employee? Were they tailored, or were they more or less standard?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, they were generally standard, with some variations.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, what were the broad terms? And obviously they were to serve, obviously they were to get a given daily remuneration — and I take Mr. Tkachuk, \$350 a day. Does he have any rights to annual vacation leave or/and superannuation, sick leave? I will ask about those types of employee benefits, sometimes called fringe benefits.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — No, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, do I understand then that the persons who are on these personal service contracts are not entitled to superannuation, and not entitled to any . . . well, I'll just leave superannuation, because . . .

Hon. Mr. Devine: — No superannuation, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — I wonder if the minister could provide, the Premier could provide, us with a form of one of the contracts that he will assure me is a more or less standard form; or alternatively I will ask for copies of all of them, if they vary substantially. And I will ask him whether he will give me a form of the contract if they are substantially similar.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I believe that request was part of a motion for return no. 86, and it has already been dealt with.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, was the answer yes or no?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, as I indicated Mr. Chairman, it was covered under the motion of return, and any action as a result of that motion will be forthcoming.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I have to say that I'm dissatisfied with that answer. When we were in the House here the other night, the Deputy Premier invited all hon. members to reject motions for return on the grounds

that the information could be obtained in estimates. And at one point he indicated that even though the request was perfectly proper, the information ought to be given, he asked the members to turn down the motion on the grounds that the information could be obtained in estimates. Now that was clear on the record of the House, and as a matter of fact was reported in the press. I am distressed now to hear the Premier say that since it was the subject of a motion he will not give the information in estimates. We have the Deputy Premier saying, 'We turned down the motion, the opposition could get this in estimates.' We had the Premier saying, 'We will not give it to you in estimates because it's been asked for in a motion for return.'

We have a government where the Premier and the Deputy Premier have decided simply to stall. We have a government which is paying people \$410 a day, and that's a lot of money, and we're asking for a copy of the contract by which someone gets \$410 a day, by which someone gets for a period from May until December an amount of \$78,000, some of it in fees and some of it in expenses, pursuant to a contract. We're asking for a copy of the contract. The Deputy Premier says, 'No, you can't get it on a motion for return. We ask you to ask for it in estimates,' and we have the Premier saying, 'We won't give it to you in estimates because it's been asked for as a motion for return.' And I think this is not good enough. I think when a government decides that it's going to hire a good number of people at what must be called high fees — to a lot of people in Saskatchewan, \$350 a day is a good sum of money, and we have Mr. Tkachuk getting 350, Mr. Ted Walters getting 250, Mr. Livingstone getting 330, Mr. Harrington getting 350, Mr. Leier getting 410. These are large sums of money, and I suggest . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, the member for Regina North West can be as tired as he likes. He is part of the stalling operation, as well. He is unwilling to tell his constituents why he is paying Mr. Terry Leier \$410, and the contract under which he is paying it, and I think that that tells its own story. And I invite the Premier to reconsider his answer and say that he will give the contracts which were requested.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I notice that the hon. member is a little bit excited about the contracts. I will endeavour to provide a typical contract to the hon. member, which is exactly what he asked for.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — But, Mr. Speaker, we have an offer, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, we have an offer that the Premier will endeavour to provide a typical . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . an offer which obviously we cannot refuse, but we can ask for a good deal more, and should ask for a good deal more, and accordingly I am going to ask the Premier to provide us with a copy of all of the personal service contracts executed by the Department of the Executive Council from May 8th, 1982 to May 1st, 1983, wherein amounts are paid in excess of — and we won't deal with small amounts — let us say \$150 per day or more. I think that weeds out the casual employees and weeds out the people who are getting an amount paid for typing or for minor services. I think \$150 a day is, while not a huge sum of money, is a fairly substantial sum of money, and I think that I will ask the Premier to provide us with copies of contracts which may provide for the payment of \$150 a day or more, contracts entered into between the period of May 8th, 1982 and May 1st, 1983, and I'll ask the Premier whether he'll provide that.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I said I would provide a typical contract to the hon. member, because I said they were pretty much a standard contract with some variations. I'm quite prepared to do that. If the hon. member doesn't think a standard

contract would be reasonable, well then I would look for more. But I mean I can provide a standard sort of contract that would apply to most of these individuals.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister. My difficulty is that I don't know to which individuals they will apply and which they will not. It seems to me that when people are getting \$150 a day, and there are not that many of them, we can ask for the terms of the agreement by which they get \$150 a day. If the Premier wishes to refuse to give me that information, that is his responsibility, if he thinks its not in the public interest. I assert it to be in the public interest. I assert it to be not a burden on the public service to provide their 15 or 20 contracts. I believe it to be appropriate information, appropriately asked for, and I ask the Premier for it. If he wishes to give it to me, that he can. If he does not, that is his responsibility. And I will simply say, and feel free to say, that he is declining to give that information.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I will co-operate and provide the contracts, the form of the contracts signed by the individuals. As I mentioned, they are all standard contracts. There may be some variations, and I will provide the typical contract that these individuals signed. I'm not going to . . . I don't think I can provide any more than that. I don't believe that I'm in a position to Xerox a copy of every specific one. But the standard form of contract is a fair request, and I would provide it. And if there are any major deviations from those, and I don't know whether at this time there are or not, we can certainly advise the hon. member.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I'm not here to bargain. I made my request. The Premier can provide what he likes, and I am asserting that copies of the contracts are what the opposition and the public are entitled to, and I ask him to provide that.

I now move on to another matter, and this has to do with the ministerial assistants. People who are executive assistants and administrative assistants to the ministers heretofore have been appointed by order in council. The order in councils are public documents, and we can see who was appointed in the ministers office and at what salary, and on what terms? Is it true, Mr. Minister and Mr. Premier, that you propose to discontinue that arrangement and propose to have an arrangement whereby ministerial assistants will be appointed by simple ministerial fiat, a letter or some document in writing signed by the minister, that will not be a ministerial order published in the *Saskatchewan Gazette*, will not be an order in council which is a public document, but which in fact will mean that there will be no public record of the contract — the arrangement — and that the only public record will be a year and a half later, the amount paid in the year? You won't know how much per month, or you won't know the rate of pay. All you will know is the gross number of dollars paid. Is it true that you propose to do away with the public disclosure of who are appointed to minister's office and how much they're paid?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, quite the contrary. We are operating under the same rules and regulations the previous administration operated under. If someone is employed by a minister the conditions of that employment must fall within the rules and regulations that are designed by this legislature.

If they're outside those rules and regulations, then they automatically become an OC. So either way you've got the information, that they fall within these specific guidelines, or if they're outside you've got different characteristics that go along with the information, and then it's public because it's an OC. In terms of revealing this

information, I think it's fair to say that we've opened up public accounts that reveal much information. Similarly we reveal the salaries of the head of Crown corporations, which is very much public information. It was never done before and I think that's fair to point out, Mr. Chairman.

We did ask, when we were in opposition, time and time again, for that kind of information and never received it. Now it's public information all the time. I just point that out for the hon. member.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Well, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I won't deal with . . . I simply challenge . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No. I challenge the Premier's facts. The Premier operates on the basis that if it didn't happen in the last five years it never happened. And he keeps saying that in many, many areas, and I'll come to a bit of that. There was a time when that information was freely public but not in the last couple of years, and I freely concede that.

But what I want to say . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . Oh, no, no. What I want to say, Mr. Chairman, is that I am delighted to hear what the Premier said, that we are not going to have ministerial assistants appointed under any ministerial assistants' regulations, which were passed by your cabinet in the last week or two, which permit the appointment of assistants by other than order in council. And if I am right, if I understood the Premier, and I don't think there's any doubt what he said — that people will either be appointed under the Public Service Commission, or will be appointed by order in council, the way they were before, and that the previous system is going to be maintained — I'm delighted to hear that because I feared that another system was going to be introduced wherein ministerial assistants would be appointed other than by order in council, and that this information would not be available to the public.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, we made the rules and regulations explicit so that the public can understand them. What I've said to the hon. member is that, if cabinet ministers employ people, that employment has to fall within those rules and regulations as we've defined and as we've explicitly laid out. If they're outside those rules and regulations, then they become OCs, which automatically become public. So either way the public knows precisely what is going on.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — No, Mr. Speaker, no, Mr. Chairman, they don't. and I ask you to look at order in council number 616, '83, passed on April 20, '83, wherein you can appoint — I read them this way — a ministerial assistant, or the Minister of Finance can appoint a ministerial assistant. He can write a paper, a letter, appointing that ministerial assistant, pursuant to these rules indeed, but nobody knows who is appointed; nobody knows at what classification level the person is paid, except the person who's got the letter, and Mr. Andrew, the person who signed it, and a couple of other people, like the Public Service Commission, who must be advised. But there is no public record of who is appointed to Mr. Andrew's office or what he is paid. And no member of the public and no member of the opposition can go to any public record and find out who Mr. Andrew has appointed and how much he is paid. And that's what you could do before with orders in council, and I say that if I read these regulations right, you can no longer do it, and I ask the Premier to confirm or deny my understanding of his regulations.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, the hon. member is perhaps trying to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear here. The former administration used to allow people to be employed or appointed under the Public Service Commission, and that would show up

some time later to the public. We have modified that, so we've designed rules and regulations that people can be employed under, and those are public. So, if the individuals fall under those rules and regulations, as they fell under in the Public Service Commission, they apply. If they don't, they go to the OCs, and they're public as well. So I can't add any more than that.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, we're talking about the Executive Council, and I ask the minister to name one person who was ever named an EA in the Executive Council under the Public Service Commission — just one — because I flatly deny it. I flatly deny that. I flatly deny that that has ever been used in Executive Council, whose estimates are before us, and I ask the Premier either to justify that or to say that it doesn't apply. And, in any case, if he could find one in Finance, or two, which possibly is true — I do not know that . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . The people who assert this can stand up on their feet and say so, instead of sitting down and braying like the member for Indian Head-Wolseley . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . That's right.

I am wanting to say to the Premier that what he is doing is permitting every EA to be appointed secretly — every EA to be appointed . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . Mr. Premier, this is very serious. We have a record here of a government who is appointing a great number of their employees of the party — I'll put it that way — to the government pay-roll at high prices. And I hope that that's not denied. I hope that people don't . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . I hope that the Premier is not denying that Mr. Terry Leier, the former Conservative candidate in Regina East, is at least associated with the Conservative Party. I hope he's not denying that Mr. Jack Harrington, who was the campaign manager, is associated with the Conservative Party. I hope he's not denying that Jack Nichol has been a campaign worker, if I may put it that way, or Mr. Jim Petrychyn was a candidate in Regina Centre.

Mr. Premier, I want to . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, I will just discontinue my remarks for a moment until you have an opportunity to ask for order.

I want to put it to the Premier that what he is doing is permitting every minister to appoint executive assistants who were previously appointed by order in council — and I've already challenged him to find one in Executive Council where that was not true — and now all of them will be appointed in a way where there will be no public record. You will not be able to find out what they're paid. You will not be able to find out whether they're paid at the low end of the scale at \$2,000 a month, or the high end of the scale at \$3,740 a month. You will not know who they are. You will not know for what period they served, and people will simply not know whether they are being paid by taxpayers. They will see them with ministers. They will see them, no doubt, doing political work, and this is not uncommon with respect to ministerial assistants.

But it has been a public record, whether or not they were hired by order in council, what they were paid, and who they were supposed to be working for. This will no longer be a public record, and I think that that is a bad move; a move to make the government more secret. A move to make it less clear who is working for the government and who is being paid. And if the Premier doesn't agree that this will mean that dozens, and dozens, and dozens of people who were previously appointed by order in council, will no longer be appointed by any document that's a matter of public record, I wish he would explain why he believes that is not true.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, the public has access to all the information, either through *Public Accounts*, or through orders in council, as it does in the Public Service Commission so there is every possible opportunity being taken to provide that information to the public. The member opposite knows that. People can be employed; they can get the information in *Public Accounts*. And if it isn't there under rules and regulations, they can get it through orders in council that are public.

The hon. member spent a fair amount of time, Mr. Chairman, talking about supporters of the Conservative Party. I don't think that he wants to get in a long argument about who hired who, but if he wants to do that, I'm prepared to get into it. The lists, and lists, and lists of NDP supporters that were employed . . .

An Hon. Member: — Candidates.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — . . . Candidates, etc. etc. I'm not going to read it. I'll just set it on the desk, Mr. Chairman. I'll just set it on the desk. What we're doing is perfectly open to the public. The rules and regulations are there. People know the salary range. Public accounts can find out who they are — if they're outside that salary range, or any deviation, they can find out in orders in council, and that is open to the public. Plus, we provide the information because public accounts is open. We provide the heads of Crown corporations, how much money they have. I provided a list of all the people that are employed in Executive Council. There's the entire list of those who were employed, now are employed, used to be employed, and so forth, since we took power. Everything to the public, so before the hon. member decides to get a little sanctimonious about who's being employed, I think that it would be fair to point out that we have provided all this information, and the information will continue to be provided.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I think we're not meeting minds here. It is not a question of whether in *Public Accounts* I can find out two years later how many dollars was paid to somebody in a fiscal year; that is hardly disclosure. I say to you, and I pick a name here, the chief of staff to the Premier, who might be a ministerial assistant, perhaps he will not be, under your administration, or I'll take the cabinet press officer, who probably would have been a ministerial assistant at just over \$3,000 a month. When he was appointed an order in council was passed, and you had access to that information the next week; who he was, what his position was, how much he was paid. If now you appoint somebody tomorrow, I will not have access to that information next week, nor next month, nor maybe next year. I will get it when you wish to give it to me in estimates and in many cases, as you will freely admit, the information you gave me is 10 months old. Why, the people you hired last May you tell me about in March.

An Hon. Member: — it's up to date.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — It's up to date now, but I had no way of finding out who you hired last May on contract. We will not have no way of finding out who you hire as ministerial assistants all across the government. That was not the case before. You had ready access to the orders in council, as do we. It will now be the case we will not know who you hire, and we will not know what their salary is.

If the member for Saskatoon Sutherland, the Minister of Urban Affairs, hires a ministerial assistant tomorrow under those regulations, I will have no way of finding that out, nor will anybody else in Saskatchewan have any way of finding that out. The

Premier assures me that I can read it in *Public Accounts*. I will not read it in *Public Accounts* for at least 18 months — for at least 18 months, and that's hardly disclosure, and was not true before — was not true before. And the people were hired by order in council before, and they are not now going to be hired by any public document. And I say this is a very substantial change.

The member opposite asks, 'What's the point?' The point is that when people are hired in ministers' offices and paid for out of the public purse, the public have a right to see it, to see who is hired by order in council. Order in council appointments are, by definition, not appointments that are made in the course of the ordinary operations of the public service. There are no tests as to merit, no tests as to qualifications; that is the nature of an order in council appointment. And because there is no test as to merit, no test as to qualifications, we have provided that when somebody is appointed who may not meet any tests of merit, may not meet any tests of qualifications, we have done it by order in council so that everybody would know. And I would defend the appointment of Mr. Greg Gertz as the cabinet press officer, as we appointed him, at \$36,000 a year. I would defend that, but the opposition, the then opposition would know what the appointment was, and would be in a position to call upon me to defend it.

You now propose to appoint people who meet no, who are required to meet no qualifications, who need have no prior qualifications for the job, unlike people who are appointed under the Public Service Commission, and you are not permitting anybody to know that. You are not permitting anybody to know that, and that is a very substantial change. Governments do a great number of things, and for the most part they should be free to do them, and required to defend them. And what you are proposing to do is to be free to appoint people who are ministerial assistants but not be required to defend them because their appointment will nowhere be a matter of public record.

And I suggest that that is a major change, and one which ought to be modified to the extent of saying that anyone so appointed ought to be listed in the Saskatchewan *Gazette*, simply saying 'ABC is appointed as a ministerial assistant number 1, class 1 or class 2, to the Minister of Urban Affairs.' It would be a very simple change. It would not require any particular amount of red tape, since you're going to give that information pursuant to your own regulations to the Public Service Commission in any case, and then the public would know as much, or very nearly as much, as they know now with respect to appointments by order in council.

And I invite the Premier to make that change, because what he is now doing is creating a very large number of people who are appointed, not in accordance with the Public Service Commission, not under the safeguards that the public has under The Public Service Act, and not by order in council where it can be questioned in public, but in fact by regulations which permit him to appoint people and pay people without making any public disclosure for at least 18 months . . . (inaudible interjections) . . .

Well, look at the record. Don't ask me.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I suggest to the hon. member that he is making way too much of this. The Public Service Commission made these modifications to strengthen the entire administrative process, and for that reason only — to standardize employment characteristics. We are proud of our executive assistants, and we will tell everybody who our executive assistants are. We set up the rules and regulations on how they're employed. If they don't fall into those rules and regulations they're OCs.

I mean, we're quite prepared to tell you who's working for us, where they fit. They fit into these rules and regulations and that the guide-lines are there and the rules and regulations to know this is the minimum and the maximum. We can tell them their name; you can check them to see who they're related to. The public can have that information. And if they fall outside that, if there's something that you may be concerned about or that wouldn't fit in there, they go to OC.

So that it's designed, Mr. Chairman, I can just say in summary, to expedite an efficient public service transaction to strengthen and to standardize the employment characteristics. And it's not meant to say that we don't want to let anybody know who our executive assistants are. We're very proud of them and I'm sure I would be happy to tell the hon. member who my executive assistants are. And I suspect most, or any, or all of the members in cabinet would be happy to tell the public who their EAs are.

It's designed to expedite the system as it may in contemporary rules and regulations. I guess I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that the hon. member maybe is off on somewhat of a tangent on so-called secrecy. Clearly I have provided all the information on everybody that we employ to date, those that are employed now. And this year has been a year of transition and he has some difficulty and I'm sure he shares it with me, watching people come and go, and they have.

On more normal years, I'm sure when the minister asks for information or the hon. member asks for information, we can provide it much more quickly. So again, I just suggest in all respect that perhaps he's making a bit of a silk purse out of a sow's ear.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I wonder if you would take me through the procedure, then. If the Minister of Urban Affairs appoints a ministerial assistant, the old procedure would have been that he had appointed a ministerial assistant by an order in council, and the next week that order in council would have been available to the public. What is the new procedure which will allow the public similarly to know of the appointment?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, the procedure, basically, is individuals may be interviewed by staff, or the ministers themselves. Second, or after people have been interviewed, there is a committee of cabinet that looks at the potential characteristics or qualifications and agreements. Third, if an agreement is reached, the copy of agreement is filed with the Clerk. This process is standardized, the terms and conditions of employment, so people who want to be employed, or want to understand it, it clarifies to the employees what the terms and conditions are. It lays it out in rules and regulations, and they can find those because they're public information. And the only intent of this was to expedite the process, to make it efficient and effective, and to allow employees to understand clearly what the rules and regulations are so that we had a standardized mechanism for dealing with people who may be employed in minister's offices or for ministers.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I'm sorry I didn't make my question clear. What I asked was, under the old procedure that appointment would have been by order in council, accordingly a matter of public record in the next 10 days. I'm asking you a very narrow question: under the new procedure, what makes it a matter of public record so that it will be known to the public and the opposition?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, it is public record under the normal course of

events. This is not intended to not make it public, so as I mentioned to the hon. member, I am quite prepared to advise the minister, or the member opposite if he wants to know who it is. This is not designed to not let the public know who it is, and I'm sure any other cabinet member here would be quite prepared to say, 'Here are the rules and regulations; here's the person who I've hired; and he falls within the rules and regulations.' So I don't know what else I can suggest. It's designed to standardize the terms and conditions of employment. I'm prepared to provide you the names and the qualifications of anybody that I employ, and I'm sure every other cabinet member is.

And if they fall outside these standardized rules and regulations and they go to OCs, they're out there automatically public, so I don't think I could offer any more than that.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, we had a good deal before. It was simply a matter of public record. Everybody who looked at the OCs every week knew, and you didn't need to ask ministers; it was just a matter of public record. Now the rules and regs. No one is asking about the rules and regs. We're asking about who is appointed and how much they're getting. That's the information that we would want and that's the information which we cannot now get from any public record.

You assure me that we will get the information if we ask. Maybe six weeks later, maybe, but that doesn't matter. It's not a question of whether the public have to ask. It's whether it's a matter of public record. And I just suggest to you that you ought to make that a matter of public record, the same way the OCs were a matter of public record, by putting a little notice in the *Sask Gazette*. You can do it by a very, very simple method, then nobody is going to have to bother ministers with letters. You just say, 'John Smith, whatever, admin assistant 3, a salary of \$3,100 a month,' or whatever it is, and it's done. It's not a case of having to hound ministers; ministers have got lots to do. The Minister of Urban Affairs doesn't want to deal with 20 letters from people asking if he's appointed an EA. That's not a proper function for the Minister of Urban Affairs; he's got important matters to consider. And I ask why this matter, which was previously a matter of public record, cannot now be a matter of public record.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, people know that if you want to get information on OCs, you go down to the Clerk's office and you ask for the most recent file and they'll provide you with the information. We could provide a file, so if you want to walk down to the Clerk's office and say, 'In addition to the OCs, can I see who is working for the minister this week? I'm quite prepared to do that for my staff and I'm sure the other hon. cabinet members — I haven't talked to them but this wasn't designed to hide anything — are prepared to talk, or proudly talk about the kinds of people they hire within the rules and regulations. You know exactly where they fall. And if they fall outside, it's in OCs.

I could point out to the hon. member, there was many, many things that went on in the previous administration that the public didn't know anything about. We're just finding out — and we couldn't find out. I won't dwell on those either. This is not designed to hide the names of the individuals who are employed by ministers. It's designed to make the system work more efficiently and more effectively.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I'm not saying it was designed to do that. I'm saying it will have the effect of doing that unless the Premier does what he's suggested, and I think that's not a bad suggestion, of saying that when the contracts are approved, that there be a file down at the Exec. Council office where you

look at the orders in council, and you can look at that. And if that's what he's going to do, fine. We'll leave it at that. I think that that may well, if it works, accomplish the task of making this information available.

I turn now to another item, Mr. Chairman, and this has to do with air fares. And we've had some difference of view on this one, and a difference of approach between individual departments. I want to make clear what I'm talking about. I'm now asking some narrow questions on whether or not the Executive Council pays air fares on commercial airlines for persons who are not employees of the government. And I am not asserting that all of those are wrong. I'm not asserting that. I'm wanting to find out what their policy is with respect to the payment of air fares by the Executive Council for persons who are not employees of the government. And I ask now whether any air fares since May 8th have been paid on behalf of persons who are not employees of the Government of Saskatchewan. And I'm not now asking who. I'm asking simply whether. I'm looking for an affirmative or a negative answer.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I'll take notice on specifics. I can't recall whether we took people to the constitutional conference or not. We may have. From time to time we may take what I would call distinguished citizens, representing various communities or demographics, or sectors of the community. There were SARM members and SUMA members that may have attended. I just don't recall who paid for them, or whether they were invited by me. Members of the Francophone community, members of the native community, and so forth. So, from time to time that could be the case. I will get that information and provide it to the hon. member.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, there are — and I made that very, very clear — instances in which I think it's entirely appropriate for the Executive Council to pay air fares for people who are not employees of the government. I was not challenging that, and I have a list here of classes of people where I think it would be appropriate. If you bring someone in to interview them for an appointment to a position in the government, it may be appropriate to pay their air fare for the interview. It similarly may be appropriate to pay for representatives for organizations to attend federal-provincial conferences, and we have done that, and I'm sure your government will do it, or has done it. I am really wanting to know whether there are any other instances, and if you wish you can exclude representatives of organizations to attend federal-provincial conferences, or like conferences, or include them, as you wish.

I am interested in instances where that might be different, and I'm asking now for policy and not for names at this point. Have you paid the air fares on commercial airlines of the spouses of the premiers or cabinet ministers? In the last estimates you indicated that your policy was not to pay that, and it's clearly an arguable point, and I'm not now being critical. I'm asking whether or not that is still your policy, or whether you have changed your policy. The question again, Mr. Premier, is: have any air fares on commercial airlines been paid for expenses of members of the Executive Council?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Pardon me, Mr. Chairman, could the hon. member repeat the last part of his question?

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — My question is this, and I prefaced it by saying that when we last considered estimates, you told me that the policy of the government was that the spouses of members of the Executive Council did not have their air fares paid on commercial airlines, even though they may accompany their spouse to a conference, and we considered whether that is not a black and white case. I want now, not to be

asserting that it is black and white, but I'm asking you: what is your policy on that and has it changed?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, to date, it has not been the policy. But as I mentioned before, I am giving it some consideration with respect to special occasions, or perhaps it may be appropriate to have a spouse attend with a cabinet minister or even perhaps the Premier. I mentioned my spouse for an example. We haven't made any changes in that regard but it still is under consideration and from time to time, in special occasions, there may be people who we would consider picking up the air fare for. But they should be unique circumstances and special occasions and so forth.

Some other administrations are from time to time doing this, and I suppose some of the justification is that it was just the role of the general family. Sometimes it would be appropriate for a couple to go as opposed to just a member of the cabinet. But we haven't changed the policy on that and we'll get the information if there's been any expenditures and if there has, I'll certainly provide it to the hon. member.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister. And I want to say that I think that's a difficult policy decision, particularly if there is an occasion where it is clearly expected that one show up with one's spouse, as used to happen occasionally when the Queen would have a function in Ottawa and it's a little difficult not to bring one's spouse, and on the other hand, it is a matter of expense and one doesn't matter and two don't matter, but if they come frequently, it is an item.

I noted what you stated your policy to be. May I ask the Premier how he's getting along with respect to arriving at conflict of interest guide-lines?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I believe the minister is still awaiting for the rule of the Ontario court.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Did I understand the Premier's answer to say that work was continuing, but nothing had been arrived at?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I believe the minister . . . It is continuing, but the minister is awaiting the results of the Ontario court proceedings.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — With respect to this general area, the Premier will be familiar with the remarks he gave to the deputy ministers back in May of last year, in which he indicated (and he'll be familiar by now with the quotes) his desire for a non-political and professional public service, 'and to that end we want to ensure that no civil servants hold membership cards in any political party.' We have had indications that that is no longer the policy of the government, but I would like the Premier to confirm whether or not that is the policy of his government with respect to people other than in the very senior ranks of the public service.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Clearly, Mr. Chairman, the public service in Saskatchewan is under — any member of the public service in Saskatchewan is under no obligation to hold any political card or any political affiliation. I made that clear. Public service is a professional service, and that means that it is non-partisan, and that it is professional, and that is what — in my mind, in my view — is expected from the public, that we do receive professional service from government employees.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I am sorry. My question couldn't have been clear. I wasn't asking whether any public servant had an obligation to belong to a political party. I was asking whether a public servant had a right to belong to a political party.

Now, I will repeat the sentence again.

We want to ensure that no civil servants hold membership cards

And that has nothing to do with obligations to belong, but that's a prohibition against belonging, and what I want to know is whether that still holds, or whether the government has changed its policy and now believes that civil servants may hold membership cards in political parties.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, my policy has never changed, and my view has never changed. People in the public service are free to hold any political card they would like, or participate in any political function they wish at any time.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I'm interested in that comment, but you understand, Mr. Minister, how someone could be misled into believing that they weren't to hold political cards, by hearing you say, and I have the notes here:

We expect the public service to be thoroughly professional and entirely loyal at all times. (Fair enough.) And to that end we want to ensure that no civil servants hold membership cards in any political party.

It is possible to construe that as saying that civil servants shouldn't hold membership cards in a political party. Indeed it's impossible to construe it any other way. And are you telling me that you didn't say that, or that you've changed your policy?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — No, I have never said that, Mr. Chairman, in my life. And those are notes from somebody who said that this was my general speech to deputies, and any deputy, or any civil servant or public servant, that knows me knows that I wouldn't say that. So the position is that anybody can belong to any political party they like, but they're under no obligation to belong to any political party, and full democratic rights and freedoms are very well protected under this administration.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I'm sure that there will be a good deal of satisfaction in the minds of some people to hear that, and there would be even more satisfaction if it were thought that it was likely to be followed. And we will, I think, await to see whether or not the government follows that, or whether we have ministers standing in the House and saying that people are being discharged from their position because they took part in a civic election, as we did, and as I heard.

An Hon. Member: — That wasn't the reason.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Well, members suggest that that wasn't the reason. If it wasn't the reason, the member for Kelsey-Tisdale shouldn't have said it if it wasn't the reason.

Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, just the one final question for a moment before it's 5 o'clock. I ask whether or not there have been any developments with respect to the Regina water pipeline. And there have been some recent developments, as you will

know, some recent reports that the city of Regina and the city of Moose Jaw have put some proposal to the government. There was a report back in March indicating that the Minister of Finance would be having discussions with the federal government with respect to federal assistance, and there have been some reports to the effect that Ipsco (Interprovincial Steel and Pipe Corporation) may be withdrawing their offer to provide the pipe at cost. And you will know something of those reports. Since it involves the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Urban Affairs and, very possibly, the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, if it involves a major Ipsco contract. I ask you, and if you would prefer that the question be directed to some other minister I can do that.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't have all the details. The minister has advised me just now that he's been in negotiations today and previously on an ongoing basis. I think it would be probably more appropriate that he was given the opportunity to provide whatever information seems to be appropriate for the public. It is my understanding that Ipsco is very interested, and the negotiations are continuing to proceed. And perhaps if I said any more without talking to him, I must just jeopardize it, so I would just say that the minister knows much more about it than I do and he'll probably brief me and cabinet.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.