

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**May 9, 1983**

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**Hon. Mr. Rousseau:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My pleasure today to introduce to you and to the members of the legislature two classes of grade 4 students from the Ethel Milliken School. And they are accompanied . . . In fact, they're sitting the west gallery, Mr. Speaker, and they number 50 in total. They're accompanied by their teachers, Della Irvine and Norma Cholerton. I will meet with the group at 2:30 for pictures and shortly thereafter for refreshments. I do hope that the students and their teachers enjoy the proceedings during question period, and I would ask all members to join with me in making them welcome here today.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Smith:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce through you and to you, a group of 19 students from St. Mary's School in Moose Jaw, grade 4, 5 and 6. They're sitting in the Speaker's gallery and I presume they have toured the legislature by now. I'll be meeting with them shortly after 2:30 for pictures. Thank you.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**QUESTIONS**

**SPC Rate Application and Consumer Price Index**

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Minister of Finance in the absence of the minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, and it has to do with your government's approval of SPC's application for rate increases of more than three times the current rate of inflation, and in particular it has to do with the application just made by Saskatchewan power Corporation to the public utilities review commission, a copy of which I have here, Mr. Speaker. In the application it sets out the reasons, the justifications for the requested increases. And at the top of the list of expense items is the consumer price index. And I note that SPC forecasts that the consumer price index will jump by 10 per cent in 1983, 10 per cent, Mr. Speaker. And my question is simple, to the Minister of Finance: do you agree or disagree with SPC's forecast that the annual rate of inflation in this province in 1983 will be 10 per cent, well above the expected national average?

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — I can simply say two points, Mr. Speaker. Number one, it's not for me to determine that particular question as it relates to public utilities review commission. It's for the public utilities review commission to determine that point and I assume that they would simply call evidence with regards to that, to come down to their view. And that's clearly why we have a public utilities review commission in place to do it.

With regard to projections into the future, I suppose those sometimes are difficult. The only thing I can say about the consumer price index in the province of Saskatchewan: since May of 1982 it has been the best in the entire country, thanks to this government and thanks to the actions of this government. We are proud of what the consumer price index is in the province of Saskatchewan and clearly we're hopeful it will get even better.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Are you equally proud of the application made by your Crown corporation for rate increases based upon a projected 10 per cent increase in the consumer price index in 1983?

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — I suppose the question . . . And I certainly haven't had an opportunity to read the presentation. I don't know whether that presentation is, if that's what Sask Power sees their particular aspect of their cost going up, be they interest rates, which of course Sask power is a high borrower, be that they have to pay increased rates for natural gas that you, when you were the government of the province of Saskatchewan, forced us into buying from the province of Saskatchewan, not only this year but for the 15 years . . . from the province of Alberta. It could be based on their costs for Saskatchewan Power Corporation because of the fact that when you were the government, you agreed. You agreed with the federal government that Sask Power Corporation should fall under the PGRD tax of the national energy program and the effect of that has been \$100 million cost to the people of Saskatchewan in the year 1982. Maybe those are the costs that they're referring to in their submissions, and those costs are hard. I don't know other than that. I haven't read their submission, but certainly that particular corporation has been placed in difficult situation because of the actions of your government, and you should be ashamed of it.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I refer the minister to the application filed by his corporation, which includes none of the things he mentioned — none of the things he mentioned — all of which are separately listed, and I am talking about the consumer price index. The one for gasoline, for example, is 18 per cent. But for the consumer price index it says: '10 per cent for general items.' I ask: is that your view of what the cost of living is going to increase, or is in fact SPC simply playing games with the consumer price index in order to apply for a higher rate increase than is necessary?

**Hon. Mr. Andrew:** — Well, you can certainly give us lessons on playing games. And I can assure you that the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, everything is out front, everything is before the commission. It's not sneaking and sneaking around and hiding behind the doors of cabinet where it was with regards to you. I simply say with regard to Saskatchewan Power Corporation, perhaps they're borrowing a lot of money, and clearly they are because of the Nipawin project. Perhaps they have extra taxes. Clearly they have, because of the actions of your government. Perhaps their wage increases are a little higher because they didn't blend in or they had a two-year contract. Those are the situations that are probably referred to there. I haven't had an opportunity to read it. I am confident of the management of Saskatchewan Power Corporation, but more importantly I am confident of the management of the public utilities review commission in this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### Tour of Lanigan Mine by Chinese Bankers

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the absence of the minister in charge of the potash corporation, I'd like to direct a question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, can you confirm — and I believe the date was Wednesday, April the 27th — there was a special four-hour tour of the PCS Lanigan mine by a high-level group of bankers from the People's Republic of China?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I wasn't on that tour. I'll take notice with respect to the four-hour tour and get the minister to report back to the hon. member.

**Mr. Koskie:** — As a supplemental, Mr. Speaker, I understand that a number of the cabinet met with the group of Chinese bankers. I ask the Premier: was the subject of last week's tour, or on April 27, and the meetings, were they in fact in respect to the potential purchase of an equity position in the PCS Lanigan by the People's Republic of China?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, perhaps I could . . . Mr. Speaker, it might be more appropriate if I asked the deputy chairman of the board to address these questions, in the absence of the minister, and he may have some observations about it. In terms of specifics, I'll just take note. In terms of the general attitude about people coming into the province, there's an awful lot of people interested in Saskatchewan recently, and we're quite happy to deal with no end of them that are coming in here. Perhaps the deputy chairman could add some information.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — In response to the hon. member's question, I have a little difficulty, Mr. Speaker, in that the former deputy minister of intergovernmental affairs, who's well known to the members opposite, was critical of the new government in not maintaining contacts with mainland China, the People's Republic of China, and here we make an initiative — which potentially is one of the greatest markets that the potash corporation could have — we make an initiative to invite people over to see the facilities. We established the contacts. Now we find out that the NDP opposition is opposed to our efforts.

The details of the tour — we undertake to take notice and supply the hon. members with the details of the tour, and I will ask the chairman to supply that information. But it is a rather inconsistent position for the NDP to take. On the one hand, you're critical that we're not selling potash, although we were caught with this big inventory because the previous government wouldn't cut production, although the markets weren't there, because of the election. So we go out and try and sell and bring people over, and now they're critical of that as well.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll ask another supplemental, in view of the fact that the Premier can't answer, and the assignee that he has indicated, so I hope the minister in charge will indeed . . . What I want to know, and I understand: was the topic of negotiations with the Chinese banking community that was here, was it in respect to an equity position in the Lanigan mine as a whole, or was it an equity position in respect to the expansion?

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Well, as I have indicated, the chairman of the PCS board will . . . We'll take notice of the question and supply it, but it would strike me, in general terms, that any efforts that we can make to crack the market of the People's Republic of China, which has a potential for immense potash sales of Saskatchewan potash, that we

should be making every such effort; and I really would hope that the hon. member opposite and the NDP would change their position and stand up and encourage the government to make effort to arrange potash sales with the People's Republic of China. I suggest to you that we will take notice of the specifics of the question, and that in fact we will have a very appropriate announcement in due course, which I think the people of Saskatchewan will be very supportive of, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the minister, the deputy chairman of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. My question is really a simple one. Were the negotiations which were held with the Chinese in relation to the sale of potash to the Chinese or the sale of potash mine or an interest therein to the Chinese? They are quite different, and I ask you to indicate which.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — I won't indicate because discussions were very general, and several options were in fact discussed, and will be considered, but any negotiations with the People's Republic of China are ongoing. They're in process. And at an appropriate time, as I say, an announcement will be made to the people of this province — an announcement which I believe will be well supported by the people of Saskatchewan.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Was one of the options considered a sale of an equity interest in any potash mine in Saskatchewan owned by the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — As I indicated that several options were considered, that negotiations are ongoing, an announcement will be made at an appropriate time.

### **Proposed Changes to Saskatchewan Legal Aid Plan**

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Speaker, question to the Minister of Justice, and it has to do with his plans to introduce legislation which would drastically change Saskatchewan's legal aid plan. And my question deals with the fact that, at least as of now, he has not indicated that any hearings will be held in connection with this major change in government policy. And my question is this: will the minister reconsider his position and propose and arrange that hearings be held so that interested members of the public may put their point of view with respect to proposed major changes in the legal aid plan?

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — I'm surprised that the Leader of the Opposition would take that position, when in office he refused public hearings of the Culliton committee into freedom of information. As the hon. member knows, the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Plan was studied by former Justice M.A. MacPherson. The only undertaking that I will give is that I will be meeting with some members of the so-called board of boards who have requested a meeting. That, I believe, has not yet been scheduled, but I'm subject to the possible correction on that. As of this morning, it had not yet been scheduled. I have undertaken to do that. As of this morning, it had not yet been scheduled. I have undertaken to do that.

It is my view however that I have seen nothing as yet which would cause me to reconsider the basic thrust of the MacPherson report on legal aid, the basic thrust being an improvement, efforts to improve the quality of legal services for those who are unable to pay, primarily, the private bar, and secondly, that the local boards, instead of being autonomous, would be advisory.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. The thrust of my question was

the client group and their opportunity to have an input. My question therefore, my supplementary is this: can the minister tell this Assembly which groups or which individuals had an opportunity to meet with Mr. Justice MacPherson before he's made his report, who you would describe, Mr. Minister, as in any way representative of low-income people or native people or women or unions or church groups, or people of that ilk who have some standing to speak for the client group of the legal aid boards?

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Well, I don't have before me the people that Mr. MacPherson heard or sought out or talked to. I would urge the hon. member, however, to keep in mind the basic thrust which was the improvement of quality of legal services to the disadvantaged, that in fact the MacPherson report really doesn't make fundamental changes in the actual operation of the legal aid plan. It does basically suggest what he believes to be a more effective way of improving, one, the quality of service, and the delivery of such services. So as I say to the hon. member, I do not have the list of individuals or groups that Mr. MacPherson talked to. However I would think that the tenor of the questioning that in fact people are going to be harmed because of the changes is an erroneous one; that in fact people will be helped with the proposed changes.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Minister of Justice, and this concerns the proposed changes in the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Plan. And I tell the Minister of Justice that I have had representations from native groups and church groups and others, who feel that any proposal to dismantle the local boards as effective boards and to convert them into a simple advisory capacity and to organize the whole operation from one central board will deprive native people and other disadvantaged groups of an opportunity to have an effective voice in the administration of the system.

My question to you, sir, is: have you had similar representations and do you not agree that the points made by these native groups, church groups and others are very effective and that, in point of fact, your changes will mean that they will have a much less effective voice in the administration of the legal aid plan?

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — I do not accept that for one minute, because to accept that argument would mean that provincial advisory council on the status of women, for example, is ineffective, because it's dealing one organization at the provincial level, and that advisory boards as such would be ineffective, as the hon. member has indicated. That we have a history, in this province, that there are advisory boards, that these advisory boards have some significant impact.

To say that advisory boards in the legal aid plan would have no impact, when we have advisory boards for hospitals, for the status of women, as a prime example, I really think is frankly an unwise statement, because the advisory boards throughout the province in fact have generally a very good record. To say that they won't have a good record in the legal aid plan, I think, is unfortunately prejudging many people.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. The minister has made reference to advisory boards for hospitals. Does the minister believe for 30 seconds that hospital boards in this province would agree to have their status changed from that of an effective operating board to an advisory board, and have the hospitals administered centrally by your government?

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Not for a minute. I've made it quite clear that advisory boards have

significant impact throughout the province of Saskatchewan. To say that a change from autonomous local boards for legal aid to advisory boards, I frankly think, (unless I'm swayed by arguments to the contrary), will have a very beneficial effect. I have difficulty with the concept that these boards are necessarily the best way to deliver high quality legal services, and I simply suggest — I simply suggest — oh, I don't want to control them. As a matter of fact, one of the recommendations of the MacPherson report is that the government take a minority position on the board; I tend to favour that, subject to final policy determination. In fact, I don't want to control them.

What I want to see is the best quality legal advice given to the poor and disadvantaged in this province, and that is the type of system that this government intends to deliver, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — One final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. If your government proceeds with this plan to dismantle the local operating boards and convert them into advisory boards, as you say, like the advisory committee on the status of women, will you see that those advisory boards are funded in an adequate way, as the advisory committee on the status of women has been funded in the past?

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Well, I would certainly consider, without making a commitment to that, I would think that perhaps the funding should be done if we're trying to set up a system, perhaps by the legal aid commission, although that may or may not be the appropriate way to do. I would like to consider that option. I throw out for the members opposite of how effective some of the local boards are when I'm forced, because of local difficulties — mismanagement, inability to manage, etc. — that I am forced to, as Attorney-General, take away the autonomy of the Swift Current board (and I am sure the hon. members don't want me to go into a great deal of difficulty as to the difficulties that existed there, although I'm sure they're familiar with them), and turn that over to the Moose Jaw board to operate the Swift Current clinic, and that has been going on since, I believe, approximately last September. So I'm prepared to consider the proposal set forth by the Leader of the Opposition without as yet making any commitment as to that proposal.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Speaker, a further question to the Minister of Justice, having to do with the position of autonomous boards in legal aid. He seems to argue that simply because one board had a difficult experience, that this proves that the board system is faulty. Would he equally agree that when the commission was criticized by Judge McLellan that this proves that the commission system is faulty, or does he feel that both commission and board systems can have strengths and can have weaknesses?

**Hon. Mr. Lane:** — Any system can have strengths. Certainly the economic system that promotes individual initiative that we espouse can have some strengths, although it was ignored in the past. So that there are . . . Any system can have strengths and weaknesses. I'm satisfied that the tentative proposal we have will in fact strengthen the existing system. That's the objective of this government — to improve the quality of legal services and the availability of legal services. That's our objective. This government intends to meet that objective, Mr. Speaker.

### **European Companies Locating in Saskatchewan**

**Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to address a question to one of only seven ministers who take the democratic process seriously enough to show up. I want to publicly complain to the Premier about that. Let me ask a question to the minister of industry and commerce. I want to take you back to one of your many glittering successes, Mr. Minister, and that's the European trip. And you will recall that on your return, you announced that at least two European companies had decided to immediately open offices as a direct result of your visit. I'm asking you, Mr. Minister, will you now name those two European companies? Are you in a position to tell us where they're going to locate, when they'll be under way, at which Saskatchewan location, how many jobs will be created as a result of these firms' interests?

**Hon. Mr. Rousseau:** — Mr. Speaker, when I visited . . . toured Europe, I spoke to 265 different individuals from different companies, many of which were interested in locating — not just two, by the way, many more than two that are interested . . . No one, at any time, indicated a guarantee that they were signed and sealed, and they were coming, and they were going to create whatever. I did attend an opening about 10 days ago of a company that I called on while I was in Europe, that are now located in Regina, made their Canadian headquarters in the city of Regina, province of Saskatchewan — very pleased about that — the distribution centre employing some 15 or 20 people.

I have recently had contacts again with another company through a local business man very interested in joint-venturing with a German firm and another firm that I called on while I was there. I will be prepared to announce when these things happen. I wish the members would read some articles that are written once in a while about what does happen. It just caught my eye this morning, Mr. Speaker, I think it's worth while noting a quote from an article.

Flin Flon Mines Ltd. Is awarded a \$500,000 contract to dismantle, move and relocate a 125-ton-a-day mill recently purchased in British Columbia to a site in Saskatchewan 6.6 kilometres west of Flin Flon, Manitoba.

We know what government's in Manitoba.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Rousseau:** — They found it far more desirable, Mr. Speaker, to locate in Saskatchewan than they did in Manitoba.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Status of Women

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to announce today to the members of the legislature the appointment of the Hon. Gordon Currie as minister with responsibility for the status of women. Recently, the external component of the former women's division was relocated to the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower. The department's mandate includes responsibilities for addressing issues and providing services related to education, training, and employment for all adults. By using the resources of the department, the women's branch will have additional support in improving educational opportunities and employment status for women.

It is therefore appropriate that the Minister for Advanced Education and Manpower assume this responsibility. The minister has already initiated plans for meetings with

the Saskatchewan Advisory Committee on the Status of Women to ensure the continuity of the consultation process of women's issues. In addition to the Hon. Gordon Currie's department, affirmative action programs in government and in Crown corporations will be strengthened by the addition of several positions within the Public Service Commission.

This government has made great progress in involving women in all aspects of government. Five women sit on the government side of the House, and two are members of cabinet. Within my own department, the Department of Executive Council, I am pleased that over 36 per cent of the senior positions are now held by women. The concerns of women in the family, in government, and in society as a whole, are a top priority of this administration. No longer will women be pushed off into, or confined to, a division of the Department of Labour or any other particular department.

To strengthen the ministerial mandate of cabinet, a cabinet committee consisting of the Hon. Pat Smith, the Hon. Joan Duncan, the Hon. Gary Lane, as well as Mr. Gordon Currie and Mr. Russ Sutor, MLA, has been set up in a government support role. The committee will consult with and advise Mr. Currie on issues of concern to women in the province of Saskatchewan. The committee will be a major focus for the development of policy. With an overview of the entire government, the committee will ensure that this government serves women of all ages in all economic circumstances in all parts of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Only this government would be so pedantic as to make a ministerial statement out of a fact which has been in existence for well over 10 years. And I remind the Premier that there has been a minister responsible for the status of women for many years. The difference, of course, between the Hon. Gordon Snyder, who used to occupy that position, and anyone that you name is that they took an active interest in the concerns of women and took an active interest in trying to promote their interests.

With respect to your committee, Mr. Minister, I can only hope that with this committee you are going to break precedent and actually establish a committee which will accomplish something and not try to analyze the problems out of the other end of time. And I could refer the Premier to your committee on the pipeline and your committee on any other number of issues which have accomplished nothing except to spin the problem out of existence. And I hope, Mr. Premier, this will mark a sharp break with precedent. I hope, Mr. Premier, this committee will begin a new tack with this government and actually accomplish something on behalf of women.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

### **GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

### **COMMITTEE OF FINANCE**

### **CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE**



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**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL****Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 10****Item 1 (continued)**

**Mr. Shillington:** — Mr. Premier, I want to deal with the subject we just left, and that is women's issues. I want to ask the Premier why you resolutely avoid adopting the principle of a specific division or department targeted at improving the position of women in the economy. The Premier states that he wants all government services to be available to women. I can only remind the Premier that for many years, far preceding mine in public life, women have been able to avail themselves of all services. All services have been equally available to men as to women. And nothing that you have done, Mr. Premier, has changed that or made them more available.

The concept of a special division was an idea which said that since women do occupy a rung on the economy that ought to embarrass us, a special division whose responsibility it is to promote them and to give them a leg up over everyone else should be set up. And I remind the Premier that all other provinces followed Saskatchewan's lead. All the other provinces have kept a women's division. The women's division in Saskatchewan achieved a national reputation for excellence, and I ask the Premier again if you will tell the Assembly why you resolutely refuse to endorse the idea of a special division or department whose special responsibility it is to promote the lot of women.

You flirted with the idea after having been beaten up rather badly by a number of women's groups. You said you'd consider the idea of a women's department. I gather now that they leave you alone, you are abandoning that concept, because you . . . at least Friday you resolutely refused to even suggest you were still considering the idea. So I'd ask you again if you would clarify for this House your position on a special division, or department if you like, whose special responsibility it is to promote the interests of women.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, I can reiterate to the hon. member much of what I said the other day, which was very clear and I just made a ministerial statement with respect to it. We have a special focus, a special focus in the new Department of Advanced Education and Manpower. It's the women's services branch, which is a focal point and a target for women's concerns.

In the development of this new focal point, the women's services branch, we are going to do two things: one, look at the old women's division of the Department of Labour and find out what it did and its limitations; number two, look at what we could do if we didn't have to be confined to that, under this new focal point, the women's services branch in the new Department of Advanced Education and Manpower. So we've covered both. As well, we've included the Public Service Commission, so that no department can get off the hook.

So we've looked at what was in existence in the women's division of the Department of Labour, bringing it forward and saying, 'Can we make it better?'; establishing a brand-new women's services branch in the new Department of Advanced Education and Manpower; and three, including the Public Service Commission so we don't miss anybody. So I think that's as fair as anybody could expect, realizing that there were certainly limitations, confining women to one division, and we're broadening that. It is a

focal point and it is a target.

**Mr. Shillington:** — Well, I'm amazed the Premier didn't avail himself of the opportunities occasioned to him to find out what the women's division did before you abolished it. You said you were trying to find out what the women's division did. I'm amazed you didn't take that step before you abolished it. But that seems to be the way of this government — analyze things indefinitely and then stumble into disaster anyway.

But, Mr. Premier, I want you to confirm then that one of the ramifications of setting up this committee is that you are now considering another women's division or some facsimile thereof, and that that is one of the things that committee is being asked to consider and report presumably to you. Is that accurate?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, I just finished saying . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, if you look at *Hansard* tomorrow, I'm sure you'll find it's very clear. We have a brand-new department and we have a new minister responsible for the council or status of women; in the new department we have a women's services branch, which is a targeting point and a focal point for women's concerns in developing in the depth and breadth of that branch. We will be looking at some of the limitations of the previous division — women's division of the Department of Labour — and we are looking at many new opportunities, plus the Public Service Commission. I can't add any more to it.

**Mr. Shillington:** — Well, I can only say, Mr. Premier, that I sincerely hope that one of the results of setting up the committee is that you will set up a women's division or some facsimile thereof. Because I think the concept was sound and, as I say, it was followed by every government in Canada, all of whom, with one exception, are now Conservative.

I want to ask you, Mr. Premier, when you expect the committee to report to you. Do I understand the committee to report to you as president of the Executive Council or is it reporting to caucus or what's the system? Let me ask you two questions, then. To whom does it report and by when do you expect them to report?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — It is a cabinet committee but it includes a members of the legislature that is not a cabinet minister at the time. Mr. Russ Sutor, and that cabinet committee clearly reports both to caucus and back to cabinet. As chairman of Executive Council, I will be reporting to me. Now they will be continuing their work and I expect them to report as quickly as possible and they will make not only one report but to continue to make reports and bring us up to date as to the development of the new women's services branch and any other activity.

I think it's fair to point out: because of the very large number compared to the past of women that are involved in this cabinet committee, as well as caucus members from the administration, it's an extremely powerful force for women in the province of Saskatchewan; because having two cabinet members that are women, plus the committee set up to get this, the design of this brand new women's services branch, it's an excellent opportunity to have very broad representation from women all across the province.

**Mr. Shillington:** — Well, Mr. Premier, I'll leave this particular aspect of the subject with this comment. As critical as I have been, and as we have been of your activities on behalf of women in the past, we are not critical of this committee and we wish it the best. We only hope that this committee accomplishes something concrete on behalf of

women and does it within a reasonably short time span.

We also hope that this committee is not seen in itself as any sort of a solution to women's problems but that it is seen as having a responsibility to find those solutions.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, just on this point raised by my colleague, the member for Regina Centre. I'm not sure whether I understood whether you said there was now a women's services division of the Department of Advanced Education or you anticipated that there would be women's services division of the Department of Advanced Education.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — It is in the embryo stage right now. It's in existence and it's being developed. It's just in the beginning of being fleshed out.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, it will be recalled that a number of employees were transferred from the Department of Labour to the Department of Advanced Education, and if you happen to have this information, can you tell me whether they are the core, or whether other people are the core?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — It's my understanding that at least six of the people that have been transferred over are in the new women's services branch. There may be additions to that as it is developed. I'm quite sure there will be some additions to that.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I have only to reiterate the words of my colleague, the member for Regina Centre, in saying that we wish the new agency well, and we felt that the problems facing women in the work-force are difficult, and many of them are peculiar to women. They are not by any means confined to government departments. They exist in the private sector and in Crown corporations, and in the non-competitive private sector, if I may put it that way, and we would like to think that all of these areas would be addressed by the new agency.

I turn now to another matter of government organization. On April 19th in this Assembly, you said, and I quote here a portion of *Hansard* which I think is a fair quote:

. . . there is a single department that will be looking at water, all aspects of water.

And it is this question of the single agency or department which is going to handle all the matters relating to water that I am now directing questions.

Can you tell me whether or not it is assumed that there will be another department of government which will be the department of water and hydraulic resources, or some such name, or whether it's going to be one of the existing departments which is going to take to itself all aspects of government water policy and water administration?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, we are currently pulling all the public matters related to water into the Department of Environment. There's water concerns, and water divisions, and water interests in agriculture, in mining, in several other departments. Those are being brought together under one jurisdiction — the Department of Environment. That is not to say somewhere down the road there may be enough interest and enough justification to have a separate department, but currently it is the Department of the Environment that is consolidating the concerns of water. So an individual coming in that may have an irrigation concern, or a drainage concern, or

something, doesn't have to go to six different departments, or five, or 15, or whatever it may be, but will be able to eventually get all that information in one department.

In addition, I'm sure as the hon. member knows, we're establishing a water Crown to deal with some of the longer-run financial concerns in water development.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. As a couple of examples, can you tell me then whether, let's say the farm water well assistance program, any farm well water assistance program of the Department of Agriculture, would now find itself in the Department of the Environment, or let us say any dealings with a water pipeline from Diefenbaker Lake would find itself in the Department of the Environment? Are those the sorts of things which will be consolidated in the Department of the Environment?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, without going back and doing further research on what those may be, I would say, conceptually, yes. Any concerns with respect to water we're pulling together into one agency or one department, so that people don't have to run from department to department to department finding out how they may be able to develop a particular water resource or a water project. So, to a general extent and a general answer, yes, we will be pulling issues of water together in one department, as well as a major focus on economic development with respect to water projects in the Crown. And between the two, between the Crown and between this separate department, most every water concern would generally be covered. There may be some exceptions, and I'll say that at the outset, where there may be an ongoing engineering concern with some department that wants to stay . . . have some expertise. But generally the intent is to bring together into a solid single focus the various elements of water development, so that individuals throughout Saskatchewan who want information about water, or rules and regulations with respect to water, can go to one place to find it.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — That would mean, I take it, Mr. Minister, that let us say, a clearing and draining project, might involve the Department of Agriculture for its clearing aspects and the Department of the Environment for its water aspects. There's never any totally happy solution in organizing government, and you are telling me that you are opting to pull together almost all of the water concerns, and that will mean that some people will deal with one department for water and another department for some related matters, and I'm using clearing here as an example.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, I can just add, one of the major concerns that has been brought to us by people across the province of Saskatchewan is that when they want permits for whatever that they become a little frustrated because there are many departments that they have to go see, and they can be easily shuffled around and it takes a great deal of time. They need to be able to talk to somebody who has control, or at least access to information in several different departments all at the same time, and to the extent that we can consolidate that we're going to do it. If there are still areas of expertise needed in a particular department, we certainly wouldn't move rashly and reduce the capacity of government to deal with things. It's designed to expedite the development and use of water in the province of Saskatchewan, particularly as a result of a fair amount of frustration that has been expressed by people around the province in dealing with no end of different departments even on a single permit.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Well, I only caution that water is a highly complex subject, and the frustrations are not going to go away by having one agency, but we will see to what extent they may be reduced by the proposed initiatives of your government.

I want now to turn for a moment to the proposed water utility, and to ask whether or not you see it as something which will supersede the current, the existing water utility, the Saskatchewan Water Supply Board, or whether it will likely operate in addition to the existing utility of the Saskatchewan Water Supply Board.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — I believe the fairest thing to say is it will do all the things that the existing Crown does, but it will have an expanded role.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Minister, will it absorb the existing Crown, or will they operate side by side?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — They will be absorbed; they will be together.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, with respect to some other questions concerning Crown corporations, I ask: has any decision been made to remove ministers as chairmen of Crown corporation boards, as recommended by the Wolff commission?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, the complete analysis of the Wolff commission, plus several other considerations with respect to Crowns is under consideration by cabinet and by me. We haven't made any formal moves to change that. There may be an announcement in the weeks ahead with respect to any new directions in policy and/or administration with respect to the Crowns, but nothing to date.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I pick up briefly a line of questioning that I pursued a couple of days ago with respect to utilities, and with respect to their profit policy. And I am now talking about whether or not the utilities should make a profit. I am particularly referring, so as to narrow the discussion, to the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. We have established that it's the policy of your government that the power corporation should not pay a dividend to the Crown investments corporation or to the Finance department.

What I am now trying to find out is whether the policy is that there should be a profit sufficient to make some contribution to further capital investments, or whether there should be no profit but should be a break-even figure on a year-to-year basis as closely as that can be arranged. Everybody admits that nobody can operate a utility that breaks even every year exactly. But is the aim to break even, or is the aim to make some profit to contribute to future capital investments?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't know if I can add an awful lot more to the previous discussion that we had about this topic. We generally, in a theoretical and conceptual base, reject the notion of generating monopoly profits as a planned way to run and operate a Crown corporation, or that a public utility like Sask Power should be paying dividends to the Crown investment corporation by charging rates that were higher than normal. I know that varies perhaps from the former administration, but, in any event, that's the way we do it.

In terms of generating profits and consequently retained earnings that you can put back into a capital project, about all that I could add at this time is two things: one, that from time to time, as the hon. member points out, you can't always break even right on the nose — sometimes you may have a small loss and sometimes you may have a small

profit, and we deal with those because of fluctuating international events and costs, and so forth. In those cases where we have a small profit and we have some retained earnings, that means that we would just . . . We could certainly put it to good use, but it isn't a planned measure to tax the consumers in the province of Saskatchewan through a natural monopoly or a public utility.

Then I suppose the second observation is: it would certainly, if you did plan for a capital project and you did plan to raise some money with respect to rates, you would certainly want to do it at a time when your economy and consumer confidence and consumer income and everything else was in a much better and sounder position than you would at any time that we've seen in the last 12, 18, 24 months, and so forth.

On a general basis and philosophical sense, public utilities, in our view, are not made to generate profits and are not made to generate dividends to the Crown investment corporation. If small profits are made, we can certainly put them back into retained earnings, and it means that we have to borrow that much less. But generally we're going to try. The intent is to run them at a break-even basis in the long run, covering their costs and their capital projects.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I think we've disposed of the issue of dividends so I don't think we need to refer to that. And I just want to know whether I understand your position clearly, that you're aiming to set rates that break even, recognizing the fact that in a given year that may create small profit or a small loss, but that there's no intent to set a rate schedule which will produce, let us say, an extra 1 per cent of capital employed, or 2 per cent of capital employed which would systematically be reinvested in order to cut down future borrowings. A case can be made for either position. I'm not asserting that one is right and the other is wrong. I'm just asking what the policy of your government is. And I understand you to tell me that it's the former, that you're aiming for the break even, and not for getting any systematic, small incremental profit that would be used for reinvestment. Do I understand that correctly?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I think the hon. member is right. I believe he does understand our position. It is one of break-even analysis, not generating any sort of monopoly profits or paying dividends. I believe it's long run, break even, covering the cost of major projects in that corporation. It should stand on its own. It should be able to be independently as sound as possible, given its monopoly in the market, that it shouldn't abuse that. From then on it's a break-even proposition.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, the last comments could be interpreted in several ways, but I take the first comment as the one that governs, that we're aiming at a break-even figure, and that when we say that the capital cost shall be covered, it shall be covered out of the depreciation or capital cost allowance, and not by getting some perhaps more rapid repayment of the capital arising from some profits.

I now refer to a narrower question, and that has to do with the future of the mines owned by the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, and this is a matter of public policy. I refer the Premier to some comments which appeared in the *Estevan Mercury*, and I'll quote them briefly. And I think that they will set the stage for the question I wish to ask. And this was discussion about the closing of the Souris Valley mine and the possible transfer of employees to the Coronach mine, and I now quote:

Employees also challenged the Premier as to whether or not the mine at

Poplar River is for sale. The employees told the Premier they had heard the rumour 'the mine is going to be sold,' while the Premier reacted that he, too, had heard such rumours. 'I don't know if it's for sale or not,' said Premier Devine. 'I certainly will find out and report back to you.'

Could the Premier add anything to that? Can he advise whether or not his government proposes to sell the Poplar River coal mining operation?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, no decision has been made to sell the mine as far as I know at this very hour, but clearly I can't rule that out at some point in the future. If an option was presented and it was in the public interest to do so, then it would be given consideration. But to date no decision has been made to sell the mine.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — With respect to the position that I understand was taken at Estevan and may well be being considered at Poplar River, judging from the last comment, can the Premier envisage circumstances in which it would be in the public interest to sell the coal? I'm not now talking about the mining operation, but the coal itself, the title to the coal. Can the Premier envisage circumstances in which it would be in the public interest to sell or grant a long-term lease to the coal itself, as opposed to the sale of a drag-line or the sale of some tracks or some other chattel?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, that's very difficult to answer, because it is very much a hypothetical question and there would be no end of circumstances around any sort of hypothetical arrangement like that. I don't know if I could even begin to speculate on what my reaction would be in some sort of a venture some time in the future with respect to a mine. I would have to look at those and look at the alternatives. I look at various alternatives every day when it comes to no end of things, from agricultural ventures to oil ventures to upgraders to whatever, and there are an awful lot of alternatives, and I'm sure the hon. member is aware of that. So it would be very difficult to speculate . . . (inaudible)  
...

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — May I then, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, make a brief comment? No doubt arguments can be mounted which suggest that coal can be mined or oil can be pumped by private companies as well as by public companies, and I am sure those arguments can be made. What is very much more difficult to make, based upon the history of western Canada in the last 20 years, is that any government would have been better off to sell outright its interest in oil or its interest in coal or its interest in potash or some other mineral. Virtually every mineral has enjoyed a very substantial increase in its value in the ground. I look at oil in Alberta, and much of Alberta's prosperity as a government has rested on the fact that it owned the oil, that the oil rights were in the Crown and it was able therefore to capitalize on them to a remarkable degree, and quite rightly so.

I say the same with respect to coal. The value of coal in the ground is very much more than it was 10 or 15 years ago. Any decision to have sold the coal outright 15 years ago would have been a very bad decision. And I suspect that none of us can see into the future except to express the point of view that in all probability, in all probability the value of non-renewable resources is likely to continue to increase. That goes for coal and that goes for oil and that goes for a good number of other things. It goes for farmland, as a matter of fact, as Will Rogers' saying: 'They ain't makin' any more of it.'

And while certainly, on a short-term basis, the price of oil might go up or down, or on a

short-term basis the price of coal or farmland may go up or down, I am suggesting to the Premier that the course of wisdom is for the Crown to retain its ownership of oil rights or coal rights, and that any alienation of those rights ought to be for sufficiently short periods of time so that any substantial increase in their value will accrue to the public purse, the current owner, rather than to somebody who has purchased them. Again, this is not to suggest that all of the operations . . . all the oil need be pumped publicly; obviously no. Or all the coal need be mined publicly; obviously no. I make that point of view and ask the Premier to consider it.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I'll give it very serious consideration. I think the hon. member alluded to several facts or possibilities that would be involved: how much and for what and at what length of time and what was the benefit cost, and all the other arrangements that might be developed around a non-renewable resource. I share many of his observations about non-renewable resources. I'll take them under very serious consideration.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I turn to another subject which the Premier may not be briefed on and if he isn't, I understand, because it's not within his strict area of responsibility. It has to do with a subject that we have raised and that has to do with the policy of the government when an operation is closed down and there may well be other positions in the same or similar government agency in the same area.

More particularly, I'm talking about the Souris Valley mine closure and the fact that it is proposed that there by nine employees terminated on June the 1st and six employees terminated on July 1st and a number of other employees terminated on August 31st that total 15, I think, on August 31st, because I think there are 30 in all. And the fact that there appear to be a number of vacancies in the Saskatchewan Power Corporation operation at Boundary Dam and the fact that according to information that we have no positions have been offered to the displaced miners in the Boundary Dam operations. And it is our information that there are perhaps as many as 26 vacant positions at Boundary Dam, many of which could be filled by the people who are being displaced at Souris Valley Mine.

I ask the Premier whether he is aware of this situation, whether he's looked into it, and whether or not he believes it would be appropriate government policy for an agency like Sask Power Corporation to offer jobs in the same vicinity, the same geographic vicinity, to employees who are displaced, for example, at the Souris Valley mine.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, I've sent for a letter that I just recently wrote to Souris Valley miners, but I can advise the hon. member that Sask Power has agreed to look very specifically at several positions with respect to the 26 members involved. We have guaranteed that nobody will lose their jobs and all of them have been offered employment. Sask Power is relooking at the possibilities for employment in the local area, as well as private alternatives and options in the area for those that would rather stay and perhaps leave the public service and go into the private service.

But certainly the housing accommodations, the guarantee of employment, despite what happens to Poplar River, etc., etc., have been given very serious consideration, and I've recently outlined several of these alternatives to the 26 members in Souris Valley.

So, yes. Sask Power is giving it a very serious look, and is prepared — or they advised



me they're prepared — to look at offering, I'll just say several, positions in the area.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I urge upon the government that type of a policy. With significant unemployment at Estevan, as in other places, 12 or 1300 people looking for jobs at Estevan, and people who have worked for the Saskatchewan Power Corporation for many years, for some decades some of them, and having their families there and their homes there, it is obviously a great deal easier for them to take other employment in the Estevan area than to be transferred to Poplar River, where housing accommodation will not yet be available since it's an expanding community, and where they perhaps would not be able to accommodate their family nearly as well.

There's just a whole lot of reasons why, if you can offer a person, a family man or woman who has got an established family in a community over 10 or 15 years, you can offer them a job in the same community, allow the new jobs in the new communities to be taken by people with fewer family responsibilities at the moment, until the infrastructure is built up. You do a good job not only for the corporation, but for the employees, and I'm pleased that the Premier is looking at those alternatives.

I want now, Mr. Premier, to turn to another subject, and that deals with the matter of the general policy of the government concerning budget deficits, and whether or not the Premier has set himself any rough limits to the size of the deficit which he would expect to accumulate in, let us say, four successive budgets. The first two budgets will have accumulated deficits of approximately \$500 per person, about \$2,200 for a family of four in two budgets.

Do you have any rough outline of what you think your ceiling to be? I recall the Minister of Finance indicating that his policy was a balanced budget over a term of the legislature, which I assume to be four or five years. I would ask whether that is still the general policy of your government or, in view of the current circumstances, you have some other rough guide-line that you are using in order to determine what the permitted size of the deficit might be.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I believe it would be fair to say that at this time everybody in Saskatchewan would prefer to have the option of easily balancing the budget. I just throw that out as my initial comment. Really, given two or three international economic conditions affecting oil, affecting American farm income, and affecting uranium markets, we look at the. . . and we face the situation where we can either raise taxes to make up for that international loss and income or we can cut programs. During this time of general economic slowdown around North America at least, raising taxes is not something that I would suspect would be all that inductive to the attitude towards recovery; similarly, raising taxes might not do all that much to stimulate employment and consumer confidence. At the same time, we want to maintain our commitment to health and social service programs, particularly — education, health, social services. So any further cuts that the members opposite might recommend, we'd certainly be prepared to look at, but we have maintained, in fact increased our expenditures, in education, health, and social services. So to directly get to the time at which and the point at which the hon. member says we expect to balance the budget, I guess it would be fair to say, given our commitment to health, education, and social services, it will, to a large extent, depend on international conditions affecting: number one, oil markets; number two, potash markets; number three, uranium markets — all of those resources produced in our province. And those

activities, international activities, combined with our own internally, where we have some control over them — that is, the royalty structure, tax structure, or whatever — will provide the general elements that will decide how much revenue is going to come into the province of Saskatchewan, even if we don't change expenditures.

Expenditures were frozen, for example . . . (inaudible) . . . didn't increase at all, and this year I believe the Minister of Finance kept them down to 6.9 per cent, well under most other administrations and certainly under the national rate of inflation. Even if we froze them to zero, and we had a continual fall in international markets, then we would have to look at the two options: do we raise taxes to maintain education and health and social service functions, or do we begin to cut some programs? Well, if we keep our budget and our expenditures at zero, if we don't want to cut programs then we look at the alternative down the road. If international conditions get worse and worse, do we double the sales tax, or do we add five points in income tax, or do we whatever? Those are really the only two options that are there.

In general, it is the policy of this administration to balance the budget. If there are short-run aberrations to revenue generation, particularly because of international conditions, and most particularly because of that, if this government drops \$200 million, \$300 million, \$400 million because of events we can't control, we've taken the view, best we cope with that as a provincial government as opposed to transferring those, hopefully, short-run changes onto the backs of the average citizen. So we are prepared to do that, given the general long-run inclination of balancing the budget when revenues become more normal.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I turn to another subject now, and that is the office of the agent-general in London. And as I read order in council no. 16 of January 6th, 1983, Mr. Robert Larter was appointed agent-general for Saskatchewan, such appointment to be effective the day following the day on which the appointment of Mr. W.M. Johnson as agent-general terminates. I believe that Mr. Johnson's appointment expires in July of 1983. I am asking when Mr. Larter came on staff of the Government of Saskatchewan and in what capacity. I have here a note which indicates that the Larters moved to England in February and have been back to Regina on three occasions. My question is: is Mr. Larter an employee of the Government of Saskatchewan, and when did he commence to be an employee of the Government of Saskatchewan, and in what capacity, I suppose?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, I'll give the hon. member the information I have to date, or I have at hand, and then we'll proceed immediately to get any additional information that he may need.

I believe, the information I have here, Mr. Bob Larter will take up his duties as the new agent-general effective in August of 1983. Mr. Larter will travel to London in May in order to better obtain an understanding of the operations of the office. Mr. Merv Johnson, the present agent-general, will remain in London until July of 1983. Mr. Larter has not been living in London. He has made a trip or two over there, but he's been living in the province of Saskatchewan. And I believe he is now in . . . If he isn't in London, he will be in the next day or two or three. He's been in Toronto, and I believe in Ottawa, with briefings with External Affairs and some others. So that the intention was to give him a little lead time — I suppose about a month's, or four or five weeks overlap — that he can be in there when Mr. Johnson is still there, and that one moves out and one moves in.

The exact date that he came on staff: I don't have it with me, but I'll certainly provide it to the hon. member.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — That information is similar to the information I had. It indicates . . . You were telling me Mr. Larter will become agent-general effective in August, and my note indicates that Mr. Johnson's appointment expires in July. That would make sense, particularly if they were near the end of July and early in August.

You advise me that Mr. Larter is leaving for London about now, May 10 let us say. Can you advise me what sort of accommodation will be provided to the Larters in London during the period from May 10th to, let us say, July 31st, when they overlap the Johnsons?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — I believe, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Larter has secured some temporary accommodations and then will be moving into the formal residence. When Mr. Johnson moves out, Mr. Larter will move in. Or I have here, he started, he commenced in April the 1st, 1983. He spent a fair amount of time visiting and talking and discussing with Saskatchewan people what they trade with, manufacturers and others throughout Saskatchewan, in terms of their interest in Great Britain and in Europe. So he spent about a month doing that and then in the first part of May or generally the beginning of May, on his way to London, move into his temporary accommodations, have about five weeks or so with Mr. Johnson, watching what he does and where he goes and how he does it, and then one moves out and the other moves in towards the latter part of July and the first part of August.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, do you have any figures on the cost of Mr. Larter's temporary accommodation in London?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — I don't right now. I'm not sure he's even lived there. But I would certainly know at some future date what he's arranged in a temporary fashion, prior to moving into the residence that Mr. Johnson has.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Would you, Mr. Minister, find out and advise me of the weekly or monthly rental which is being paid by the government on Mr. Larter's behalf and for what period, presumably from the 1st of May to the 1st of August or something, if you could confirm that to me?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Yes, Mr. Chairman, we'll provide that information.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Larter is reported as saying that he hopes to increase the size of staff but that this will depend upon the government, and I ask the minister whether or not any decisions have been made with respect to transferring staff now in Saskatchewan to the London office.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, as I mentioned the other day, Mr. Chairman, if we make any modifications to staff, when they're made I'll certainly take the opportunity to announce them, and to do so ahead of time would be unfair to Mr. Larter, unfair to staff, unfair to almost anybody else. Yes, Mr. Larter has plans, and Mr. Larter and I have talked about the growth of the activities of our trade relations in Great Britain and in Europe, and if

that might require some increase in staff, we will give it some consideration, and we'll be discussing that over the months ahead. But no announcements had been made and if any will be made in the future I'll be more than glad to advise the hon. member.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, with respect to Mr. Bedson, can you advise me whether when Mr. Bedson came to the province of Saskatchewan relocation expenses were paid on his behalf by the Government of Saskatchewan?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Yes.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, in the hypothetical event that Mr. Bedson was transferred to London, would it be the intention of the government to pay relocation expenses for Mr. Bedson to transfer from Regina to London?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, that is hypothetical so we'll just leave it as hypothetical. If I have any announcements to make with respect to the addition and growth of staff in Great Britain or Europe, or any place else, I'll advise the hon. member, including what financial package goes with it.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I turn now to some other items which we were touching on on Thursday, and I wonder if the Premier could tell me what the administrative committee to the cabinet committee on government organization is. Is that the officials committee of the transition team, or can you tell me what group of people those words describe?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I might ask the hon. member: is he looking at something specifically in Executive Council estimates, or something we sent across? Or could he be referring to the advertising committee? Or where's he . . .

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — I'll come at the question another way then. Has the Executive Council employed the services of Hickling-Johnston, who are management consultants?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, I'm getting a couple of other officials, but as far as I'm advised, and from what I recall, the Hickling-Johnston people were providing us some advice on productivity. We've recently had several meetings that have been ongoing meetings with senior officials throughout government on productivity. If it's any more than that or anything else than that, I will be able to advise the hon. member as quickly as possible. And I'm not sure . . . I don't believe that Executive Council even pays for that. I believe that it was some place else in general government expenditures that handles that, but I'm advised it is not Executive Council. I'll have more information as soon as we get a couple more officials here.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, if Hickling-Johnston Ltd., Bow Valley Square, Calgary, sent an account addressed to Mr. Leier, as administrative committee to the cabinet committee on government organization, what agency of government would likely pay that?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, I'll just take notice and get the information as quickly as possible to the hon. member. My officials here don't have the information and we'll get somebody tout de suite.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — I ask that that be done. I'm curious to know the amount billed

by Hickling-Johnston, and the services rendered, and I have reason to believe that amounts were billed, addressed to Mr. Leier in the capacity of administrative committee to the cabinet committee on government organization, but I am not sure of that and will accept confirmation or rebuttal . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, the information I have would be an invoice to March 31st, 1983. It may not be accurate. It suggests professional fees, \$3,500 . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . of this account, and I would pursue a line of questioning.

Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, we were discussing earlier the question of air fares paid by the Executive Council, and it will be recalled that I asked some questions about that last Thursday and, as I recall it, the Premier indicated that he would get some further information. I ask today whether or not the Premier has information on any air fares paid by the Executive Council for people who are not regular employees of the Executive Council, and I would ask that information with respect, firstly, to contract employees, and secondly, with respect to other people. If we don't have all of that, and if you have part of it, I'd ask for part of it.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — As I mentioned last week, Mr. Chairman we will provide that information, but I don't have it today. I might have it, but I don't have it now.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, can the Premier recall any instances in which air fares were paid for people not in the employ of the Government of Saskatchewan, and not contract employees of the Government of Saskatchewan?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — I can only add to what I said a few days ago. To the best of my knowledge we have paid for air services for people who we may have interviewed, and that we bring in from various places into the province of Saskatchewan to be interviewed for positions. We may have, from time to time, taken people to things like the constitutional conference, special groups and individuals representing groups. But beyond that I can't recall any other unique or peculiar circumstances for people who either were not on contract or not employed, where we paid their air fare to go wherever or to any particular place.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, you understand our concern with this item. We have asked and moved motions for return with respect to this item in the house. And most of the departments have agreed that they would tell us for whom they paid air fares. On two occasions now the government majority has voted down a motion asking that the Executive Council tell us for whom they have paid air fares. They wish to restrict it only to employees. That leads me to believe that they do not wish to disclose air fares paid for non-employees, unlike some of the other ministers who were perfectly free to give that information.

With respect to the Department of Health, and some others, wording was found to exclude people who may have had air fares paid because they were in receipt of assistance under a program for needy persons. Perhaps that was under welfare, I don't recall, but that is a perfectly reasonable exclusion and we raise no question with respect to it. We are naturally concerned and apprehensive when the Executive Council indicates that they do not wish to disclose information for whom they have paid air fares, in respect of people for whom they have paid air fares, not once, but in two separate sessions now. I welcome the Premier's indication that he will give us that information, and I want to make it very, very clear what I'm asking for. I am asking for the names of all persons for whom the Executive Council has paid air fares since May 8th, 1982. And if the Premier wishes to divide it into the category of air fares paid for regular

employees in the course of their duties and other, that is satisfactory with me. However, I am looking for that information. With respect to the employees, it is probably going to be covered by the order for return which I believe has been passed or no doubt will be passed. With respect to people who are not employees, we have no indication that that information will be forthcoming, and I'm specifically asking the Premier for it. And I understand that he has said that he will give it.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, I certainly will provide that information with respect to Executive Council. I would not, though, be prepared to provide information with respect to the names of individuals that we may have brought in from various places for interviews and so forth. That would be . . . I don't think they'd want that information public.

But anybody that we've paid the air fare for in Executive Council that either — and I can't think of any, frankly — but either didn't work for us or wasn't there on official government business and so forth, I'll certainly provide the hon. member.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — I agree with the Premier's remarks and modify my request, therefore, to exclude those who may have had air fares paid as beneficiaries under a program for needy persons, and that's highly unlikely in Executive Council, or secondly, persons who have had air fares paid to in consequence of an interview for employment or an application for employment. I quite agree with the Premier that they may well not wish that information disclosed and it is not in the public interest to disclose it, since people who wish to apply for positions may well not want their present employer or some other prospective employer to know that. Fair enough. I exclude those and ask for the rest and understand that I have the Premier's commitment that it will be forthcoming.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, yes. I will provide that information to the hon. member. I believe there's a motion of return no. 68, 69? . . . 92 . . . pardon me, that says that the total, requesting the total amount paid by the Department of Executive Council during the period November 27th, 1982 to April 12th, 1983 to commercial airlines for employee air fares, and number two, the name of each employee for whom air fare has been paid and the amount for each individual. And I will endeavour to provide the information to the hon. member with respect to Executive, from Executive Council to anybody that was not part of government, that was not an employee of government that we may have paid for. Again I'll point out I don't recall that there are any, but if there are I would certainly provide the information and, correspondingly, the justification.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Yes, thank you, Mr. Premier. Again I say I pick out any one of these orders for return, and there's a list of them on Friday, May 6th that indicated some returns, and I pick out the Department of Agriculture. They were going to give, or gave the total dollar amount paid by the Department of Agriculture to commercial airlines for air fares and the name of each individual. And that is in effect what I wish, subject to the two exclusions we've identified. And we were already going to get the employees. Now what we're looking for — non-employees — and I take it that will be forthcoming.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Yes, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Premier, last day I was asking some questions in respect to advertising and I'd like to pursue that. If you don't have the full information I'd like to go through a number of questions at least, and see if I can get your undertaking as to what information you can provide in respect to that. I asked you the other day what advertising agency is the agency of record of the government, and I believe you

indicated Dome was the agency of record. And I went on to ask you whether there is in fact a written contract with Dome, and whether you could indicate when in fact it was signed.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, what we have is a letter of agreement, and it was dated July 22, 1982. And it's a letter from us to Dome, and it said:

Dome will be responsible for the placement and purchase of all government advertising. Dome will be responsible for providing counsel and guidance to the cabinet review committee on advertising. (On the 22nd of July, I believe, I announced a cabinet committee on advertising.) And Dome will be responsible for advising the cabinet review committee regarding or duplication of advertising programs between departments, or conflicting program chronology and oversaturation of government advertising in a particular medium.

Dome will receive in exchange for providing these services a fee of 3 per cent of the gross media spending processed through their firm. Dome will also be responsible for the placement of all paid announcements, being those public notices usually placed regarding business hours, tenders, sales, job offers, meetings, etc., for which they will receive the full 15 per cent agency commission.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Now, in respect, you indicated that there was a letter of an agreement on July 22, '82, and a 3 per cent gross payment schedule. What I ask you is: has that rate been amended since the signing of the letter on July the 22nd, '82?

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — And I think you have indicated that the rate of commission that applies to paid announcements is at 15 per cent, if I heard you correctly. All right. Then can the Premier indicate what hourly fees are charged by your agency of record for work on accounts?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, for what they do they get 3 per cent, period. They don't bill any other way other than through the 3 per cent gross as an agency of record.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Now, since I take it all the advertising goes through a single agency, I want to know whether you have, the government has negotiated any rebates on commission from the agency to government due to volume. Is there any volume discount arrangement?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, we are currently negotiating two forms of discount — one would be volume discount and the other would be an early payment discount — in dealing with the media. I could point out, Mr. Chairman, and it may be of interest to the hon. member, in discussing volumes: in '81-82 the government expenditure on advertising was 7.9 million; in '82-83 government expenditure on advertising was 3.3, and of that 3.3, 1.2 was spent by the previous administration. So in discussing volume discounts, the volume of our advertising has been substantially under what the media has traditionally been accustomed to. So we are giving it, I guess you might say, our

best shot at volume discounts, given the fact that our volume is significantly under the previous administration.

**Mr. Koskie:** — I want to ask the Premier: is any government printing contract through or produced under the auspices of advertising agencies, for instance, brochures, leaflets, annual reports, and posters?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — I'm advised, Mr. Chairman, that all printing of line departments goes through the printing procurement mechanism under revenue, supply and services, and the majority of it is done there. There is a clause under that printing procurement for exceptional circumstances, particularly with respect to time, and if timing is a problem then we can deal with an outside agency. And in those cases, which would be exceptional and very few, there may have been an exception. But in general all the printing for the line departments goes through the normal printing procurement system.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Then I ask you, I guess, whether any government departments have had printing done other than through the Queen's Printer bid process?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Yes, in exceptional circumstances.

**Mr. Koskie:** — And I wonder if the Premier could indicate what are the exceptional circumstances that he talks about.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — A couple of examples would be a budget, a budget address, and the most frequent, although the whole exercise is an exceptional one, would be timing —where there would be time pressures, where we'd want something done quickly to provide it without any loss of time.

**Mr. Koskie:** — I'd like to ask the Premier: who assigns suppliers of advertising concepts and materials and what criteria are used?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — The cabinet committee would make that assignment, and it would look at the similar circumstances with respect to unique circumstances if there was something outside. Another example that came up: if we wanted something that was to be very specific and very quickly, like an ad on the Crow, for example. It may be unique; it's not all the time that you're debating that particular program and the cabinet committee would decide that one should be done immediately and this is the form it should take and here's where it should go, etc., etc., then that would be another illustration for the hon. member.

**Mr. Koskie:** — I'd like to ask the Premier: has the cabinet review committee on advertising and public opinion research approved the use of a company by the name of Tanka Research Group for opinion polls?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — I'm advised, no.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Has the cabinet committee approved the use of any marketing research firms, including Tanka? What I'm asking is: has the cabinet committee approved the use of any marketing research firms? Can you give me the names of the firms that have been approved?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — I'm advised, no.



**Mr. Koskie:** — Well, I guess I come back and ask the Premier: has the cabinet . . . You're saying the cabinet has not approved the use of any marketing research firms at all?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, the cabinet committee on communications and advertising has not approved any research for Executive Council. They may have approved some for — market research — for various departments and so forth, but, I'm advised none for Executive Council and certainly none that would be paid for by Executive Council.

**Mr. Koskie:** — I'd like to ask the Premier whether he would undertake to supply copies of the survey research results and polls which have been conducted by the government. I know, in the past, surveys that were, in fact, conducted by the government were provided to the opposition, and what I'm asking the Premier, whether in fact he would likewise undertake to supply copies of the survey research results. Certainly this would ensure that the surveys were done in fact on behalf of the government and the studies were paid for the purposes of conducting the government business, and it is my understanding that this was not a procedure that was not followed in the past.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, I think it's generally well appreciated that polling is quite often used to determine if people are aware of new programs, and if so, how they've taken advantage of them, what they think of them, what could be done with them. Sometimes advertising is necessary to explain the significance of programs so more people will benefit from them. The government generally — and governments generally — cannot release all polling information available, simply because many of the subject areas have direct impact on final policy verification, particularly prior to being announced.

So I would be unable to release today information that will, from polls on government programs, and so forth, because it may jeopardize some of the programs; it may jeopardize final policy with respect to an administration.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I want to direct a few questions to you with respect to the labour force statistics put out by the Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics. I think that perhaps I'd best do that under the Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics subvote, so that you might have an opportunity to have with you any people who are familiar with the series of labour force statistics which your department, the Executive Council, publishes, and I particularly talk about the labour force statistics, and I'm going to refer to the January, February and March of 1983.

But before I come to that, I want to ask a little bit about the transition committee, and what role they had in the dismissal of chief executive officers of a number of the Crown corporations.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, in a general sense, the mandate of the transition committee was to facilitate the smooth transition of power from one administration to another. And it'd include chief executive officers and/or deputies and senior people that were employed under the former administration that may or may not be employed under the new administration. So they were involved in a general sense in bringing that transition together.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Let's say the chief executive officer of Sask Tel . . . I'll pick one out of the air — Mr. Nelson, who was transferred from that post to another post in government. Who will have made that decision to transfer Mr. Nelson from Sask Tel to SaskComp, I believe is his current position?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — That decision would, in all likelihood, be made by the board of directors.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, is that equally true of, say, Saskoil and Sask Power, SGI, to name three more — at Saskoil, Sask Power, and SGI?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, I would think, in a general sense, the board of directors of the Crown corporation would . . . That would be a typical decision with respect to personnel that a board of directors would make. I would say yes, that would apply to the Crowns.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, are you able to state the policy of your government which led to the dismissal of most of the chief executive officers of all of the Crown corporations — most of the chief, not all of them, most of them, of the major corporations? It seemed a rather remarkable coincidence that the boards of directors of the several Crown corporations reached the conclusion that, let us say, Mr. Nelson, who had served under several governments since 1950, was no longer suitable for that position — particularly when the corporation under his management, I think all would concede, had a good record. And I would say the same with respect to some of the other CEOs. Just a general statement on the policy pursued by the various boards of directors which led to this rather surprising number of dismissals of senior chief executive officers.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, I could just add, Mr. Chairman, that an analogous situation is where we have deputy ministers in departments that are appointed under order in council. They can be hired or removed by order in council by Executive Council. On the Crown side, it follows a little different operation, where the board of directors of the particular Crown make the decision. And they make the decision along the same lines that Executive Council makes the decisions with respect to the deputies. And those decisions, as we've mentioned many times, are based on, in Executive Council's best judgement, whether that individual can perform the function as outlined by Executive Council for the direction of the administration. Similarly with respect to all the Crowns, they make the same decision. It's a judgement on their basis, and all kinds of characteristics are evaluated in terms of experience, in terms of policy, in terms of the attitude of the individual, the energy involved — no end of characteristics when people have to make decisions about employees.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, earlier today you indicated that a considerable number of senior employees of the Executive Council were women. I wonder if you can tell me which employees of the Executive Council earning \$40,000 or more, which isn't a high salary in this group, are women.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, we have 18 women employed in Executive Council and 31 men; 36.7 per cent of the non-clerical positions are women. We have at least two in excess of 40,000, and there would be several between 30 and 40. I could provide additional information with some time, but we have to get that information.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, would you give me the names of the two?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — The personnel administrator, Bev Horn-Johnson, is first. And the acting assistant co-ordinator, executive development and government organization, Colette Kokesch.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, with respect to those two, Bev Horn-Johnson and Colette Kokesch, they are said in your material to be secondments. From whom or to whom are they seconded, and from whom and to whom are they seconded?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — From PSC to Executive Council.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I think you will have observed that there are many, many employees, male employees, who are above the \$40,000 threshold. And there's nothing magic about the \$40,000; I could have selected another one but . . . The list is very long — Bachiu, Bedson, Botting, Cascadden . . . I'm not sure if all of these are on staff now, but I believe they are — Fyffe and Hinds and Gil Johnson, who may or may not be with you now, but was, and Jon Jonsson and Lampard and Martin and McMahon and Jack McPhee, if he's still there. Petriquin and Quinlan, Sarvajc (have I got that right?), Sellers, Smith-Windsor, Spetz, Sotropa . . . A very, very considerable list and I haven't . . . It's pretty clear, I would think, that while there are two who are above the threshold they represent not a large number of the people in the more lucrative jobs.

Is it anticipated that in those many areas of activity which I have indicated, and on the assumption, let us say, that Mr. Bedson will be transferred to other duties, is it thought that he might be replaced by a female employee; or alternatively, if, say, Mr. Smith-Windsor takes his position, that Mr. Smith-Windsor's position will be filled by a female employee?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure where the hon. member is taking this. I just think it might be fair to point out that approximately 20 per cent of the non-clerical staff were women under his administration in Executive Council. Under ours, it's 36.7. Now the total, totalled salaries going to women in Executive Council under our administration (I would believe; I haven't calculated it) would likely be a fair amount larger than it would be under the previous administration's category. So we are employing more women. There are many ranging between 25,000 and 40,000. There are non-clerical or executive positions. There may be more and more. Well, I'll just leave it at that.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I don't think there's any point in disputing the Premier's figures, although I certainly would like to because I don't accept them. But once again, there's no point in our discussing what happened several years ago. I'm asking what is likely to happen next year in the event of staff changes which I anticipate will take place.

I will change the subject to a Mr. . . . Oh, perhaps I won't then. I'm getting some encouragement to pursue this, getting some encouragement to pursue it. I look at the personal service contracts, and while the number is very, very lengthy, I would think that of all that list only one of them would be in the \$200 a day category or more, and that is really not, in this particular company, not a high figure. I would think it a high

figure, but in this particular company it is not — not with the 250s, and the 290s, and the 350s, and the 410s, and the 330s, and the 350s, and 350s, and 350s, and 250s. My question to the Premier then is this: does he have any proposal to appoint any female employee to the senior ranks of the public service in the Executive Council?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, we already have done much more than was there when we took over. And yes, to the hon. member, we will give women equal opportunity and certainly that's indicative, and the hon. member knows that it is with respect to our entire administration, for the first time, I guess, in the history of the province, women sitting in Executive Council . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Well, without pursuing this, I would invite anyone to simply look at the figures, and if they have the knowledge sort out which of those employees were with the previous government and which were with the current government, and which are male and female, and make their own comparisons. They stand out without my needing to belabour the fact.

May I ask the Premier whether or not any information has come to hand with respect to Hickling-Johnston and any of their contracts?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — With respect to that company, I'm advised that the Executive Council never paid them anything. There was some work done for CIC. We could get that information, but I don't have it here.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Fine, I would be pleased if the Premier would provide me with some information, and perhaps I can pursue it with CIC.

I have another question with respect to the general policy of the government with respect to education and health tax. And I particularly refer to Mr. John McKenzie, who signs himself as executive assistant to the Premier, or did last October, October of 1982, and writes to a citizen of Regina in these terms:

Premier Devine has asked me to thank you for your telephone call of October 6 in regard to several concerns you have in connection with government campaign promises. To date the top priority of the Conservative government has been to develop programs dealing with inflation and high interest rates. These concerns were addressed through the elimination of the road tax on gasoline, establishment of the mortgage interest reduction program, holding interest rates to 13.25 per cent, and the introduction of a public utilities review commission.

In regard to your concerns (and I won't quote the whole letter but this will do it, and I am now continuing on and have not skipped anything), the provincial government plans to begin eliminating the 5 per cent provincial sales tax in its spring budget, and this tax will be lifted from as many products as possible.

And Mr. McKenzie goes on to give additional information on other items. Mr. McKenzie, as I say signing himself as the executive assistant to the Premier, indicated that the plans were then to begin eliminating the 5 per cent provincial sales tax in the spring budget. Is that plan now not operative?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I believe what the individual was referring to

that targeted reductions and eliminations of sales tax were and are constantly under consideration. I believe that it's been removed on things like the power rates or irrigated land, irrigated projects, so that you're not charged sales tax on electricity used to run irrigation pumps. I believe there's no sales tax now on children's clothing. I believe that the member, or the individual, is right in saying it is our intention to remove the sales tax as we can afford it and as we can stimulate the most economic activity with those targeted reductions. The hon. member has just asked, or at least somebody has asked, when we plan to balance the budget. Clearly there is no magic. When revenues . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, you say there was magic in the campaign, and I'll acknowledge that. So I would just add to the hon. member that, yes, we plan to target those reductions, and that was our intent and still is our intent.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — I note the Premier mentioned that there was no sales tax on children's clothing; that's true. There's no sales tax on food. There's no sales tax on a great number of other things. And there wasn't on any of those, including children's clothing, when he took office . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . So I think the . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I want, Mr. Chairman to repeat again what the letter signed on the Premier's letterhead says, from the office of the Premier:

The provincial government plans to begin eliminating the 5 per cent provincial sales tax in its spring budget, and this tax will be lifted from as many products as possible.

This to a Regina citizen who I doubt was thinking of electricity for irrigation purposes. I doubt whether that was in his or her mind, but I think probably some other items.

Do I understand you to say that that plan did not mature during the spring budget but is still the plan of your government?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, yes, Mr. Chairman. It is the plan of our government to continue to remove the sales tax, target those tax reliefs where it would provide the most benefit to Saskatchewan people, keeping in mind the sound fiscal and financial responsibilities that we have. I might point out to the hon. member from the Quills that . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Quill Lakes.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — . . . Quill Lakes . . . that when he goes back to the magic of the campaign, I think it would be fair to point out, and I'm sure he would agree, that all the campaign promises were made assuming normal revenue comes into the province.

**Mr. Koskie:** — I just want to indicate to the Premier that I've read his election material many times, and I want to say that the people of Saskatchewan have read your election material many times. And I want to say that I don't think that you can stand in this House and not say that the elimination of the E&H tax, which amounted to something like \$350 million if implemented, had any caveats during the election. And I think that any indication by you to try to downplay it, and now to say, 'in accordance with sound economic policy,' I want to say, Mr. Premier, that you misled the people of Saskatchewan in respect to the elimination of the E&H tax, because you didn't put any caveat on it. You misled the people of Saskatchewan when you indicated you would reduce the income tax by 10 per cent, and you're not doing it.

I want to say, Mr. Premier, that the people of Saskatchewan have started to weight your promises in respect to what your performance is. And what they are clearly indicating to me is that you as Premier, or purporting to run for the office of Premier, did not in fact care at the time that you were making the promises — that in fact what you wanted was electoral success, and you didn't care in respect to being responsible to the people of this province.

What I want to ask you, Mr. Premier . . . You're talking about a lot of responsibility — fiscal responsibilities . . . And I'd like to ask you: do you in fact have any guide-lines in respect to the minister's offices in the employment — that is, the number or the salary in respect to the number of special assistants, executive assistants, press officers, and the like? Have you got a policy?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I believe we went through this previously as to . . . There's two mechanisms to employ people. One is through the development of the rules and regulations that outline the salary and the compensation, and so forth. The other is OC. And I said I was quite prepared to provide the names of the individuals we employ to Leader of the Opposition, as we do OCs, and I'm sure every cabinet minister will. We set up the system to expedite the entire process.

With respect to the size of the staff for ministers, the ministers use their best judgement in 'deciding whether they need an executive assistant, or whether they need a press person as well as secretarial staff. So it depends in many cases on how many portfolios they carry. If they are responsible for one, two, three or four Crowns, or they're responsible for one or two or three departments, then it may require more staff. If there's fewer it may require less, but it's up to the minister to use their best judgement in saying, 'Do I need a particular person for this particular department?' Or a combination of departments in some cases.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Well, Mr. Premier, when one goes through the information of the number of assistants in the various ministries, it seems to me that it comes awfully close to between 150,000 to over \$200,000 per cabinet minister. And so what I am asking you: are you satisfied that the size and the magnitude and the cost to the taxpayers of this province is in fact being looked after with the number and the cost per each individual cabinet minister?

I want to say that it varies, but certainly it's somewhere between \$150,000 to over \$200,000 on a calculation, in a given minister's office. And I want to say that I think that this is a very, very large amount of money to be spent, because executive assistants, to a large degree, provide a lot of the . . . handle a lot of the political aspects in respect to the minister's office. But I am surprised that you indicate that there are no guide-lines whatsoever in respect to the total number that a given individual cabinet minister may employ. And I wonder whether the Premier reviews this or whether he is looking at any particular guide-lines in respect to some form of limitation.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I have said many times that in the first year of operation from one administration to another, there may from time to time be a transition team or groups of people or an individual or two that may be brought in to either Executive Council or a minister's office to handle a problem, to deal with it, if that's the case. But in general, I think that you will find, and it's borne out by the statistics, and I think all the public is very happy to find out, that the size of the administration . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Chairman, the hon. member from the Quills says that the government is increased by 9 per cent, and yet at the same time,

he says there's cut, cut, cut. I mean he can't have it both ways.

Mr. Chairman, if I could just carry on with my figures. On March 31, 1982 there was 10,631 permanent staff, government's. On March 31 of 1983 there was 11,693 permanent. On March 31, '82 there was 1,475 temporary, 775 casual, and 2,615 labour service positions for a total of 15,496. March 31st, 1983, there is a decline: 11,693 permanent, 1,389 temporary, 647 casual, 1,354 labour service positions, for a total of 15,083. Therefore our administration, Mr. Chairman, has decreased the civil service by 413 positions in our first year — a decline of 413 positions. That is a decrease of 2.75 per cent, which is a difference of 11.75 per cent from the information reported in the article that the hon. member is talking about, where it says: 'The bureaucracy grew by 9 per cent under Devine.'

I guess what I'm advising the hon. member is that he can take one line or the other, whichever he feels is best for him. But he can't be saying on one hand that this government is terrible because it cuts, and then on the other hand it's terrible because it's increasing the size of the bureaucracy by 9 per cent. If he takes a look at the programs of permanent, temporary, casual and labour service positions, adds them all up and looks at it, then there has been a decline in the administration by 413 positions; that we've kept our budget under the level of inflation — 6.9 per cent in the province of Saskatchewan. We are in fact 11.75 per cent under this article which says that we've had a growth rate of 9 per cent.

So I guess I would say that . . . Well, perhaps one other observation for the hon. member, Mr. Chairman, and I'm sure that the Leader of the Opposition appreciates this because he's watched it on a couple of occasions: that there always is some temporary increase in transition from one administration to another. And if I could just give an example. For the fiscal year ending in 1972, the Liberal administration estimated the administration branch of Executive Council, which included 11 people, had an average salary of \$6,000 per person. For the fiscal year ending 1973, the NDP listed 17 people in the administrative branch of Executive Council, at an average salary of \$13,358, which is more than 211 per cent increase in the first year over the previous year's government's estimate of what it would be.

Now there's several examples of that but I won't go on with it. But I would just point out to the hon. member that we have general guide-lines that we have applied. The Minister of Finance has laid general guide-lines on this entire recovery package. It falls well within that 7 per cent guide-line, inflation minus one. In terms of our employment we have not increased government, even in terms of expenditures, beyond the 6.9 per cent, and in terms of positions; in fact there's been a decrease. So yes, we have a policy. And yes, that policy applies all the way to the executive level and that policy of one of being responsible, given the general guide-lines provided by the Minister of Finance, and they will apply across government, including Executive Council.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Well certainly, other than evading the question, you did a good job of saying nothing. But I'm asking you, Mr. Premier, whether or not you do in fact have any guide-lines, or is it open-ended heretofore, continuing on? You always keep talking about a transition year. And what I'm asking you: is it going to be the policy (and without guide-lines) that on the average an individual minister may have a political staff at a cost of somewhere between \$150,000 and \$200,000?

I want to indicate that you have had no problems in cutting people from Valley View in Moose Jaw in speech therapists, but you certainly do not seem to have any problems

increasing the number of political hacks that you are putting on the taxpayers' expense in respect to the individual minister's office. What I really am saying to the Premier is that I think it would only be responsible that indeed a policy were evolved that there be some consistency as to the salaries to be paid for special assistant, salaries to be paid for executive assistants, and probably there should be some limitation, at least guide-lines, in respect to the total number. I am wondering whether the Premier is prepared to address that, or is it all worked out in the general guide-lines that you indicated under the Minister of Finance's budget?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, the policy, Mr. Chairman, to the hon. member, is to get the fewest number and the highest qualified individuals possible to get the job done.

**Mr. Koskie:** — And I take it then that you are not going to look at imposing any guidelines in respect to the total size of political staff that an individual minister can have. Is that what you're saying, you're not looking at any guide-lines?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, this is not political staff. These are policy advisers. And I've said we will have the fewest number and best qualified to get it done. When the size, Mr. Chairman, of the administration in the province of Saskatchewan from '71 to '81 has been phenomenal, I guess I could turn around and say that we will use the same guide-lines the previous administration used, except I couldn't accept that. I mean, it went from, I believe, about 18,000 people to 30,000 people, and the population of the province didn't change hardly at all. Now that is a significant increase . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, I've said we'll use the smallest number of best qualified people possible in the administration. And if we get two people that are well qualified for X amount of money versus one person that is better qualified for something else, then obviously some judgement is made. But in terms of the size of the administration, we have no intention. I guess we could say, no intention at all, to see that the dramatic growth in administration in the civil service in this province in the next 10 like it was in the last 10, without some corresponding increase, or a pull by population. But just to have it grow for the sake of growing, or for whatever reasons you may find justifiable, that is not our policy. So if you're asking our policy, it is not to see the role of government, or the administration, or policy advisers, in general, the size of government, increase like it did in the last 10 years, unless we had so many more people to administer to that we could justify it in terms of just providing the service.

**Mr. Koskie:** — You have a usual knack, Mr. Premier, of throwing around figures which are totally misleading. And you know very well that from '71 until '81 or '82, that the province of Saskatchewan had developed some very significant Crown corporations such as the very successful Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. And what you are trying to indicate that during this period of time there was growth in government, but that there was no sound economic development. And I want to avoid the continuing of the misleading to the public of Saskatchewan, and to clarify that the increase in the number of people that were employed by the Government of Saskatchewan was in line with that strong economic development in this province, and one which I must say if you hadn't inherited, this province would be bankrupt.

I just want to ask the Premier whether in fact, in respect to summer employment for young people — vis-à-vis employment opportunity with Crown corporations or with other government agencies — whether or not in fact all of the applications do indeed go through your employment committee? Call it what you want. The one that was looking at all the applications before, that went to the Public Service Commission.



Certainly I want to ask the Premier whether there is a screening process in respect to summer employment for students with Crowns, government agencies.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, the student employment program is operated by the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower. I believe they're responsible for it. Employment with the Crown corporations are handled by the Crown corporations. So it's either generally through the Public Service Commission, or special programs like the Opportunities '83, through Advanced Education and Manpower; or third, the Crowns deal with it as they need or as they see fit, given the general recommendations from cabinet.

**Mr. Koskie:** — I'm going to ask you specifically, in respect to employment with Crown corporations, with young people, students, whether or not that in fact goes through a screening committee.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — The Crowns do the hiring themselves.

Mr. Chairman, I thought for the hon. member that he would be interested in this. I just happened to see it. It's from the *Lloydminster Booster*, April the 28th, '83, in its 'Viewpoint,' and Mr. Dave McCullough was ranking the Premier and his administration. He was giving them a pass or a fail. And for keeping promises — and I must point out that the general grade was a C-plus to a B-minus — but in keeping promises, he gives the government an A-plus.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Koskie:** — One final question. Could the Premier advise me what his psychic has told him in respect to the popularity of his government for next year — his psychic?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, in visiting with the people of Saskatchewan, the general impression is that the promises are being kept, and any additional types of programs that people are asking for will come forth. And we are doing as well as can be expected under some rather unique international economic conditions.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, just a couple of comments on some of the last comments of the Premier, particularly with respect to the staff of the government. And I think the figures themselves were very revealing. The Richard Cleroux story says, 'The bureaucracy grows by 9 per cent under Devine,' and I think that that's basically accurate, because the figures given by the Premier are rather revealing. I think by 'bureaucracy' people tend to think of as people who are around and about government departments as administrators, but they don't ordinarily think of highway workers or people who work in parks as part of the bureaucracy — people who are looking after the parks in the summer-time or who are doing road repair work in the summer-time.

When you look at the Premier's figures, you will note that when it comes to regular public servants he has quite a few more. With respect to temporary, he has about the same number as last year — 1,389 to 1,475. With respect to casual, a few less — 640 to 770. The big drop — 1,200 of his 400 drop — three times his drop, comes about from labour service employees. Now, doubtless he will say that some of the labour services were made permanent, and no doubt that was true. But basically what he has done is say that he is not going to hire people to look after the parks. Perhaps he's going to contract it out; perhaps he's not going to look after them. He's not going to hire

people to fix the roads — not his employees. Perhaps he's not going to fix the roads; perhaps he's going to contract it out. But that's where the cut in staff comes, and of course none of that involves very much saving to the public — not for long.

There's no doubt about that he has 1,260 fewer labour service people, and we know what labour service people are. They are the people who are taken on work crews of the government in northern Saskatchewan or with the Department of Highways or the tourism and renewable resources. And they are the big employers of labour service employees, and that has been cut back by 1,200. And by cutting them back by 1,200 he has kept his figure 400 under last year, because in other areas, particularly in the permanent public service, he is up, and up very substantially. That may be touted as a big slash in government employees, but I don't think that when the public talks about too many government employees they are talking about too many people out there fixing the roads. That's not what they're talking about, not road repair people or people cutting the weeds along the road, or people who will fix up the parks in the summer-time, the temporary employees. That isn't what they have in mind. That's not what they mean by bureaucracy.

And so I think Mr. Richard Cleroux was dead on when he said the bureaucracy has increased. And they argue about whether it's 9 per cent, but you can't argue about whether it has increased. And by and large it has increased without any increase in services.

And I noted some others suggesting that there had been no increase in services in the 1970s. That was the position taken by the member for Regina North West. And I was interested in that, because he does not feel apparently that there is any positive increase in services from such programs as children's dentistry, which wasn't there in '71 and was there in '81, or the prescription drug program, which wasn't there in '71 but was there in '81, or the Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living, the SAIL program, which is brand-new, or the law reform commission, or the human rights commission, or the Ombudsman — none of which was in existence in 1971 — nor community colleges. Evidently he feels that community colleges do not represent any increase in services.

Well, I accept that as the view of the Progressive Conservative Party, but I don't accept it as the view of the people of Saskatchewan, and I think that we have all heard the comments, so we don't need to be elaborating them in any way. We heard them say that this did not represent any increase in services, and I suggest that that well may be the view of that party, but it's not the view of this party.

And I say again that, notwithstanding the rhetoric, notwithstanding all the words, what they have done is cut back and cut back sharply in labour service employees. Now it well may be that they've made some of them permanent employees, and that may be an argument for some of them. But the great number, as the Minister of Highways has made very clear and others have made very clear, represent jobs that were performed by people who were fixing roads, or fixing up parks, or doing maintenance work in northern Saskatchewan, who no longer have jobs with the Government of Saskatchewan. It's not as if the work won't be done. It will have to be done by somebody. That is how the public service has been trimmed — not by taking people out of the central core in Regina, not by taking people out of departments as such, but by and large taking them out of institutions like Valley View, taking them out of institutions like — well, let's pick a few in northern Saskatchewan. Or taking them out of highway crews, or people who fix up parks. That's what's been done. It is understandable, but I don't

think it represents any cut-back in the public service.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Chairman, very briefly, there's two or three things that are clear. Instead of employing 15,496 we're employing 15,083. We've cut temporary, cut casual, cut labour service positions. So many were on a, you'd call a temporary basis under the previous administration. Those people now are receiving the benefits of government employees — permanent government employees. So they have higher security; they get seniority; they get all kinds of things. I'm sure the hon. member will agree that many, many people were employed on a permanent basis in the previous administration, but called temporary, casual or labour service positions. When you look at the total number that are employed, yes, there's more that are permanent and they appreciate that. If you ask them, they like that, because they know where they are.

We are employing less than the previous administration. It is 2.75 per cent less. Eight, some are temporary and some will come in terms of looking after parks and so forth. But when you add it all up, it is 413 positions fewer, and those that were forever and ever in a temporary basis — many, many, many of them are now on a permanent basis, and they really appreciate that. So if there's some difference in philosophy, fair be it. I mean, that probably goes without saying.

In terms of our general philosophy with respect to the growth in the size of the administration, I can only reiterate, and I won't bother what we said before, that we don't see unprecedented growth in the size of the bureaucracy or government employees or government service without at least some demand pull from the population base to start it.

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, there are — just one brief comment. I'm surprised that the Premier would talk about security with respect to labour service employees, some hundreds of whom are now carrying pink slips from his government. And we well know that and they know it, particularly if they're with Highways, and I suspect government services, and certainly Northern Saskatchewan. The pink slips have fallen like the snows of winter, and those people don't need to be reminded about what security means.

May I make one other brief comment, and that is that demands for services come from other than population increases. The population of Saskatchewan did not increase sharply during the 1970s, although it increased about 60,000. But the demand for electric power doubled and tripled because of a very, very rapid increase in industrial development. And that meant that there was a need for more people to man the power corporation, to provide the personnel for the power corporation.

And I invite anyone to look at the use of telephones and the number of long-distance calls. What happened was that we had economic good time. This led to a very substantial increase in economic activity as reflected by the telephone corporation — in telephone installations, in telephone calls, and notwithstanding the application of advanced technology, in the number of employees needed to give the service. Now, this was economic activity generating business, not particularly population growth, although there was some of that.

I am disappointed to hear the Premier say that he doesn't expect some more economic activity in the '80s and accordingly the need for any substantially additional number of employees for the telephone corporation or the power corporation or other corporations which respond to economic activity. He believes that economic activity is

solely measured by the number of population.

I invite him to look at the 1970s. I invite him to look at what happened to this province in the increase in power consumption, increase in services provided by the telephone corporation, and as it happens, increase in number of employees of those corporations. Certainly the number of employees went up, but so did the services rendered, and so did the income of Saskatchewan people. And if we see a rate of income growth in the 1980s similar to what we saw in the 1970s, I will be very pleased, and I venture to think Saskatchewan people will be very pleased indeed.

Item 1 agreed to.

## **Item 2**

**Hon. Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, I think this may be a . . . I have some questions which are going to take more than five or six minutes, and it may be a useful time to call it 5 o'clock. I'm going to ask in information services for information on the amount of business given to advertising agencies. This may already have been asked for.

With respect to the bureau of statistics, I've already indicated I will be asking some questions about employment, particularly just using the January, February, and March figures as a basis for questions.

I also may have some questions on housing — broad questions on housing, and what it is assumed that housing starts might well be this year. They're certainly buoyant for the first several months under the impact of the two programs, and we all welcome that. And I'm interested in the Premier's prediction as to, in general terms, what his planning people are telling him about the housing program for the rest of the year. And I will be asking some questions a little later on those, Mr. Chairman.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.