

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
May 6, 1983

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

Mr. Embury: — Mr. Speaker, I take pleasure in introducing to the House 26 grade 8 students from Athabasca Elementary School in my constituency. They are here with their teachers, Dr. Ochitwa and Mr. Hickling. I hope that they have an enjoyable stay in the legislature today. I will be meeting with them at 10:45 for pictures and refreshments, and I would ask the members of the House to join with me in welcoming them here today.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Domotor: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through you, to this Assembly, a group of grade 8 students from Young, Saskatchewan. There's 17 of them in total. They're accompanied by their teacher, Barb Olenick, Irene Osmak, Lorraine Holdner, and the bus driver, Lil Sather. They toured the building this morning. I trust they'll be in question period in the west gallery this morning from 10:00 to 10:30. At 10:30 I'll be meeting with them for refreshments and pictures. I trust they'll find their tour and stay in Regina informative and entertaining, and I'll look forward to meeting with them later on. I would like all members of the Assembly to welcome them here today.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Pepin Plan

Mr. Engel: — Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the silent Minister of Agriculture. The minister can't decide whether he's on side with Pepin and Trudeau — and the Socreds, I suppose we can throw them in this morning — or the farmers of Saskatchewan. In yesterday's *Western Producer* was a very revealing article that kind of contradicts what you said to the House yesterday when you said you don't know what's in the legislation, the proposed legislation. Mr. David Miller, the special assistant to the transport minister said:

The two ministers have held a series of meetings (talking about yourself and Pepin) to discuss what changes to the proposed legislation would make it acceptable to the Saskatchewan government. Both sides were open minded (he said).

My question to the minister this morning is: what is there in the proposed legislation, or what was there in the resolution we passed unanimously in this house that is so different that you couldn't make a decision now as to standing up on behalf of the farmers and saying that this new proposal is just benefiting the railways and not

benefiting the farmers?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, as was the case yesterday, we were then on the side of the farmer of Saskatchewan; we are today. Particularly this morning, we're also on the side of the Socreds in B.C.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — And it's true I met with the federal minister on several occasions. I met with other federal ministers on several occasions; and I met with the opposition in Ottawa on several occasions; and I met with officials in Ottawa and Regina and other jurisdictions on several occasions; and I did advance the arguments for our position relative to our nine-point resolution. I have yet to see the legislation that will be tabled on Monday. And when I've seen that legislation . . . I'm sure even the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg wouldn't want this government to buy a pig in a poke on behalf of the farmers of Saskatchewan. And quite frankly I don't care what Alberta did. We, Mr. Speaker, when we see the legislation and make an analysis of that legislation, will be giving our position relative to that legislation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Engel: — New question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, when we, on Tuesday, February 22nd, unanimously passed a nine-point motion, had you seen the legislation before we passed that motion?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — If that's not the dumbest question I've ever heard, it's bordering on it, Mr. Speaker. Of course I haven't seen the legislation; I've never seen the legislation. And if you've got some kind of relationship with the federal cabinet that you've got it, I wish you'd share it with me.

Mr. Engel: — Mr. Minister, the point I'm making is that we were able to pass a resolution that your government designed — nine points. We didn't agree with all of them. We had an amendment that we wanted to move. You voted down the amendment, but then we agreed with these nine points. Which of these points are still outstanding as far as Pepin's new proposal is concerned?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Oh, my goodness sakes, he's breaking new ground every time he stands up, Mr. Speaker. I don't know how many of those nine points will show up in the legislation when it's tabled, Mr. Speaker. I advanced our arguments relative to every one of the points in the resolution, and I would hope that they're all there. And if they're not, we'll make an assessment as to what our position will be, based on what we see in the legislation when it's tabled.

Mr. Engel: — Mr. Speaker, the minister, by his silence, is condoning Pepin's third plan. Pepin there indicates that the only two points that are covered off of these nine points are, one, that there's some additional crops are going to be recognized, and possibly the cost of production. Those are the only two points that are going to be recognized out of these nine. Does that mean you'll give up the other seven points, and in your silence are agreeing to the Pepin plan? That's what you're doing because according to Mr. Miller, a special assistant to Pepin, he said that you've had meetings, and you've discussed the legislative changes that would make it acceptable to Saskatchewan. And is that why you're silent today?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, if the federal minister is already admitting to two changes to his legislation, I think that's a fair start, and I think a commendable effort so far on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan. And I would hope that when the legislation is tabled that it indeed includes the other seven. And if it does, in all likelihood we will support him. If it doesn't, when that legislation is tabled, we will make an analysis and I will give you my commitment that you'll be the very first one I call to tell you what that is.

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to ask the Minister of Agriculture a question in respect to the Crow proposals that are flying around, and which he has no knowledge of. But there are a few principles within the whole discussion of the Crow that are very important. And one is the variable rate. I ask the minister: will he categorically not accept any plan that includes a variable rate?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Well, I don't know where the hon. member has been. The question has been asked at least three or four times in this particular house, and in other forums as well. And the answer has always been the same. We categorically reject any power that would allow the railroads to design rural prairie Canada.

Mr. Koskie: — As a supplement, Mr. Speaker, there's one other principle that is very important in the Crow issue, and that is as to where the payment shall be directed — to the railroads or to the farmers. I ask you: will you categorically stand up and indicate that your stand is that if any payments be made, that all of them be made to the railroads?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — My position, Mr. Speaker, has always been what I thought was the reasonable position of United Grain Growers, and that is that in the absence of any consensus on that question, that a reasonable compromise would have been a 50-50 sharing, with review after '85-86.

Mr. Koskie: — One further supplemental. One other principle is involved in respect to the Crow rate, and that is whether there is going to in fact be a safety net for the farmers. It is my understanding that you are satisfied with the alteration of the Crow rate, providing that there's a safety net attached whereby the increase to the farmer is tied to the increase in prices of grain.

I'm asking you: are you in fact supporting no alterations of the Crow to the farmers — in other words, he'll pay no more — or is it your position to go with the safety net tied to the increased price and increased cost?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, we tabled a resolution in this House on February 22, was it? You just read it off a while ago. And there were nine points in that resolution, one of them being the so-called safety net. You voted for it. We voted for it. It passed unanimously in this House. I really haven't seen anything that would cause me to change my mind on that particular question. If in fact the Crow is going to be changed, I think the farmers of Saskatchewan would expect that kind of protection. We've argued for that kind of protection, and indications are, according to news releases and comments from benches opposite, that that is one of the things that's being considered by the federal minister.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture, and the Minister of Agriculture has referred us to the resolution which he introduced on February 22nd, 1983, on the basis of a proposal by Mr. Pepin — not legislation but a

proposal — and he asked this House to take a position, and this House took a position on a proposal, without seeing the legislation — a pig in a poke, as he might say.

My question now is: why are you unwilling to take a stand on Mr. Pepin's latest proposal, when you asked this House to take a stand on his earlier proposal, and we all did?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, the member will remember well that when the earlier proposal was made, it was vastly different from anything that even approached consensus during the times of the Gilson discussions. There was considerable desire on the part of agricultural Saskatchewan that this government should in fact put its concerns to paper, find some consensus at least in this House, and make those representations to Ottawa. Our nine points were contained in that resolution. We've made those arguments in Ottawa and other places. Our position still hinges on those nine points.

If the federal minister has in fact accepted those nine points, and if they show up in legislation when it's tabled, I suppose we're under some obligation to take a serious look at supporting the federal legislation. If those nine points are not included in the legislation, we will make our analysis when the legislation tabled, and we will give you our position at that time.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Minister of Agriculture. On what grounds does the Minister of Agriculture believe that there will be anything in the legislation other than that which Mr. Pepin has announced? Accordingly, why does he believe that he cannot now take a position on the basis of Mr. Pepin's proposal and must wait for the legislation? What makes him believe that there will be anything in the legislation other than that which Mr. Pepin has announced?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — You know, Mr. Speaker, things really aren't all that static. I've heard in the last several months several Pepin proposals, and things aren't static. What he says today may well change tomorrow. What he says tomorrow may well change. And if you will remember, Mr. Speaker, who was leading the fight and who has brought it this far, I make no apology to members opposite for taking it as far as we have.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. The minister has been asked a question. Give him an opportunity to reply.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — I'm sorry I woke them up opposite, Mr. Speaker, but I wanted them to hear this, and we make no apology for carrying the ball as far as we have. We will continue to carry the ball and advance our arguments on those nine points. And, Mr. Speaker, when the legislation is tabled and we make the analysis, we will make the determination as to whether those nine points are covered or not.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, one final point. Does the minister agree that the most recent Pepin proposal covers very possibly two, but not the other seven, of the nine proposals? Will he then agree that if the legislation does not cover the nine proposals, he will continue, or shall I say resume, his opposition to the Pepin plan and discontinue his silence which has been so obvious since the recent announcement by Mr. Pepin?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and I suppose silence is in the ear of the listener. And, Mr. Speaker, they read from this news release, and they say, ‘Apparently, two of our concerns have been dealt with in the federal proposal.’ I don’t know if those two concerns have been dealt with. They have talked, Mr. Speaker, about additional commodities being covered under the new proposal. I don’t know what those commodities might be. It may not be broad enough for us to accept. They talk, Mr. Speaker, about a safety net, a linkage to the prices of commodities, and in principle that’s great, but I would hate to see the linkage at 50 or 75 per cent. So when I see the legislation, Mr. Speaker, and see if that linkage is in fact reasonable, and when I see if the commodity coverage is broad enough, I’ll make my determination then as to whether even those two points have been met.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, a further question to the Minister of Agriculture. I would like to ask the Minister of Agriculture: does he in fact have the contents and the details released by Mr. Pepin, the transportation minister? Have you reviewed them, and have you any reaction? Have you . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I’ll run through that again.

An Hon. Member: — Can’t hear.

Mr. Koskie: — I thought . . . (inaudible interjections) . . .

Mr. Minister, this is a serious matter. And I want to say that no amount of your diversion or lack of hearing will deter me from asking this question.

An Hon. Member: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — What I want to ask you, Mr. Minister: are you saying to the farmers of Saskatchewan that the Pepin plan has been out for a number of days and that you as a government have not in fact reviewed the contents of it and cannot in fact make any statement to the Saskatchewan farmers?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, if he has a copy of the Pepin plan that’s going to be tabled in the House of Commons, I would urge him, and in fact I think he’s under some obligation, to share it with this House. I just said that the two points covered in his press release, in the federal minister’s press release, dealing with additional commodities and a safety net make no indication at all as to how they will be included in legislation. And if the safety net is in fact some ridiculous linkage, like 75 or 50 or 30 or even 15 per cent of a commodity price, clearly that’s unacceptable, and we won’t know what that is, we won’t know what that is until the legislation is tabled. Likewise, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to additional commodities being covered, there is no mention as to what those commodities might be. And if it’s not broad enough, Mr. Speaker, clearly it will be unacceptable to us, and we would reject it. As it relates, Mr. Speaker, to the member’s allegations of silence from this side of the House, he’s been accusing us of that for years. And I can remember in the last election what the main issue was from that side of the House, and I see the results that it brought for them.

Mr. Koskie: — I have a new question to the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Minister,

recently Pepin made an announcement of the modification to his original proposal. And I want to say that the Alberta government has taken a position; I want to say that the wheat pool has taken a decision. I'm asking you: have you met with any of the agricultural groups to date to determine what their position and concerns are? Have you done anything at all?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, since the news release which came out two days ago, I have not met formally with any agricultural group. I think I've talked with almost every member of every agricultural group through the telephone — it's a kind of a new technology that the members opposite may not be familiar with. But we have in fact been in discussions, and discussions with almost every agricultural group in Saskatchewan.

If the Sask Wheat Pool wants to take a position based on what they've seen, that's fine with me. If the Alberta government wants to take a position based on what they've seen, that's fine with me. If the NFU, whose position has never changed much, takes a position, that's fine with me. If the commodity coalition want to take a position based on what they've seen, that's fine with me. If members opposite want to bury their head in the sand and maintain the same old position they've always maintained, Mr. Speaker, that's fine with me. I'm going to, in a very responsible way, represent the wishes of the agricultural community that I represent. And when I see the legislation and make that analysis I will be giving the position of this government.

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. Yesterday I asked a question in the House regarding the inventory at the lumber yard. Saskatchewan Forest Products' lumber yard in Prince Albert, and I wonder if the minister is prepared to answer that question today.

Hon. Mr. Hardy: — Mr. Speaker, the information hasn't come back yet, so I couldn't answer it. In regards to the inventory at the lumber yard in Prince Albert, via phone, he told me that it has been sold. Most of it's been sold, but I don't know to who, and he'll be getting it back to me. I'll have it for Monday for the member.

Mr. Thompson: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister, when he brings the information back, also inform the House whether or not that lumber was sold by tender — public tender?

Hon. Mr. Hardy: — I'll get that for you, Mr. Speaker, but I understood it was just sold through the lumber yard as a direct sale, but I'll check for you.

Conflict of Interest in High Technology

Mr. Koskie: — Yes, Mr. Speaker. I want to direct a question to the Premier. Last Friday in this Assembly you claimed that there was no potential conflict of interest in the fact that your key personal adviser on high technology policy, Mr. John Schaw, who was also a principal in the new high-tech company, Philom Bios. I want to know whether the Premier has had second thoughts, and I want to know whether or not you have

instructed Mr. Schaw to divest himself of any interest in Philom Bios and all other high-tech companies in Saskatchewan — that is, if he wishes to continue to be your top adviser.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I said at that time that there was no conflict; that I would examine it. If the member has some information that says that there's a conflict, I would be prepared to look at it if he tables it.

Mr. Koskie: — As a new question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier, I direct the Premier to an article in yesterday's *Leader-Post*, which is a report on a Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce meeting yesterday in this city. The article quotes the president of Philom Bios, John Cross, as lobbying for changes on the taxation system — changes which would make it easier for high-tech companies like Philom Bios to raise money. It seems to me here you have a principal of Philom Bios as your top adviser, and here you have Mr. Cross, the president, lobbying for certain particular changes in the taxation scheme. I think it's an obvious conflict of interest, and I ask the Premier whether he will in fact look at the situation again.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I said the last time I was asked about this that that company I don't believe is doing any business at all. If it will, if there's a potential for doing business, I said to my staff, then if there's a potential for conflict they'll remove it. If there's a conflict it will be removed. As far as I know, that company isn't doing any business, and never has. It's an infant company. So I've advised my staff that if there's any potential for conflict, to remove that conflict, and they will.

Mr. Koskie: — As a final supplemental on that, Mr. Premier, I appreciate you taking a second look at it. I ask you: will you take a second look at it and report to the House?

An Hon. Member: — And report to the House.

Mr. Koskie: — And report to the House, because I think there's a very high degree of potential for a very major conflict of interest.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member just put his finger on it when he says there is potential . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . All right. All right. And I said at the outset, Mr. Speaker, I said at the outset that if there is any conflict, that my staff will not be involved in a conflict of interest. All right. That company isn't doing business. Potentially it is. We will make sure that there is no conflict. Period.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Not Debatable)

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order. The House cannot carry on its business with this much noise in the Chamber, and I would ask for order so that we could proceed.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, on motion for return (non-debatable), item 1, I move we transfer to debatable.

Motion agreed to.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 42 — An Act to amend The Time Act

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move, by leave of the Assembly, seconded by the member for Regina Centre, that the order for second reading of Bill No. 45, An Act to amend The Municipal Tax Sharing (Potash) Act, be discharged, and the Bill referred to the standing committee on non-controversial Bills.

An Hon. Member: — No, you've got them reversed.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Okay, correction, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member for Regina Centre, with leave of the Assembly, that an order for second reading of Bill No. 42, An Act to amend The Time Act, be discharged and referred to the standing committee on non-controversial Bills.

Motion agreed to, Bill discharged and referred to the standing committee on non-controversial Bills.

Bill No. 43 — An Act to amend The Municipal Employees' Superannuation Act

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move, by leave of the Assembly, seconded by the member for Regina Centre, that the order for second reading of Bill No. 43, An Act to amend The Municipal Employees' Superannuation Act, be discharged and the Bill referred to the standing committee on non-controversial Bills.

Motion agreed to, Bill discharged and referred to the standing committee on non-controversial Bills.

Bill No. 44 — An Act to repeal The Tax Sharing (Pipe Lines) Act

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Regina Centre, by leave of the Assembly, that the order for second reading of Bill No. 44, An Act to repeal The Tax Sharing (Pipe Lines) Act be discharged and the Bill referred to the standing committee on non-controversial Bills.

Motion agreed to, Bill discharged and referred to the standing committee on non-controversial Bills.

Bill No. 45 — An Act to amend The Municipal Tax Sharing (Potash) Act

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Regina Centre, by leave of the Assembly, that the order for second reading of Bill No. 45, an Act to amend The Municipal Tax Sharing (Potash) Act be discharged and the Bill referred to the standing committee on non-controversial Bills.

Motion agreed to, Bill discharged and referred to the standing committee on non-controversial Bills.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 10

Item 1 (continued)

Mr. Koskie: — Yes, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Premier, I have a few questions that I'd like to direct to you; in fact I have many questions that I want to direct to you. But I want to get into a specific area and I want to ask you some details in respect to your advertising policy. My first question to you then, Mr. Premier, is: what advertising agency is agency of record for the government?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — As I mentioned in my last estimates, it's Dome.

Mr. Koskie: — As a follow-up, Mr. Premier, I ask you: is there indeed a written contract with the government and Dome Advertising? If there is indeed, could you indicate when it was signed?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I'll get that information.

Mr. Koskie: — I would have thought that the Premier would have that information here because it . . . Ah, fine. I want to know when it was signed, and I want to follow that up. If it can be provided to me during the course of these questions, then I would follow up on that because I have some additional questions on that line. The second thing, I would ask the Premier whether he would undertake to supply a copy of the contract with the agency of record for the government, Dome Advertising.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, first, I'll have to see if we have one. And if we do, then I'll give it consideration when I find it — if there is one. I'm not sure that there's been a contract signed or what . . . (inaudible) . . . My officials are getting that information.

Mr. Koskie: — I want some specifics in respect to this, and that is I want also what hourly fees are charged by your agency of record for work on accounts. That is, what hourly fees are charged by your agency of record for work on accounts?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, we're calling on a specific official to bring that information forth. We'll have it momentarily.

Mr. Koskie: — I would think then if the official is coming, Mr. Premier, and some of the details, that I might be better off to shift to another one because I've got a whole detail of questions in respect to advertising, some of the specifics.

I just want to go back to one item that was raised by the Leader of the Opposition, and I really want a few further details, and that is in respect to the accommodation allowance provided to one of your staff, Mr. Greg Smith-Windsor. And I want to ask the Premier; he has indicated that the contract provides, I think, up to \$600 as accommodation allowance, if I'm using the correct term, and that it is used at such rate as is needed pending the subletting of the lease. Two things I want. One, can you . . . I think you indicated, Mr. Premier, that you would provide the amount each month that has been used in respect to that contract by Mr. Gren Windsor-Smith, Gren Smith-Windsor, pardon me. If indeed you are not, I would ask that you provide us with the details of the specific amount used each month.

Also, what I would ask is: because of the nature of this unusual allowance, will you provide me with the rental rate, for each month, for that unit that is being rented by Mr. Gren Smith-Windsor, or vice versa?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Yes, I said I'd provide that information, and I will. We're asking Finance to provide it.

Mr. Koskie: — Well, you see, this is very difficult for Finance because we come to deal with your staff, and you're saying now to me to wait for Finance. Are you saying that I get into the details of this unusual one in estimates with Finance? Or can I ask it this morning? Because I think the public is entitled to know. So what I'm asking you: what is the rental rate paid for the unit that is occupied by a member of your staff who is receiving the accommodation allowance?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I've said, Mr. Chairman, I'm getting that information. It might be here momentarily.

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Premier, I've started two questions, and each time you have indicated to me that you're going to get some information. Estimates are here to provide information. Do you want us to stop the questioning until you have a chance to review? Or what is the nature of it? So I want, certainly, the specifics; I want the monthly amount of the use of the living accommodation that was used, each month. I want to know the total rental that was paid for the unit. I want to know the size of the unit, whether it's one bedroom or two bedroom. And will in fact the Premier be in a position to provide that information today?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I'm endeavouring to get that information as quickly as possible. As the hon. member knows, he can ask me on questions on the entire government. We are prepared to dig up the information as quickly as possible on virtually everything or anything that he asks. So, I'm getting my officials to get that information and he will have it as soon as I have it in my hand. I don't know the answer to his question. As soon as I have the information I'll give it to the hon. member.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Chairman, in following up this line of questioning, can you tell me whether or not the individual concerned is part of the staff who are advising you right now?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Yes.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well, would you mind turning around and asking him how much rent is being paid?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I've said to the hon. member, it covers some period of weeks, months, and he'll want the accurate information. So, a member of my staff is getting the information on a month-to-month basis. It varied by month. So he doesn't have it on the top of his head by month. We'll provide it to the hon. member as quickly as we get it here.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well, I don't want to wait a long time for this information. And so maybe we can go at it part by part. Can you tell me . . . Ask him what size the apartment is. Is it one-bedroom, two-bedroom, or whatever? I would like that information.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, the figures are coming forward. It's part of a two-bedroom apartment.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well, is part of the apartment sublet, or how do you mean that it's a part of an apartment?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, I don't know what part of the two-bedroom apartment. I have the information from June, July, August, September, October, November, December, January, February, March, April — the amount that was submitted, the receipt for accommodations, and I will pass that over to the hon. member.

Mr. Koskie: — I ask a further question. The Premier indicated yesterday that Mr. Gren Smith-Windsor was in fact using only such amount of accommodation allowance, subject to that portion which he was unable to get back from subletting. I ask the Premier to whom is the part of the suite being sublet to?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — It's various people at various times.

Mr. Koskie: — I'm going to ask the Premier now, if it's various people at various times, to give me a list of all the names of the people who sublet the unit in which the taxpayers of this province is in fact paying for.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, taxpayers are not paying for the unit. They are covering part of the cost of accommodation of this individual on my staff whose family's in Saskatoon and he's living here . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Chairman, we have provided the information with respect to the living accommodation. The accommodation is part of a two-bedroom apartment and it has various people that have been there in the apartment. I can't add any more than that. We have provided the monthly receipts and the bills on the accommodation.

Mr. Chairman: — The question is . . . Order.

An Hon. Member: — Yes, I come back . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order.

An Hon. Member: — Order what?

Mr. Chairman: — The question is not in order because the apartment is not being paid for out of public funds.

An Hon. Member: — Of course it is.

Mr. Chairman: — Order, order! I find the question not in order. Next question. Next question. Next question.

An Hon. Member: — I challenge the ruling of the Chair. Call in the members.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — There has been a challenge of the Chair on a decision that you have made that the questions were not in order and I would call for a standing vote on that challenge to the Chair of the committee.

Mr. Chairman: — I do now leave the Chair. Call in the Speaker.

(Mr. Speaker re-entered the Chamber and occupied the Chair.)

Mr. Chairman: — Mr. Speaker, during consideration of estimates for the Department of the Executive Council, I ruled a question out of order on the grounds that the question did not relate to the matter for which the government was responsible. My ruling has been challenged.

Mr. Speaker: — Shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained?

Ruling sustained on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 27

Devine	Muller	Birkbeck
Berntson	Lane	Muirhead
Pickering	Sandberg	McLaren
Klein	Katzman	Sveinson
Sauder	Meagher	Schmidt
Smith (Moose Jaw South)	Martens	Young
Domotor	Maxwell	Embury
Dirks	Hepworth	Myers
Zazelenchuk	Johnson	Dutchak

NAYS — 5

Thompson	Lingenfelter	Koskie
Lusney	Shillington	

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 10

Item 1 (continued)

Hon. Mr. Lane: — I'd just like to direct a question to the Premier on, perhaps in my 12 years, the sleaziest action by an opposition. Because I would like to . . . Mr. Chairman, I know that the Hon. Members do not want to hear this, but I would like to background, because the Premier was reluctant.

The NDP have asked the question what an individual — who was living with an individual — what is involved in his private life, and they are asking who an individual is sharing an apartment with. I'm going to tell why, Mr. Chairman, before I ask the question, why the amounts were paid. The individual, as the Premier has indicated, had a significant personal problem. It's unfortunate that there was cancer in the family that

in fact caused the individual to have to go back to his home in Saskatoon on a fairly regular basis, that unfortunately the family member passed away recently, at which time the government ended the housing allowance.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chairman, that has a lot to do with it, because I have never seen anything as cheap and as sleazy and as sick as I have seen this morning. And it's very interesting, Mr. Chairman, that when the vote came about that the Leader of the Opposition, who knew the facts full well, took off down the hallway — because he realized what was going on. So the opposition, Mr. Chairman, the NDP opposition, Mr. Chairman, now wants to probe into the personal situation of a member of this government.

I ask the public to realize that where that takes him. It takes him into the NDP who are now deliberately going to be checking on the personal relationship of civil servants that will have to be held to account in this Chamber and before the public. I say that's sick. And they want to know the personal lives of individuals within government, and I say that that is sick. They want to pry into the personal lives . . . The next step will be the personal lives of the people of this province and I say that that is sick.

The NDP are going to say that asking about a member whose record is in *Public Accounts* — public record — is the same thing. And of course it's not the same thing, because a member has the opportunity to stand up and defend himself. The member, an elected member, has to have that information tabled in *Public Accounts* and it's public information, but individuals do not.

And I'm going to ask the Premier of this province whether he agrees that in fact the NDP position that individuals in government (and I suggest the next logical step is outside) should have to declare their private lives to this Assembly, or whether the government's position is different from that of what I say is the sick, New Democratic Party's position.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I will only reiterate, as I did to the Leader of the Opposition yesterday, that this was a special case where a person that is working for the government that has to go back and forth; he hadn't been able to move his family here because of some very serious problems in his family, and he received some accommodation to help him in this regard. I respect the problems that he had in his family; I also respect his right of privacy. It is not my business . . .

An Hon. Member: — But it's also the accountability of public money.

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

Hon. Mr. Devine: — When a member of the civil service submits his bill for a hotel room or something else, we don't ask him who was in the room, and we never will — ever. When a person submits to me a bill for his apartment or it's a duplex or whatever it will be, I don't ask him who's in there. And I will not ask him. And I will not be expected, and the public doesn't expect, for us to know . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . the public in the province of Saskatchewan respects the civil servants' right of privacy. They submit the bill; we can examine the bills. We have the bills, we have the time, and I've given that to the hon. member. But I am not about to give them information about who was living with who.

There's respect for the right of privacy; there's respect for the individual and I think it's fair. I said this to the Leader of the Opposition yesterday and he understands the situation — the family situation involved. We give you the information; you can see what it is; it's part of a duplex, or part of a two-bedroom apartment. But I will not provide information on any government employee when they submit bills: who did you live with; who shared the room. Or anything else. And that's the point.

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I was making a telephone call when the division bells rang, so I missed part of the conversation. But I want to take issue with what you just finished saying.

Mr. Premier, if you're not interested in who was in a hotel room, by way of example a member of your Executive Council submits, if that member of the Executive Council wasn't in the hotel room, and the bill may be false, you're a Premier looking for a problem. You are a Premier looking for a problem.

It's the former leader of the Conservative party, I may add, it's the former leader of the Conservative party who disgraced himself by suggesting that some member of cabinet — some member of the cabinet of the former administration — had some untoward relationship. And he just made an ass out of himself, and that's not what we're suggesting.

What relationship, if any, Mr. Smith-Windsor might have with the occupant, is irrelevant. I couldn't care less. And I didn't understand (although I was absent), I didn't understand any of my colleagues to question that. But we are interested in who may benefit by this, if I may try to focus on the issue; if I may try to focus on the issue of who may benefit.

I say to you, Mr. Premier, that it has a suspicious look about it. The figures I am given are: 480 in June, 510 in July, 510 in August, 480 in September, 480 in October, 480 in November, and then — by I know what is just an unfortunate coincidence — and then, it goes down to 350 in December, and then goes down to 265 in January and stays there. This just happens to coincide with the session, Mr. Premier.

Mr. Premier, I have some specific questions about the apartment which the taxpayer was paying for. Was it a one- or a two-bedroom apartment? Or has that been asked? It may have been asked.

An Hon. Member: — Two-bedroom.

Mr. Shillington: — Two-bedroom apartment. My colleagues tell me it's a two-bedroom apartment.

Was the question asked as to which apartment block it was in — the municipal address of that apartment block? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Then I'll ask that.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I don't know what the address was, and I don't see why the address is important.

Mr. Shillington: — The taxpayers are paying for it, Mr. Premier. That's why it's relevant.

An Hon. Member: — Give us your address.

Mr. Shillington: — It's probably not . . . I'll give you my address. I live at 2320 Montague Street. There's four people, one dog, lives there. And if you want any other information I'll be happy to provide it with you, even though my house isn't being paid for at taxpayers' expense.

I want to say, Mr. Premier, and it's somewhat irrelevant to the discussion, but I don't buy . . . I've every sympathy with Mr. Smith-Windsor in having an illness or a death in his family, and I extend my condolences to him. But I think his salary is sufficient for him to cover that expense out of his own salary.

So I am, Mr. Premier, critical of the concept of someone who's in his salary range being assisted with his living accommodation. It's not as if he's on minimum wage, and if he were he'd get absolutely no sympathy at all from this government. Absolutely none, and we know that from previous discussions.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — The point of order, Mr. Chairman, is simply this: it seems to me that the Chair ruled that this line of questioning was out of order. That line of questioning, or that ruling, Mr. Chairman, was challenged by the opposition. The Speaker, Mr. Chairman came in and put the question as to whether the ruling should be sustained or not. The ruling was in fact sustained, so it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, or Mr. Chairman, that it naturally follows that this line of questioning is still out of order.

Mr. Chairman: — A point of order has been raised, and I would caution the member from Regina Centre not to proceed with this line of questioning . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . in such a way to challenge the ruling of the Chair.

Mr. Shillington: — I seek some clarification of that. Do I take it that questions with respect to this apartment are out of order, because I say that I was talking about the apartment, but hadn't asked any questions about it, and I do not understand the basis upon which the Government House Leader's position could be upheld unless questions about this apartment are out of order. But if that's the case, I'll take serious objection to it.

Mr. Chairman: — Questions about the apartment are not out of order, but I would just caution the member not to challenge the ruling of the Chair on the accommodation allowance.

An Hon. Member: — The accommodation allowance is out of order?

Mr. Chairman: — No, not the accommodation allowance, but the money that isn't being put up by the government on this apartment, is. The questions along that line were ruled on and those questions are out of order . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Mr. Shillington: — I take it that the braying from the Government House Leader was just that and it does not in fact represent the view of the Chairman.

All right. I want, then, Mr. Premier, to know if anyone regularly shared the accommodation with Mr. Smith-Windsor.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — That one's clearly out of order, Mr. Speaker, because that's the same question that was challenged and sustained by this House. I'm terribly sorry

that the member was not in the House at the time that line of question commenced. If you were, clearly you would understand what the ruling was.

Mr. Chairman: — I caution the member from Regina Centre, not to proceed with questions that would challenge the ruling that has been made by the Chair.

Mr. Shillington: — All right, then. Let me try to deal with this issue in the House. This opposition, Mr. Chairman, does not want to challenge your ruling. The last thing we want to do is waste this morning running in and out with the bells ringing and Mr. Speaker being brought up unnecessarily. We do feel we have an opportunity, we have a responsibility, to hold the government accountable for the expenditure of government funds and for the propriety of the expenditure of government funds. We think that's our responsibility. And we think that money which is spent should be the subject of questioning by us as to its necessity, whether the expenditure was necessary, and whether the expenditure was appropriate, if it was necessary. We think that's relevant. We have no desire to challenge Mr. Chairman's ruling because we don't want to waste the morning.

Let me ask the Premier if the figures which I read represent the entire rent of the apartment, which I assume this is the rent for an apartment. Let me ask the Premier: does this represent the entire rent of the apartment or was it someone's sharing the cost of it?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Maybe it will be helpful if I would remind the members that all public employees sign declarations that their expenditures and the receipts that they give to government are for government business.

An Hon. Member: — And legitimate.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — And legitimate. And we accept that.

I might point out also, Mr. Chairman that MLAs, like the member from Shaunavon, receive an accommodation allowance when the session is on. And we don't ask where you live, or who you live with, when the public pays that accommodation allowance . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order! Would you allow the Premier to make his comments.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I was just pointing out that when the public of Saskatchewan provides MLAs with their accommodation allowance — members like the member from Shaunavon — the public does not expect the member, or government employees, to tell where they live and who they live with. Nor will they ever be expected to, in this administration. Maybe under theirs they would ask to know who is living with who and at what time, etc., etc. But we are not going to provide information that . . .

My staff submits bills. And you have copies of the bills. But I'm not going to ask my staff . . . You've got . . . I'm not going to ask the members of my staff, or anybody else whether you want to or not, to tell me who they live with, period.

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Premier, this stonewalling is just simply not acceptable.

An Hon. Member: — Why did you sit down then?

Mr. Shillington: — I sat down because I thought he might use the opportunity, indeed the privilege of being elected to this Assembly, to account for the expenditure of government funds. Mr. Premier, I want to ask you again: does this represent the entire rent of the apartment? We'll deal with it month by month if you like.

I understand the person who was sitting behind you was the individual whose accounts are being questioned. He just left. But it would not, Mr. Premier, have been a very difficult task to turn around and ask him. And I assume he'd know. And I think it's relevant.

Mr. Premier, you have a responsibility to ensure that expenses are appropriately submitted. And you can't simply rely on the signature of someone, because in a government of that size . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, I'm not saying he's lying. I'm saying the Premier has a responsibility to ensure himself that these expenditures are appropriate.

I don't know whether, Mr. Chairman, that member is a member of Executive Council or not. If he is, I think he's entitled to get into it. If he's not, I think the rules of *Beauchesne* are that only Executive Council members answer questions in estimates. You may ask questions of the minister, but you can't ask a question of someone who isn't a member of Executive Council.

Mr. Premier, I'm going to ask you again, was this the entire rent? And this is a prelude to a number of other questions, all of which, I think, are relevant. So I'm going to ask you again, was this the entire rent? And I'd ask you to stop stonewalling on this issue. The sum of money isn't large, but the principle is important.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — On the principle, and the member says the money it isn't large, I mean, and I just talk about the principle, the principle is this individual is performing no end of duties for the province of Saskatchewan. Assistant cabinet secretary and Clerk, he is also responsible for executive development. I mean you're talking about the principle, and the principle is relevant. The member just said the money is not relevant, it's the principle. The individual submits a bill for his accommodation, like every other civil servant. He submits the bill. And I accept that because he has signed a declaration that this is government business, and this is a legitimate bill. And if that's the portion that he said it was relevant, then I accept that, period.

Mr. Shillington: — What portion of the full rent of that apartment are you paying?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I don't know, but this is the portion that he said to me, or he billed the government, that was relevant for him . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, I don't. I have no obligation to know anything about apartments. I have an obligation to respect that this man has signed a declaration that this is government business, and this is accurate, and this is representing his share, and he said so and he submitted it. That's it.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Premier, a number of responsibilities go with being President, as I think it's styled in the legislation of the Executive Council. One of them are to assure yourself that expenses of members of Executive Council and the staff of Executive Council are appropriate. You in your term, and it's looking as if it's going to be relatively brief, but in your term as Premier you will deal with larger sums, but you won't

deal with many issues that are more sensitive than this one. And you have an obligation to assure yourself that the expenses which are submitted are appropriate, Mr. Premier. And that's what we are talking about, is the appropriateness of this expenditure.

Mr. Premier, if you're going to stonewall on the issue of what portion of the rent we're paying, I'm going to leave it, but only for the moment.

I'm going to ask you if you are satisfied that no elected member of this Assembly — and let's exclude the opposition, because I don't know that you have a direct responsibility to satisfy yourself about the appropriateness of expenses of the behaviour of the opposition, so let's deal with the government caucus. Are you satisfied that no member of government caucus obtained any benefit from this apartment which was paid for out of taxpayers' funds?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I am absolutely satisfied that the receipts submitted by this member of my staff were legitimate, that they were for him, and they were for government business. He was told that he could have an allowance up to \$600. That was made clear. He submitted his receipts, and they never did reach the maximum, and I am confident in the integrity of the individual. You've said yourself it is not a large sum of money.

I don't believe that the public of Saskatchewan want to know — I'll just say it again — want to know, and want the government to know, who shares apartments with individuals, who MLAs may stay with with their allowance. I mean, the next thing you'll be asking for us . . . We provide seniors with a living allowance; you'll want to know who they're living with.

An Hon. Member: — You're missing the point.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — The point, the principle is you want to know who he's living with.

Mr. Chairman, the maximum is \$600. He has submitted the bills. He does so under a declaration that this is government business, and I am satisfied that that information is accurate.

Mr. Shillington: — We seem to have a hearing problem, Mr. Chairman. I don't know whether it's appropriate to ask that the sound system be checked, because we seem to have a hearing problem here. The Premier's answering questions I'm not asking. Now he can do that if he wants, so long as it's understood that he's talking about something, about issues other than what I'm asking. Would it be easier, Mr. Premier, if these questions were submitted in writing? Would it be less confusing for you?

I asked you, Mr. Premier, are you satisfied that no member of your government caucus received any benefit from this particular expenditure?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I am satisfied that the expenditures, the receipts that were submitted, were for the individual in question, for his accommodation — period.

Mr. Shillington: — Perhaps if I keep asking the question the Premier may finally hear it. Are you satisfied that no elected member of the government caucus — I'll exclude the opposition caucus if you prefer — are you satisfied that no elected member of the government caucus received any benefit, direct or indirect, from this expenditure — any benefit from this expenditure?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I have said that I'm satisfied that this expenditure was for this individual, not for other people. He told me that it's for his accommodation, and I'm satisfied that his declaration is sincere, and it's for him, and it's legitimate.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Chairman, a question to the minister and the Premier. For the month of July and August of 1982 the total expense incurred was \$510. Now that seems like a relatively high rent allowance in the city of Regina — not overly — I imagine there are rents in some of the apartment blocks that would be more than that, and much more than that. But if we're saying that this is shared with another individual, and they are splitting it on a half-and-half basis during those months, we're then talking not about 510, but about \$1,020 being shared half and half. Therefore, we're attempting to establish what the total rent is for that particular apartment, and I would like you to tell me, for the month of July and August, what the total rent for that apartment was.

For example, if the rent charged on that apartment was \$350, then I think there's a question to be asked here. And I would like to know what the total rent was on that apartment, because we don't know. And I think it would be of interest to the people of Saskatchewan if the rent being paid was in fact less, and I'm not suggesting that it was. But until you give me the answer, until you give me the answer what the rent was — the bills or receipts, where it was paid, and what the total bill was, and whether or not other people were sharing the rent — then \$510 seems like a very high rent for the people of the province to be paying to one of your personal staff. And I think that is of interest to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan who are attempting to be told that that they don't need a clothing allowance for their children, and they don't need a household allowance for three months after they lose their jobs. And the fact that you are paying \$510 to a personal staff is of interest. And what the total amount of that apartment is for those two months is of interest to me, and I would like to know what it was.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, I've already advised the member, Mr. Chairman, that the individual was authorized to spend up to \$600 for a short-term accommodation per month to help him accommodate his rather difficult family situation, with illness in the family, and he submitted the bill. None of them were as high as \$600 a month. And we've already established that it was for a two-bedroom apartment in the city of Regina. And I don't think, Mr. Chairman, that if we look at the average apartment rents, that \$500 and \$300 and \$200 that was submitted by this individual are out of line. So I trust the individual, when he declares that this is legitimate government expense for accommodation, that it is legitimate.

I'm not going to ask any member of the civil service — and I'm certainly not going to ask the hon. member — confidential information about his dwelling place, or about who he's living with. The credibility of the individual is at stake. If you have some evidence that says that it isn't, well, then I would ask you to bring it forth.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Premier, you may not be interested in where I live or who I live with, nor am I interested whether you're involved in the mortgage plan on your house on Albert Street or who you might live with when you're out of town. That is your personal business; I agree. But what I would like to know is what the rent was on this apartment for August and July of 1982. Because I use the example: if there was another individual who could have been an elected person of the legislature or could have been the president of the PC Party, and I am using these only as examples, if they were paying less than \$510 a month as their share of the apartment, then the taxpayers are paying

for someone else's rent, and that's what we would like to know.

It think it's a very honest question and one that you should have no problem in dealing with. And I can't see why you're not willing to give us that information. I'll ask it one more time.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I'll say it one more time. It's the same line of questioning. You want to know who the individual is living with. And we're not going to advise the public nor does the public want to know who members of the civil service live with.

Any time we submit a bill, any time any public servant submits a bill and it's paid, they've signed a declaration that that is government business — any time they do that. We don't go back and say: 'Who was in the hotel room with you?' And you're going to say: 'Well, if somebody else was in there the public is getting ripped off.' That's what you're saying; that's exactly what you're saying. That's precisely what you're saying.

You've asked who else is in the home. You're asking the Government of Saskatchewan to ask all public employees to tell the public who shares accommodations with them.

Mr. Chairman, I am not going to provide information on any public servant, and I don't expect it from the members opposite who get an accommodation allowance to tell the public who shares their apartment. I've said it once and I'll say it again and I'll continue to say that. That's not public information. There's a right of privacy and that information is private.

And you can say — your argument is fair enough — if somebody is there or three people were there, then the public might have had some contribution. But never, never, never are we going to ask public employees at any time to say who they live with, who they shared with.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Chairman, the Attorney-General insists that we're asking for the names of people, and to clear the record and to set it straight one more time so they don't have that angle to skate around: we're not asking for names of people. What we're asking for is the amount of money that is being paid by them. Use the example of your motel room. I don't care who you might stay with or who you do or who you don't. You can refer to me in that sense and I will refer back to you, and I think that's fair.

But what we do want to know is, if you're sharing a hotel room with the president of the PC Party, then it should be split. I don't care what the name is; it's the money that is the issue here — taxpayers' money. And this apartment is exactly the same. I don't care who he is staying with. What I want to know is that the taxpayers of the province aren't being ripped off to pay for someone who isn't paying their share. That's the point. Have you got that? That's the issue. Who's paying for this apartment? If it's being shared between two individuals, then you employee should pay half — the taxpayers, in other words, should pay half. And I agree that that would be legitimate, if that's the arrangement. I would never set up an arrangement like that, but if you choose to do that, then they should pay half. But if there's someone else staying there, they should pay half.

What I would like to know is, in that months of July and August, whether or not the money that was being paid out was half, or what portion of the total rent that was. What portion of the total rent did we pay for — did the taxpayers pay for — in the months of July and August?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, let's make it very, very clear what the hon. members want in terms of information — what the NDP want to know . . .

An Hon. Member: — Is who pays . . .

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Exactly, is who pays . . . Every home-owner in the province of Saskatchewan receives, or is eligible for, an interest rebate allowance in this province because of our administration. In your line of questioning, now you want to know who lives in every home in the province of Saskatchewan that gives an allowance. That's what you want to know. We'll advise the public that the NDP in the province of Saskatchewan, the NDP in the province of Saskatchewan want to know who lives in every home in the province of Saskatchewan, because that home is getting an interest subsidy. That's what you want to know. You want to know that; that's the principle.

Mr. Chairman, we do not ask members in the province of Saskatchewan who they live with; we don't ask employees that submit their bills for living accommodation who they share the accommodation with. When they submit a bill, when they submit a bill for a hotel room, we don't ask, Mr. Chairman, what it cost the hotel to rent the room. We don't ask that. They submit a bill; it's a legitimate bill; and we cover that. We don't go back in to talk about the privacy of the people that lived in those accommodations, and we're not going to start now.

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Premier, I think it's clear that you're skating around the issue.

An Hon. Member: — Stonewalling, I think, is the word you're looking for.

Mr. Koskie: — Stonewalling. The precise issue is here: that there is an accommodation allowance, and while we disagree with the accommodation allowance of an employee at that salary . . . And we can disagree on that. We disagree on that, but you have made a policy to allow an accommodation allowance. And I think that that accommodation allowance, then, can only be used for the precise benefit of the person to whom you give that accommodation allowance.

Now you have indicated, Mr. Premier, that there was a subletting by the individual we're talking about who has the allowance. And what we're saying is, if in fact he was sharing it and subletting it, is there not an accountability for the proceeds which he receives from the subletting? In other words, there's the possibility, Mr. Premier, as you indicated to us, that Mr. Gren Smith-Windsor was subletting. Now the problem is, to whom, who is receiving and who is accounting for the subletting? Is Mr. Gren Windsor paying the 510 which represents the full payment and at the same time receiving some from subletting? Now I'm not alleging there is, but that is the accountability that we're talking about. So I'll leave it at that and see whether the Premier understands that concern.

And so we're saying, you indicated that it was accommodation and he sublet it and he paid, in accordance, portions. So what I will want to say in July or in August, it's 510. Was he paying the full amount? Was he receiving some for subletting? And to whom did the amount that he received for subletting go to? Did it go into his pocket, over and above, and this represents the full, entire amount of the rental of the unit? And there's a concern there because you indicated, Mr. Premier, that there was a subletting arrangement. And so I ask you, just to clarify so that what we're having here is, one, not an unfair advantage of subletting and still paying it out of the taxpayers for the full

amount. That's the major concern. I have one other concern, but if you could just address that and how you have . . .

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I've already pointed out that it was part of a two-bedroom apartment and the individual submit the bills on his share of that. And it varied from time to time. That's what I've said and that is the fact. And as the individual submits the bills, he is under declaration of that as for his expense and I assume that. Whether there was somebody there for five days one month, or 10 days the next month, or 30 days the next month, or all months, it's up to the individual to submit his receipt for his accommodation, given the guide-lines that were provided him, up to \$600, and that's exactly, Mr. Chairman, that's exactly what he did.

Mr. Koskie: — In the month of July '82, 510. He submitted that amount. Does it represent the full amount, or did he pay 510 as the full amount, and also sublet it and receive a portion from somebody else? The accountability of the subletting, because you indicated yesterday that he was subletting, and I want to know — surely you want to know too, Mr. Premier — as to where the money goes from the other individual who may be subletting. Is that going to Mr. Gren Smith-Windsor? He pays it in July for the full amount, has sublet it, and has kept the amount of the sublet? So, I ask you: is that not a concern to you, Mr. Premier, and how do you protect the public from indeed double subsidizing, or indeed having the accommodation in which other people can in fact benefit from the taxpayers providing this here allowance?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I've said that the individual shared the apartment. From time to time there would be other individuals in the apartment. Therefore, his share would vary from time to time as the receipt shows that it varies from time to time. When government employees submit their receipts on motels or hotels or apartments or what not, we don't go back and ask them: did somebody else pay the room and are you picking it up? When they submit it, they're under declaration that it's a legitimate government expense, and we expect that it is the legitimate government expense for that individual. And if it isn't, then they've violated the declaration. That's the way all governments work.

And in this case, this was the share of the two-bedroom apartment for this individual on a month-to-month basis — his share. And he says that's his share, and that is his share. I'm satisfied, Mr. Chairman, that that is his share.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well, Mr. Premier, that is exactly the point. We would like to know whether or not that was his share, and until we know how much each individual who were using that apartment were paying, it's very difficult to know.

You keep going back to motel rooms and what they were charging. You use the example of a government employee who went to Saskatoon and was charged 50 bucks at the Bessborough, and submitted that bill of \$50, but at the same time stayed at someone else's house, collected the \$50 from someone else who stayed there — that is of no interest of yours? I just can't believe the kind of analysis and analogy that you're using. What we would like to know . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, we're asking the Premier to tell us what is happening with this apartment last July where we paid for it, the taxpayers paid \$510. If he was then subletting it and getting money from another individual, then I think that is of an interest to the public of Saskatchewan . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yeah, and that's what we want to know, is how much more money was paid on that apartment.

An Hon. Member: — It's none of your business.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — It's the taxpayers' interest. You may not think it's not in the taxpayers' interest, but it is because they are paying the bill. They paid the \$510. And if someone's getting a free ride out of that apartment, and you can suggest who it might be, we want to know . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . We want to know. We want to know. That's right. We want to know who else is putting money into this apartment. And for the month of July, I would like to know what the total amount of rent was on that apartment.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, the hon. member is suggesting that the government employee is not telling the truth, that this wasn't his share . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes you are. You are saying that wasn't his share. I'm confident that this was his share on a month-to-month basis, and you're not. So you're saying that he isn't telling the truth — or that that wasn't his share. Well, I'm saying that it is the truth, and if you've got evidence to show that that wasn't his, then let's see it.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Chairman, the question is . . . And the Premier is trying to get off the hook by saying that we're accusing people of being dishonest. But he needs only look at other Liberal-operated operations, and I know that the Attorney-General, in briefing him, was giving him some background. I . . . (inaudible interjections) . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order. Order. Allow the member to make his comments.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What we are trying to establish — and you have the information; you could provide it to us, and solve this whole problem. Very simply, you have the information; you know what the rent for that apartment was, I'm sure; and you could give it to us. But you won't do it because you're stonewalling. That leads us to be suspicious. That leads the people of the province to be suspicious of this deal that you have made. And to clear the air all you have to do is tell us what the total amount of rent was paid in the month of July on that apartment, and then you will have cleared the air, and you will have solved the problem. Right now you are creating the problem.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I'm sure the people of Saskatoon that know the Smith-Windsor family, that knew the late Dr. Smith-Windsor, and that know Gren Smith-Windsor, will be very interested in knowing that the NDP in this legislature in the province of Saskatchewan are saying that this individual, Gren Smith-Windsor, is not telling the truth. That's what you're saying. Every civil servant . . . (inaudible interjections) . . .

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

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, every government employee in the province of Saskatchewan submits the receipts under a declaration that it is legitimate government business. And this individual does this. He's given the guide-lines. He's lived within the guide-lines. He's submitted it. He says that's his share of the apartment. Period. At any time, and any public employee knows this, if it's not the share — or in your example, you said if they don't live there in the hotel and they submit bills and that evidence is brought forward — then you've violated that declaration. This individual said that is his share. I believe that it is his share. I'm satisfied that that was his share in the apartment for those months. And I don't believe that anybody in Saskatoon that knows the Smith-

Windsor family would put up with the members of the opposition saying that this individual does not have integrity, or the family doesn't have integrity. And we will remind anybody in Saskatoon that wonders what you're doing exactly, what you're saying about this individual and about their family.

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Premier, I want to ask you a couple of questions. You have provided, to a senior member of your staff, an accommodation. You have alluded to the circumstances and I have alluded to the amount vis-à-vis consideration of the salary. And I think once you provide accommodation and once you've made that policy of providing it and providing an allowance, then I think that we're entitled to know from you, an assurance that anyone else benefiting or using that apartment, and let me use an example . . . Let us assume that an MLA went in, and let us say that he went in during the month of August and stayed there. And I don't question who he takes in. But I am saying to you the MLA living in that and having accommodation in that apartment and being paid for entirely by the government, is a concern to the taxpayers of this province. And that is the question that we're asking. Look, if you're subletting then it seems to me that you have to provide, one, in April '83, 265 he paid out of the accommodation allowance. Well, all right. What was the total amount of the rental and what amount was paid by the other contributor? Don't want the individual — the contributor.

But what we say is: in August was there a different arrangement? Was the taxpayers paying the entire amount during that month and the same person who later contributed wasn't contributing and getting the benefit? And so I ask: is it perfectly all right in your view that the taxpayer subsidizes an individual's living accommodation allowance, and then in fact can an MLA have the benefit of that subsidized accommodation without paying? I ask you: can an MLA, for instance . . . Can, for instance . . . I ask you directly — let us say, under this arrangement that the individual in question pays the full amount of rent, can he then in fact, have an MLA stay with him at no cost to the MLA during attendance, say, at a session?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, the receipts submitted by the hon. member for the months varied from 480 to 510, 480, 350, 265 and 265. The public employee advised me that was his share of that apartment. Now I am not going to discuss who he shared it with, how he shared it, etc., etc. He said that is his share of the apartment under a declaration that it was — under an oath — and to question him that it wasn't, I mean, you've already implied two things to the people of Saskatchewan.

An Hon. Member: — You want to keep her going. Okay, fine. Don't answer the question. Keep her going.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — You started it. You've implied two things. You've implied two things: that this individual and the Gren Smith-Windsor and the Smith-Windsor family are people without integrity. That's what you've implied, number one. And everybody that knows that family will know who said that.

Number two, you now want the public of Saskatchewan to know, when every single, solitary, when every single, solitary government employee submits a bill for accommodation, who they shared that accommodation with. Both those things, you're going to have to be accountable for.

I'll say it again. This is the share, and I believe it because it's under declaration that it is the share, and it is legitimate. And I will not ask any member, nor will I in the future ask

any member, to provide me further information on who shares their home or who shares their accommodation in the province of Saskatchewan, nor do I believe the public would expect anybody to provide that kind of information.

Mr. Koskie: — I'm just going to ask you again, Mr. Premier. In the subsidized accommodation which is being paid by the taxpayer, I take it that you are saying that it's not your concern that, for instance, an arrangement is made that the president of the Progressive Conservatives has the benefit of that without a contribution, without a contribution. I take it what you're saying is that on the subsidized accommodation paid for by the taxpayers, that you're also saying that any MLA could have the benefit of free accommodation. I take it you're also saying that any cabinet minister could in fact have the benefit of the subsidized accommodation. Am I correct in assuming that that is your position?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, what I've said is when government employees submit their bills for accommodation, we do not ask who shared that accommodation. And if the hon. member is saying, well, if that person had a friend in the room when they submitted the bill, then is the government now going to say: what share goes to that individual? . . . That's what you're asking. That's exactly what you're asking. I want every government employee to understand precisely what this member is asking. He's saying if a room is shared by another individual, he wants to know how much that person shared in the public expense for that accommodation allowance. Do you realize what he's asking for? He's asking every government employee to tell me who he stays with, who stays in his home, who stays in his apartment, who stays in the hotel room. I'm not going to say. That's private information. It's confidential information, and it's going to stay confidential information. It's none of the public's business who stays in your home, whether it's an apartment, or whether it's a tent, or whether it's a house.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — I want to see if we can clear away some of the irrelevancies, Mr. Premier. There are other issues that we would like to get on to and deal with. There are some issues of state that we'd like to deal with. I'd like to ask you what kind of insanity led you to abolish the women's division, and so on, and those are issues I want to get to, but we can't until we finalize this item. So if you'd quit stonewalling, we could get on and deal with other issues which are also important.

And I may say that I've never met Mr. Smith-Windsor. I didn't know he had a family. I didn't know anything about him. I have no reason to believe he lacks integrity, no reason to call it into question, and frankly, not a lot of reason to care. The questions have been directed at you, at you, Mr. Premier. I also want to suggest that any comparison with an MLA allowance I would have expected something better than that from the Premier. I wonder if the Premier doesn't know that a member's allowance is statutory. It doesn't matter whether you spend it or not, you get it. I get the living allowance, and I patently don't rent an apartment in Regina, but I get it. That allowance is totally different . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, if the member wanted to sleep on the street, you'd still get the same allowance, as an MLA, and that's the point. An MLA's allowance is different than any other. It's different than any other; it's statutory. This is not. This was paid for at public expense.

I want to ask you, Mr. Premier, if it would be appropriate, if you think it would be appropriate for an elected member of your caucus to benefit from this expenditure of public funds by staying there when in town. Would that be appropriate, in the Premier's

view?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, maybe I can help the Hon. Members be going back and looking at the entire situation so they understand it totally.

Mr. Gren Smith-Windsor worked for the Meewasin Valley Authority up until the time of the election, living in the city of Saskatoon, a professional. Mr. Chairman, he was employed by the NDP administration because they trusted his judgement; they said he was a man of integrity; they said he was a professional; and they knew that he had a very good reputation in the city of Saskatoon.

All of a sudden, there's a change in the government and we want Mr. Gren Smith-Windsor to carry on in his professional capacity, but we'd like to have him do it in the city of Regina. To accommodate that, we want him to move to the city of Regina. Because of family problems, and because of cancer, and because of children in school and other things, we said, 'We will provide you with an accommodation allowance here, because we know you've got to go back and forth, and it's difficult.' Never, ever, did anybody ever question his integrity. We said, 'You can have up to \$600 a month if you need it for accommodation, until you move your family here, until you deal with your problems with respect to health and other things in the city of Saskatoon.'

That was agreed. He submitted his bills. His receipts never did reach the maximum. He says, 'That's my share of the accommodation.'

You trusted him when he worked for you; I trust him when he works for me. He says, 'That's my share.' He signed it under a declaration that that's his share — period. If he had somebody else there, or if any government employee shares some accommodations with somebody else . . . It is not the public's right to know who you live with. There is a right of privacy in this province, and we respect that right. You respected the integrity of the family and of the man when he worked for you; I respect the integrity of the family of the man when he works for me. He says that's his share; I agree that that's his share — I'm confident that it was his share.

I don't know what more you could ask of the individual or me. We have provided the public expenditure. The individual civil servant that's his share, and that's what goes on daily in the province of Saskatchewan with respect to expense accounts.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — But, Mr. Premier, I don't know whether you're ever going to get around to answering the question or not. I hope you do, because there are other responsibilities which we should be attending to, in addition to this one.

Mr. Premier, I disagree on the comment you've just made, that it is appropriate to pay a person the salary that Mr. Smith-Windsor is paid, and pay him a living allowance as well. This province is full of people who must take up jobs in other communities before it is convenient to do so, and he's no different. But at least, Mr. Premier, you addressed yourself to that issue. At least, Mr. Premier, you addressed yourself to the appropriateness of the principle, and let the record show that you and I disagree upon that.

What you haven't addressed yourself to is the second issue — the second issue. And I'm going to ask you again, and I hope you'll spare me all the irrelevant comments. I'm going

to ask you again: do you feel it would be appropriate for an elected member of your caucus to benefit from this by using that accommodation when in town?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, when government employees submit their bills, they say it is for legitimate expenses for those individuals. In this case, the individual submitted his bill and he says, ‘That’s my share.’ Period. If you want to speculate on any government employee that submits their bills and saying, ‘Well, who else was in on this? Did somebody else share the room with you? On Friday night, December the 13th, 1982, did somebody share a room with you?’

Mr. Chairman, we are not going to question government employees at any time, or ask or demand, who they’re living with — ever. The individual said, ‘This is my share,’ and he said, ‘This is my honest share. This is the legitimate share of that two-bedroom apartment for this time period.’ I believe that. I trust that you still believe that he is a man of integrity . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . All right, then it’s finished. If you agree he’s a man of integrity and he says, ‘That’s my share,’ that’s the end of it — it’s his share. What else do you want?

Mr. Shillington: — I have no reason to believe . . . You’re getting a good deal of assistance, Mr. Premier, that you don’t need, from the member behind you. But I’ll leave that to you.

Mr. Premier, I have no reason to believe that he is or is not a man of integrity. I don’t know him. I have no reason to believe he is or isn’t, and I’m not commenting on it. But, Mr. Premier, I wonder if you’re going to get around to answering the question that I put to you? Do you feel it’s appropriate for a member of government caucus to be utilizing that accommodation when in town?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I don’t know, from day to day or night to night, who is in that apartment. And I’m not going to comment on who was in the apartment. And I’m not going to comment on who the individual might have shared the apartment with. That is not my business and it’s not the public’s business. That is his home. That’s his dwelling. And when he pays for his share of his home, it’s his. And it doesn’t belong to anybody else and it’s nobody else’s business who is in there. If it’s his share of his accommodation he does what he likes in that accommodation. Period. And I’m not going to ask him to tell me who shared with him or if his family was with him from time to time, or if there was a friend, or if there was anybody else. And I’ll stand here from now until December and I will not provide information on any public employee that submits a bill, and asking them who shares their home, or who shares their apartment, or who shares their tent — and you can ask till then. And it wouldn’t be expected of anybody in a democracy anywhere. And it’s not going to be provided in this legislature.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Well, Mr. Premier, you’re going to find Christmas a long time in coming, if you continue to answer it in the same fashion. I couldn’t care less who he shares a tent with. And if he had paid for the apartment himself, nothing could interest me less. He could have everybody in town there, including to use the phrase, the Minister of Education, Josef Stalin’s nephew, if he wanted. But that’s not the issue, Mr. Premier, and I’m surprised that you’re having so much difficulty comprehending what the issue is. I’m surprised that you are.

The question, Mr. Premier, is: Mr. Premier, do you feel it would be appropriate for a

government member to make use of that apartment? That's the question, Mr. Premier. It isn't . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, if I were assured it were hypothetical I wouldn't be asking it. That's the problem. I am not entirely sure this is an academic discussion. I am not entirely sure this is an academic discussion.

Mr. Chairman: — Order. Order. Order. Allow the member . . . Order! Allow the member to ask his question.

Mr. Shillington: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I smile. I have company. I said it: a dog and two kids, and a wife, and I don't think the Premier's interested in that. I don't think he could care less. And I couldn't care less who stays at his house or who stays at Smith-Windsor's tent. The problem is that nobody's paying my mortgage. I don't have one, but nobody's paying the taxes. I assume nobody's paying your taxes, except you out of your own indemnity. The problem with Mr. Smith-Windsor's apartment is that it was taxpayers' dollars, and it's a highly unusual arrangement. Highly unusual.

Well, let me ask that. I'm not sure that's been asked. Let me ask that. Were there any other living allowances paid to any other member of Executive Council? Is this unique or were there any others?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, there's the standard relocation packages under the Public Service Commission for people that may have moved here, in terms of their household goods and other things, that were employed, were provided. And I don't think that's any different than . . . I mean that's what the member asked. It was in terms of individuals that work for Executive Council, did we provide any accommodations, moving.

Mr. Shillington: — The question was not relocation allowances. To the Premier's credit, you suspect I'm not interested in that, and of course I'm not. That's standard. I take your word for it. It's standard for all the people you've hired. This, however, was not a relocation allowance in the standard form. This was a living allowance, on an ongoing basis, which paid the rent on apartments from June to April. The question, Mr. Premier, is: did anyone else get a similar allowance?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't know if the hon. member was in the House when I explained the unique circumstances, and his colleagues have said the amount of money is not substantial. He would agree that there were unique family circumstances, and I think the Leader of the Opposition understood those yesterday, before you started all this. But given the fact that we wanted Mr. Smith-Windsor to be here, but he couldn't move his family for a couple of reasons — one, because of the cancer and the severe illness in his family — we said we would make special consideration for living accommodations here to help him cope with this very difficult situation.

So it is unique; the circumstances were unique. Mr. Smith-Windsor needed some assistance to help him cope with this very difficult time in his family, and we recognized that, and we provided him with some guide-lines. He's lived within the guide-lines, and he says that he has only paid for himself. This is his share, and only his share, and I'm satisfied of that, and I'm sure you're satisfied with his integrity, because you said you have. So, as a result, they are unique circumstances. I do address those unique circumstances. We have some compassion for families, and I am sure you would under these circumstances.

He has lived within the guide-lines. He's provided us with the receipts. That was his share, and he says that it's his share, and I would think that you would respect the circumstances surrounding the situation, and you would respect the fact that this individual has a high degree of professional respect all across Saskatchewan, and indeed nationally. And when he says this is his share for his apartment, it's just for him. You want to know who it's for? It's just for him. That's his share, and he signed it under a declaration that it was his, and that's acceptable in any jurisdiction.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Premier, as I said, this province is full of people who have to take up jobs in distant communities which don't allow commuting every night, and who must pay for that themselves until it's convenient to move their family. And I suggest to you, Mr. Premier, that the allowance was inappropriate. But as I say, to your credit, at least you addressed yourself to that issue. At least you addressed yourself to that issue, and the record will show that we disagree on that issue.

An Hon. Member: — You don't care about his family.

Mr. Shillington: — I don't care about his family — of course I care about anyone's family. And I'm suggesting we don't. I'm questioning whether or not, when you're making \$78,000, you need another up to \$600 a month to keep body and soul together. I question whether this was a necessary expenditure of funds. But to your credit, you addressed yourself to that. You haven't addressed yourself to the larger issue. I am going to ask you again: do you think it would be appropriate for an elected member of the government caucus to benefit from that apartment by staying in it when he's in town?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, this was only for Mr. Gren Smith-Windsor. This share of the rent was for him only; nobody else benefited by it. It was just for him — only for him. It wasn't for 16 other people. It was just for him, and he says it's just for him, and that's his share.

Now you ask me, if an individual visited him, or if he had somebody stay with him, should the public know who stays with him? I've already answered that. This is his share. You can be satisfied it was just for him, and not for anybody else — just for the individual. That was his share and his share alone.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Premier, one of the unpleasant responsibilities that falls on any member of . . . the president of any Executive Council in this country, is a responsibility for the appropriateness of these kind of expenditures. I don't suppose there's a Premier in existence who enjoys the responsibility, but unfortunately, it is yours. It cannot be delegated or passed on; it is yours, and it will remain yours so long as you remain in the office of Premier. Unfortunately, you can't delegate it, for some things cannot be delegated. One of them is your responsibility for the behaviour of members of your government caucus.

Take an example. You've shown that Lloyd Hampton — I'm sorry, when the member from Canora behaved in a fashion which you thought inappropriate, you discharged your responsibility. We quarrelled about the way you discharged it, but you didn't deny the responsibility.

I'm asking you again, Mr. Premier, to address yourself to the issue and ignore the irrelevancy. Do you think it would be appropriate for a member of government caucus

to benefit from that apartment while he's in town?

Mr. Chairman: — I find the question being repetitious, and I would suggest to the member to pursue onto something new.

Mr. Shillington: — Well, I want to . . . Okay, except . . . Well, I'm not sure I do, except . . . Just let me ask for clarification, Mr. Chairman. Are you suggesting that if I am dissatisfied with the answer that's given, I cannot repeat the question and ask for a satisfactory answer? I say to the chairman that this is anything but a precedent to repeat a question when you're not satisfied with the answer. This is anything but a precedent to repeat a question.

Mr. Chairman: — I can't rule on whether the question is satisfactory, or the answer is satisfactory, I can only rule on the repetition of the question.

Mr. Shillington: — Start with a new question. Do you feel it would be appropriate for a member of Executive Council to benefit from this expenditure by staying on it when he's in town? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's not. That's not. There's a difference between a member of caucus and a member of Executive Council, so I'll change the question.

Do you think it would be appropriate for a member of Executive Council to benefit from the apartment?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, when . . . Mr. Chairman, the hon. member knows that when a public employee rents an apartment or rents a house, it's for his use, and that it's his decision whether he wants to have company, or whether he wants to have friends, or whether he wants to have the whole family here. That's his decision. He rents his home. It's his or hers, whatever the case may be.

With the accommodation allowance for that room, when you rent a room with government money, that's your room. The question is: it is not public information to say who shares the room with them, who shares the home, whether he has some friends in. Once you rent the home, the home is yours, the room is yours. That's private property. Whether you want to bring in some friends, whether it happened to be another member of Executive Council or your sister-in-law or an NDP member of parliament, that's that individual's right. It's his home.

In this case, the individual says, 'This is the share of that two-bedroom apartment that I am responsible for.' Period. And whether he has somebody with him or whether he has friends there or who else is there, that's his share. And he has every right, as a homeowner does, to have guests. And we can't question that. And because he has some guests or any individual would have guests in a room or in an apartment of anything else, are we going to say, ah, now we have to know who was in there and for how many hours they were in there so we know how much public expense sent to how many people 'cause this person rented his home for him, but he has some friends there? I mean, everybody that submits a bill for a room or an apartment or anything else has the right to live in that apartment as he or she sees fit — it's rented — because it's that share that belongs to that individual. That's always been the case and will continue to be the case.

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Premier, you're comparing an individual having a home, the individual having a home . . . and let us use an example. You have a home and you're paying for it out of your salary or whatever, or your own income. I think you have total control over that — who you bring, who stays there, and what arrangements you make.

Now, I'm saying here that here we have a situation of an apartment paid by the taxpayers of this province. And what we want to know from you, Mr. Premier, can you . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Paid by the taxpayer; it's paid by the taxpayer; it's slightly different. Because if it's paid by the taxpayer, others could go in, like the president of the Progressive Conservative Party, and conveniently be a guest and stay at the cost of the taxpayer of this province. Slightly different situation. I ask the Premier first of all; do you see a difference between an accommodation provided by the taxpayer as opposed to an individual home paid for by the individual himself?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, if an individual . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Chairman, in addressing the hon. member's question, if an individual is given a salary, let's just say that you took the same amount of money, and it was just given in terms of salary, and the individual goes out and rents an apartment. It's public money. It is going to the individual and he is paying for the apartment. It's public money. Would you be satisfied if this accommodation was paid in terms of salary and the individual can go rent himself a home? Is there any difference? When he rents the home, he can have whoever he wants into his home. In this case, because it was short-run, because it was unique, unique circumstances for his family, we said, 'We'll help you for a few months to accommodate this, because it's very difficult circumstances.' And that's exactly what we did. Would you raise the same questions if his salary was increased by \$300 for six months and he rents an apartment? It's still public expense, so you could ask your same silly question, 'Who is living in the individual's home at public expense?' It's the same thing.

An Hon. Member: — Answer the question.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — I'm answering the question. It's the very same. Public dollars are public dollars. The individual from Saskatoon just pointed out it's considered income by the revenue people, by the taxation people. That allowance is income just like it was income if it were tacked onto his salary. If he decides rent accommodations, that's his business. It's his home. If he wants to have people in there — his family or whoever else — it's his business. It's not in the public's . . . The public of Saskatchewan certainly don't want to know who this individual shares it with, and I'm not going to provide that information.

Mr. Koskie: — This is apparently a short-term arrangement. Can you indicate how long this arrangement will be continued in respect to Mr. Gren Smith-Windsor? How long will it continue on? You have been alluding to special circumstances, and I would like to know, on behalf of the taxpayers of this province, whether or not it will continue, or whether the circumstances make it that a man at \$70,000 will now provide his own accommodations, rather than the taxpayers . . . (inaudible) . . . expense.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I've already said to the hon. member and to his colleagues, this was unique because of the family circumstances. He had to go back and forth often. He had to cope with some very difficult circumstances. It was a short-run thing to help the man cope with some difficult family problems. It is not the common practice. It will be part of his income, and he knows that, and it was a unique

circumstance. So, as a result, we provided some . . . a unique accommodation to help him cope with a very difficult situation.

Mr. Koskie: — I asked you a simple question. How long is the uniqueness going to continue? That's all I asked you — the length of the contract.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, it is for a short period of time. It's a matter of months. We have just . . . The individual has just . . . Well, the difficulty in the family, I think you might say, has been, to a large extent, resolved, because the individual passed away. He is now in the process of moving his family here, and when he gets that done, in a matter of weeks, then this unique accommodation can be wrapped up.

Mr. Koskie: — The Premier alluded to the fact that it could have been paid as a salary and he could have gone out and purchased his own accommodation. I ask the Premier why he did not in fact pay it as a salary and have a complete, and not require the uniqueness of this arrangement? Why in fact didn't you just increase his salary during that period of time?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Is the hon. member suggesting that we could have just increased his salary by a maximum of 600 a month and then there would have been nothing to worry about? Is that what you're saying? Well . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . All right. If that's what you're saying — if I'm assuming that, that we just could have increased his salary by 600 a month and he could have purchased an apartment, and then you wouldn't have been upset with this — or he could have rented an apartment — then I would say he agrees with my logic, finally, that once the individual is receiving public funds and he declares this is his accommodation and he does so with a declaration, then it's as clear as can be. He has signed that; we respect his integrity. If you have information that it wasn't his share, please deliver it. If not — I think we've covered it.

Mr. Koskie: — We haven't. You'd like to think that, because what is left here is the fact that you have indicated that this apartment has been subletted, and you are not providing information as to the other person's contribution. It's our business to determine whether or not, in the month of July, \$510 was the full amount, and whether someone was having the benefit of it — whether it was in fact elected representative, whether it was a member of the Executive Council — and what we want to know, Mr. Minister, Mr. Premier, is in fact if in fact you have the uniqueness here of an arrangement. And it seems to me that what you should be documenting is in fact the amount — not the individual — but other contributions that were made to the total cost.

You will not even advise this House the total cost of the apartment. I'm going to say that you are not providing the information that the taxpayers have a right to know, and that is in fact as to the total contributions made by others. I think you have an obligation, you have an obligation to tell the people of Saskatchewan that in respect to the variation in the amount that the government and the taxpayers have been paying from 430 to 510 to 510 to 480 to 480, 480, 350, 265, 265, 265, 265.

And what we want to know is in fact, whether or not anyone else shared the benefits in respect to that.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — This was only . . . These payments . . . To the hon. member, so he gets it: these payments were only for the individual — only for him, nobody else. Just for this individual. That was his share of the apartment, and only for him. That's what he said, and that's what we believe. We trust in the man's integrity, and he said, he's

declared that that was his share. That's what it is.

Mr. Shillington: — Well, I just want to leave the subject for the moment with a comment, Mr. Premier. April 26 did indeed mark the end of an era, an end of frugality in the office of Premier. It really did mark a change. And that era didn't begin with your immediate predecessor. You have been preceded by the war; by three premiers; Mr. Douglas, Mr. Thatcher, and Mr. Blakeney, all of whom took a personal responsibility for these kind of expenditures. The late Ross Thatcher would indeed call a minister and ask him why he submitted an expense account for breakfast, why didn't he eat it at home. That may sound quaint, but I think that's what the public want of the office you occupy.

And the contrast between you and your immediate predecessor is very, very sharp. Your immediate predecessor drove, and it's an image but it's an accurate image, drove Mr. Thatcher's car for the entire 11 years he was in office, until the last year when the thing finally wore out. You have indeed ushered in not just the Conservative administration but a Conservative pork barrel which is very, very lush. It is very, very lush. And I say to you, Mr. Premier, that April 26 marked the end of an era in more ways than one.

I want to, Mr. Premier, in the few minutes that are left to us before one o'clock, deal with an issue that I alluded to earlier. That is the abolition of the women's division. I may not be here for the conclusion of your estimates and I do want to deal with it before I go. I am sure my colleagues will want to return to this. Mr. Premier, I want to ask you if you still think the decision you made to abolish the women's division was appropriate. I remind you it has been the subject of the most scathing criticism from virtually every women's group. I want to ask you if you treat that criticism in the same fashion the Minister of Finance did when he said it was a bunch of NDP women. Some, such as Dolores Honour, took exception to that kind of a categorization. I wonder, Mr. Premier, if you still think that was appropriate, or if you are now in the process of reconsidering that decision?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, we made the decision on the advice of the women in our cabinet, the women in our caucus, and women all over the province of Saskatchewan, that indeed the concerns and the legitimate concerns of women in the province of Saskatchewan should not be confined to the Department of Labour. Department, after department, after department needs constant and conscious reminder of the needs of women because of equality and inequalities. The previous administration confined that to Labour. We have expanded it in two areas, number one, to the Public Service Commission so no department gets off the hook; and, number two, a brand new Department of Advanced Education and Manpower that will deal with all issues with respect to employment for women. Similarly, for the first time in the province, having a minister responsible, legitimately responsible for the council of status of women.

Mr. Chairman, there is so much more the women of Saskatchewan can be and will be under this administration. For years, and years, and years, and years — they've asked for equality — they've asked for equality and the former administration confined that equality to the Department of Labour.

Under our administration, Mr. Speaker, there is no confinement; it is open. We have women in cabinet; we elected more women than lawyers; we have more women employed than the previous administration had. We are providing the women of

Saskatchewan with some very, very unique opportunities for some exciting opportunities in the public and the private sector in this province.

I am happy to say that women all across this province are excited about the kind of opportunities that are here in the province of Saskatchewan, particularly with the new Department of Advanced Education and Manpower, as well as women actively involved in the Public Service Commission, to make sure that women's rights are well protected.

Mr. Shillington: — You did indeed, Mr. Premier, elect five women, and I congratulate each and every one of them. As practising politicians you and I both know that women in getting elected face special difficulties that men do not, not only in your party, Mr. Premier, had we elected 55 people, we would have also had five women in the caucus. It is not be coincidence that when a party suffers electoral reverses, it's the women candidates who aren't successful.

Mr. Premier, women in government face the same problem as women do at the electoral polls. They face special difficulties. There was nothing, Mr. Premier, that prevented women from going to school under our administration. It's been a very . . . You have to go back to a different century to find a time when women couldn't go to school. They could go to school; they could work for the provincial government; they had nominal equality. The problem was, Mr. Premier, it was nominal. It was nominal.

Women make a fraction of what men make. I read an article last night (I don't have it with me) to the Minister of Labour, which suggested that women make almost exactly one-half of what men do. Women occupy the lowest echelons in society and women occupy by far the largest percentage of minimum wage people. Their rate of unemployment is far higher, and that is a problem that women in all provinces in this country suffer. Women always could go to any department of government. That was always true; you haven't changed that. Women could always get whatever services were provided by Education and all the other departments.

The concept, Mr. Premier, of the women's division was that there was a division targeted to the advancement of women. As I quoted last night to the Minister of Labour, a comment made by Mr. Justice Holmes of the U.S. Supreme Court in the *Brown v. the city of Atlanta* decision, when he said that equal laws applied to unequal people is a kind of discrimination. This, Mr. Premier, was an attempt to have a special division which was targeted at women's problems, an attempt to advance women, primarily in the public service, but in the economy as a whole.

Mr. Premier, you abolished that, after a good deal, and when you did you were the subject of a good deal of criticism, and it goes on. The last article I read to the Minister of Labour was dated May 3rd, 1983. The criticism goes on.

I want to ask you, Mr. Premier, if you accept the concept of a special division or department whose primary responsibility is advancing the interests of women in the economy. Do you accept that concept?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, we accept that there are special needs for women and there will be a special place and a special focus in the new Department of Advanced Education and Manpower for women and for their concerns, and it will be much more powerful and much more influential than the previous mechanism of being confined to the Department of Labour.

Women in the province of Saskatchewan were delighted with the results of April 26th, 1982. Not only were five elected, but there's a new era in the province of Saskatchewan that they will now have an opportunity to be involved in private and public management all across this province. The excitement that is building in the province of Saskatchewan is going to be, for the first time, shared equally by women, and they will no longer be confined to the Department of Labour or any other confines. It's equal opportunity for everybody in the province of Saskatchewan under the new jurisdiction.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Premier, women may or may not have been delighted with the events of April 1982. I don't know that there's any way of ascertaining that. But I'll tell you they were less than delighted with the events of February 1983 when you abolished the women's division. If you accept the concept of a special division or department targeted at women, why then did you abolish the women's division? Was it because you were dissatisfied with the performance of that division? Was that your reason for abolishing it? Were you dissatisfied with the performance of the division? Is that why you abolished it?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I've already said that there was so much more that could be done, and there was no need to confine it to the Department of Labour. Women wanted to be active in all departments. The hon. member doesn't understand that it was confined to Labour. It was the women's division of the Department of Labour. You didn't have a women's division in the Department of Agriculture, and a women's division in the department of the public service, or a women's division in the Crown corporations. You had only a women's division in the Department of Labour. You confined women to Labour, and everybody in Saskatchewan knows that you wanted to confine women to Labour. We've changed that. Women are no longer confined to Labour in the province of Saskatchewan. They are now a part of the entire civil service — the entire civil service, the Public Service Commission. They're involved in advanced education and training and every single solitary role in government.

Let me give you an example. Let me give you an example. Let me give the hon. members an example of what they thought of Labour. Too bad the Hon. Leader of the Opposition isn't here. Under his executive positions in Executive Council — and these are non-clerical; these are not including clerical, just executive people in positions — he had 20 per cent of his staff, women. Under the new Executive Council, not including clerical, 36.7 per cent of those executives are women. Almost double the number of women employed in executive positions, because no longer are women confined to the women's division of the Department of Labour, but they're throughout government including Executive Council.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Premier, you don't have a women's division in Labour; you don't have a women's division anywhere. And that's the subject of my complaint, is that you are apparently prepared to ignore the special role that this division played.

Mr. Premier, you indicated that you were considering a special department for women. Are you still considering a special department of women, or however you may style it?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Chairman, I've already established the fact that there will be a target and a focal point and a very specific role-functioning unit in the new Department of Advanced Education and Manpower that women all across Saskatchewan can identify with and can work with and through, through the public sector and the private

sector. And for the first time we will have a legitimate minister responsible for the council of the status of women in this province, and that's never happened before. It's never happened before; there's never been an order in council that said that. In this jurisdiction and under this administration, there will be. There are so much more, and there's so much more women in this province can be and, believe me, Mr. Chairman, they will be under this administration.

The committee reported progress.

STATEMENT BY SPEAKER

Farewell to Visiting Clerk

Mr. Speaker: — Before closing the House, I would just like to advise the Assembly that our visiting Clerk will be leaving us this week-end, and I'd like to say how much we've enjoyed having him with us. He shared a lot of information to the province of the things that are happening in Sri Lanka, and I hope that we have shared some with him.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Assembly adjourned at 1 p.m.