

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

December 1, 1983

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PETITIONS

CLERK: — According to rule 11, sub 7, I hereby lay on the table, read and receive the petition of His Excellency, James P. Mahoney, Roman Catholic bishop of Saskatoon; the Very Reverend Leonard Morand, rector of St. Paul's roman Catholic Cathedral; Winifred O'Rourke; Robert Ferguson; and Ronald Olson of the city of Saskatoon, praying for an act of incorporation.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. YEW: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure today to introduce a special delegation that is with us from Cumberland House. I want to introduce to you, Mr. Speaker, and members of this Assembly, Mr. Rod McKay, councillor of Cumberland House; Mr. Leonard Morin, deputy mayor; and the mayor, Mr. Winston McKay. This delegation is from the oldest community in our province, and they are members of the council for Cumberland House which is on the north-east side of Saskatchewan. The delegation is here today to meet with the Minister of Highways and Transportation about the serious transportation problem that I raised during question period yesterday. I wish them all the best in their efforts, and ask all members of the legislature to join me in welcoming them here today. I wonder if the members would stand please.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity — and I'm a little out of line because I'm not introducing a guest, but this is the festive season coming upon us, and tonight the religion which I am part of, the Jewish religion, starts its portion of it, which is known as Hanukkah. I wish everybody a happy season and, for those of my faith, happy Hanukkah.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Freeze on the Saskatchewan Income Plan

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Social Services. It has to do with the freeze that has been in place since his government took office more than a year ago, not the minimum wage which has affected a great number of people — 60,000 in total — but a freeze that has affected a large number of senior citizens in the province, that being the freeze on the Saskatchewan Income Plan. The minister will know that seniors have received \$25 per month, if they are single, or \$45 a month per couple. That rate has been frozen since his government took office in April of 1982. I wonder if the minister could inform the House, and the senior citizens of the province who are affected by this freeze, when, in fact, he will have the courage to take to cabinet a recommendation that this be increased, to have an impact on the high utility rates that these seniors now are faced with as a result of his government programs.

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise and participate for the first time, as a minister of the Crown, in question period, and I'm pleased to respond to the member's question. I think it will be worth while for me to remind the House of the record of the former government as I respond to this question.

In the year 1975, single seniors here received a supplement of \$20 and married couples a supplement of \$36; and in 1976, when I'm sure the seniors requested an increase, the rate remained the same — \$20 for singles and \$36 for couples. And, then, in 1977, when the former government requested an increase, or at least the seniors requested an increase, the allotment stayed the same, Mr. Speaker — \$20 for singles, and \$36 for couples. Three years running — frozen. Then, in 1978, when an election ensued, they decided that it would be appropriate to raise the allotment \$5, Mr. Speaker, from \$20 to \$25 for singles, and for married couples from \$36 to \$45. Then in 1979, when the seniors, I'm sure, requested an additional increase, did they receive one? No, Mr. Speaker, they did not. In 1980, when the seniors requested an increase, did they receive one? No, they did not, Mr. Speaker. And in 1981, Mr. Speaker, when the seniors requested an increase, did they receive one? No, Mr. Speaker, they did not.

Mr. Speaker, for seven years running the seniors received an increase once, in the amount of \$5, which averages out to 71 cents monthly per year as an increase over a seven-year period of time.

Mr. speaker, this government does care about seniors; we have indicated that in numerous ways. We have increased representation on the senior citizens' advisory council. I have met with seniors in Saskatoon. We have established a seniors' bureau in the province of Saskatchewan, and we will naturally be looking very seriously at the income needs of seniors in the years ahead.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, a supplement to the minister. As he will know, the New Democratic government instituted the Saskatchewan Income Plan. They also instituted a home-care plan for senior citizens. They implemented a home repair program which has since been cancelled by your government. They lowered the nursing homes rates to 390, which you . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please! The member is giving information instead of seeking it, and if the member has a question, would you proceed with it.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, in attempting to respond to the long answer that didn't deal with the previous question, I thought I would be given the same opportunity and leeway in my question. My question to the minister is this. In light of the fact that you have cancelled a number of senior citizens' programs, namely the home repair program, and others where you have had cutbacks, will you now admit that you have a freeze on the Saskatchewan Income Plan that is impacting negatively on seniors who are facing increases in telephone rates, power rates, and natural gas, and when, in fact, will you make your announcement of an increase?

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Well, Mr. Speaker, whatever announcements will be made with regard to any increase will naturally be made at the appropriate time, and this isn't the appropriate time to make announcements about SIP (Saskatchewan Income Plan) increases.

I do want to remind the members of the House that the former government placed a moratorium on the construction of senior citizens' nursing homes. I happened to come across a document which indicated that the former government had, in fact, in cabinet, agreed to a \$500 charge on senior citizens for nursing homes in the province of Saskatchewan. This government presently is at \$400-and-some instead of \$500.

MR. SPEAKER: — I would like to remind the members on both sides of the House that questions should be brief and right to the point, and answers should be the same. I would ask you to proceed in that fashion.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of social Services. The minister will be aware that members of senior citizens' organizations, are upset by the actions of your government with respect to the supplementary income program, and with respect to charges which senior citizens are facing.

I want to quote from a brief recently received by you. It is from the senior citizens' Action Now group, which you met with this week, and in part they say:

Previous to the election of the present government, many statements were made by the Progressive Conservative members of the opposition to the effect that seniors should not suffer hardship due to increases in electricity, natural gas, and telephone rates. In view of the substantial increases, we urge this government to make an increase in the provincial income subsidy to seniors.

Now, in view of unprecedented increases in natural gas and power rates — unprecedented increases two and three times the inflation rate — are you prepared, either to increase the amount of the payments under the Saskatchewan Income Plan, or to shelter senior citizens against these unprecedented increases in natural gas, power, and telephone rates?

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to tell this House that we increased senior citizens' rates much less than you were going to. We froze utility rates which assisted seniors. We will be looking at the needs of seniors and their income, naturally. I want to tell the member opposite that when I met with Action Now yesterday, they told me that they pled with your government for years to give them representation on the senior citizens' advisory council, and you never listened to them.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Minister. Aside from items of representation on council, are you prepared to make any increase in the Saskatchewan Income Plan payments to senior citizens, or are you prepared to act to shelter seniors from the very sharp rises in power, gas, and telephone rates which they are forced to pay?

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, I can assure this House, I can assure this House that we will increase the supplement to seniors far more than 71 cents per month average over a seven-year period of time, which is your government's record.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary. Would the minister advise when this is going to take place?

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, the former government had a 70 per cent increase in utility rates over a seven-year period of time, and they increased the senior supplement by \$5. And they have the gall to say that this government is not interested and concerned about listening to seniors. Certainly we are, and we will be making any announcements in due course.

Transportation Across Saskatchewan River to Cumberland House

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Speaker, in response to a question that I took notice of yesterday from the member from Cumberland House . . . Cumberland constituency, pardon me. I've met with so many people from Cumberland House this morning, it seems to be an obsession with me. I would just like to inform the members of this Assembly, and also the delegation from Cumberland House, that the department will enter into an agreement with the northern village of Cumberland House to reimburse them for services provided during the period from termination of ferry services until such a time as the ice can carry the traffic across it.

In addition, the department will set a crew there to assist in the clearing and flooding of the ice in the initial stages, to build up the ice thickness. With the community, and that, and working with the community, we will continually monitor the ice thickness. We will also be in contact with SPC regarding discharge from water from the Squaw Rapids dam.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to add one more point: that the member opposite yesterday was accusing this government of doing nothing. I think this is a prime example of responding to the needs and the requests of not only just the people from that part of our province, but from the council as well, and we had a very worthwhile meeting.

But, Mr. Speaker, the previous administration, you know . . . as they accuse us of a problem. I hold before me, Mr. Speaker, \$500,000 worth of studies done by the previous government, and no results. The studies, Mr. Speaker, were not . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: — I would just ask the members to give brief replies to questions, and I would ask all members to follow that guide-line.

MR. YEW: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to comment on the minister's statements of a moment ago. I want to thank the minister at this point in time for taking the advice of this side of the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. YEW: — But I also encourage, I also request, that the members on that side of the House arrive at the permanent solution of providing permanent access to Cumberland House by way of providing a bridge to the oldest community in this province. Thank you.

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Speaker, I'll try and give a very brief response to the member opposite. This government today has acted on the requests of the individuals from Cumberland House, because the mayor came down. Mr. Speaker, I want to share two points of information with you. Never had a previous minister of transportation ever committed or been up to Cumberland House. I gave that commitment to those people today. Point number one.

Point number two, Mr. Speaker: this government didn't spend \$500,000 on studying the problem, and then on top of that they never even shared it with the council from Cumberland House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Free Telephones for Senior Citizens

MR. KOSKIE: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a question to the Premier, and it has to do with the problems facing the Saskatchewan senior citizens. I want to indicate, Mr. Premier, that your government could ease the impact of the outrageous utility rate increases by making good some of your election promises. My specific question is this: when will your government make good on its 1982 campaign promise to provide senior citizens with free telephones?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please. When you ask a question I think you should give the hon. minister a chance to answer. It's your time that's running out on the clock, so I think if you want to keep calling the clock will just run down.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, a couple of things I would like to say in response to the minister's or the hon. member's question about seniors, about the taking care of seniors and the

money to take care of seniors, and rates, Mr. Speaker. And rates. If I could have their attention, Mr. Speaker, I will talk about utility rates: power rates, gas rates, and telephone rates. Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Social Services said, we froze all the utility rates, including telephone rates, for a year. We froze them. And one of the reasons that we froze them, Mr. Speaker, for a year was because of the previous record.

AN HON. MEMBER: —What has this got to do with free telephones?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — We are talking about telephone rates, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the reason that we froze the rates was to protect people like the seniors. The other reason that we froze the rates was because of the previous record.

On November, 1975, the general rate increase was 18 per cent. In April of 1977, there was a general increase in telephones of 9 per cent. On April of 1978, there was another increase of 8 per cent. In April of 1979, there was another increase of 6 per cent. In August of 1980, there was another increase of 6 per cent. A general increase of approximately 6 per cent for residential and 11 per cent for August of 1981, Mr. Speaker, for a 62 per cent increase. A 62 per cent increase, Mr. Speaker.

The second rates, Mr. Speaker. Let's look at natural gas rates — natural gas rates. In 1980, Mr. Speaker, there was a 4.6 per cent increase in February to senior citizens — 4.6 per cent. In September, there was an 8.7 per cent increase, 1980. In November, there was another 13.3 per cent increase, for a 30 per cent increase in 1980.

1981 — 5.8 per cent increase in May, 5.5 per cent increase in July, and, Mr. Speaker, in February of last year, 18.7 per cent increase. Mr. Speaker, in 1981-82, the rates went up almost 70 per cent — 70 per cent in '81-82 to the senior citizens.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite ask about telephone rates and about utility rates. We froze them for a year because in the past they had been increased by as much as 70 per cent in two years.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, they asked about money. As I spoke the day before yesterday in this Assembly, if they are looking for extra money all they have to do is look at their own policy of losing \$600 million on uranium mines.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please! I would encourage the members to stay on the subject of the question.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that a booklet called *Pocket Politics: A Quick Reference to PC Policy for Candidates* contains the following under senior citizens' items on page 29, "A PC government would provide free telephones for senior citizens," would the Premier answer the question: when will your government make good on its 1982 election campaign promise to provide, as I say at page 29, free telephones to senior citizens?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, we made a lot of promises in the campaign. Mr. Speaker, we have kept the majority of those promises. And, Mr. Speaker, we will keep the rest of those promises.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, we will be proud to announce when we will keep those

promises, and we'll be proud to send the information on to the following members. In the first 18 months of our administration, Mr. Speaker, we have done more for senior citizens in this province than has been done in the last 10 years of the previous administration.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KOSKIE: — A further question to the Premier. I ask the Premier: are you aware of yet another 1982 election promise made to the senior citizens, wherein you promised to eliminate the 5 per cent provincial sales tax from all utility bills. I want to say that a lot of the seniors voted for you on a commitment that that would be carried through with immediacy. What I'm asking you: when are you in fact going to carry out yet another promise which you intend to break?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, senior citizens voted for us because they were not satisfied with the previous administration. They voted for us because we said that we would make some commitments and we would follow up on them. Mr. Speaker, they didn't know and we didn't know, until we opened the books, that there was no money in the heritage fund. There's no money in the heritage fund. Mr. Speaker, they didn't decide they were going to take \$600 million and dump it in the hole, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we said that we would provide the things that we promised in the campaign, and we will. And we will announce when the time is right to provide those to the people of this province. We've made the commitments and we've kept them, and we will continue to keep them.

MR. KOSKIE: — Supplemental, Mr. Speaker. I would like the Premier . . . Can the Premier explain why it has taken so long to implement these relatively cheap programs you promised to the seniors which you . . . On the other hand, you made no promises to the big oil companies, and you have so readily found \$100 million to pour into the oil companies, but you have no money for the senior citizens. I ask you: when are you going to live up to the promises to the senior citizens?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, I believe that the members opposite are trying to leave the impression that we didn't do what we said we were going to do.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DEVINE: — All right. Mr. Speaker, if that's the case, I'd like to respond to it.

Mr. Speaker, we had made a list of promises, and I believe there was about 50, 50 in the promises. And, the members opposite are saying we didn't keep our promises. So, if they wouldn't mind, I could go through the complete list. They want to know what it is. They want to know why we haven't kept our promises. Well, Mr. Speaker, we went through promise after promise after promise, and we kept them. Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order please. I believe the question was ably asked by the member for Quill Lakes, and I don't think he needs any assistance from the other members. Would you give him an opportunity to answer it.

Order please. I had just asked for order. Before I'm back on my chair, you're blurting out again, and I'm going to caution the members for the last time that we want some decorum in the Chamber. Proceed.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, if I could continue. The members opposite are trying to leave the impression with the House, and with the public, and with the media, that we didn't keep our promises. I would like . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to review the promises we made, and the accomplishments that we have completed, since we went into that. Mr. Speaker, we said when we began our program, that we would open the books and find out what happened to all the money. That's one thing we promised. Second, we would freeze utilities for a year, we promised that. We've opened the books and we examined it, and we can't find the money; two, that we froze utilities.

Three, we promised the senior citizens, Mr. Speaker, that we would set up a public utilities review commission to examine utilities. We've done that. We promised, Mr. Speaker, that we would remove the tax on gasoline — \$135 million. We removed that. We promised, Mr. Speaker, that we would provide 13.25 per cent mortgages to everybody in Saskatchewan with a mortgage. We did that. We promised, Mr. Speaker, that we'd come in with a farm purchase program at 8 per cent and 12 per cent money. We've done it. We promised, Mr. Speaker, that we would provide a rural natural gas distribution system to the province of Saskatchewan. We've done that. We promised, Mr. Speaker, that we would lower royalties and taxes to encourage industries to get back to work in the province of Saskatchewan, and we've done that. We promised, Mr. Speaker, that we would build the best health care system in Canada, Mr. Speaker, and we are now spending more money than anybody else in the history of Saskatchewan. We promised, Mr. Speaker, that we would increase homes and home care facilities for senior citizens, and we did. We promised, Mr. Speaker, that we would change the image of Saskatchewan, and we would be open for business and not closed for business.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, we promised that we would bring home the children, and people would be coming home to Saskatchewan as opposed to be leaving. We promised, Mr. Speaker, that we would open more businesses and get businesses opening in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, we promised that we would encourage profit and allow people to make profit in the province of Saskatchewan. We promised, Mr. Speaker, that we would build schools and educational facilities in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, we promised that we would reduce the dominance of the crown corporations and make them run like a business in the province of Saskatchewan.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: — I would like . . . Order, please. I would like both sides of the House to realize what happens when you ask long questions or questions that provoke debate. I think that the question period today . . . If you review that happened during the question period, all of you will realize that they were the type of questions that you expect that kind of answers to, and I would encourage members not to proceed with that type of questions and answers.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 11 — An Act to amend the Statute Law

HON. MR. LANE: — I move first reading of a bill to amend the Statute Law.

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

Bill No. 12 — An Act to amend The Surrogate Court Act

HON. MR. LANE: — I move first reading of a bill to amend The Surrogate Court Act.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 1 — An Act to establish the Women's Secretariat

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with pleasure that I rise today to move second reading of Bill No. 1, An Act to establish the Women's Secretariat. It is my intention to talk a little philosophy of future direction in the role of the proposed secretariat.

This bill, in my opinion, represents a significant initiative and a milestone, not only for the women of this province, but the government. This initiative puts Saskatchewan as one of the forerunners in Canada. Two others are before us, Ontario and Quebec, in establishing a similar agency.

Saskatchewan women over the years, Mr. Speaker, have been forerunners in many categories, from our grandmothers and our great-grandmothers who made the trek across a very barren undeveloped prairie, and willingly took up the task of what was called homesteading. Homesteading included everything from making one's own soap to ploughing the fields and growing and preserving foods for the family, sewing the clothing. It also included acting as midwifery.

For many of our women the raising and providing for a family was often done in loneliness and isolation. Their task at hand was one of caring and nurturing and contributing to and for a future within a community. And they had a vision, Mr. Speaker, a vision of a land that gave them equal opportunity. It not only gave them equal opportunity, but it challenged their abilities and skills and accepted them for themselves.

Equal opportunity for our women has not come easily. And it was on March 14, 1916 that Saskatchewan women first won the right to vote. It took four years of petitioning before the powers that be were convinced that yes, indeed, women could handle a vote.

And it was another three years, in 1919, before this Assembly saw its first elected female member. Now that's not too bad if one is to look at the record — only three years from the time of the right to vote until a female was actually elected.

Well, Mr. Speaker, what has happened since? Quite frankly, the record is not as good as it should be. In the history of this Assembly we have had a total of 13 women elected, a total, Mr. Speaker, that includes the five women elected in April of 1982.

But perhaps what is more interesting than the total numbers is the number that the NDP have had out of that 13. The NDP party in Saskatchewan continues to tell the women and the men and the children that we are the party that believes in equality, in sameness. We are the party that believes in women's rights. And we believe in affirmative action. And we will look after you and we will protect you. And on and on it goes. How many of the 13 women have the NDP elected? Maybe half. If not half, maybe a third. No, Mr. Speaker, they have elected two — two out of 13 in 31 years of being in power.

Now, how can that be, after those years of being in power, a believer in equal rights, a saviour of the oppressed? Well, Mr. Speaker, what we have had in this province under the NDP was pure and simple socialism. Some other people would define it as something else. It is a philosophy that dictates the state is supreme, and we are the same. The individual, whether it be man,

woman or child, is only secondary to the basic goal of socialism, for the state is first.

Now, when one is in a secondary position, what does it matter what my rights or my freedoms are, and of the oppression? Well, perhaps the bottom line is that actions speak louder than words. And let us look at other actions, Mr. Speaker.

In 1974, this province saw an advisory council on the status of women established. And that's good. But it was only five short years later, in 1979, that the very same advisory council had their grant cut, and they were informed at that time that they would be phased out in total over two years. Mr. Speaker, five members of the council in '79 resigned in protest over that action. And the women's groups spoke out in anger, and the NDP premier of the day received a letter from the Regina Status of Women that said it best all, and I quote:

The government's recent action is a betrayal which affects the morale of all concerned women.

Betrayal, Mr. Speaker, and that was not the end of what I consider a betrayal to women. And I think back to 1981, about late October, maybe early November, only two years ago, the debate and the negotiations were taking place in this country on what the federal constitution should include and what it shouldn't. The then premier of the province saw fit to use women's rights as a pawn in his constitutional negotiations. That was in 1981 when women had assumed that they had at least gained some ground in equal rights. But it was understood that equal rights were there. What happened? Well, they had good reason to think it was not 1981 but it was beginning to sound more like 1881, particularly when a premier, a reported statesman of the country, is willing to pit the rights of one group against another --women against natives, and natives against women.

Now, certainly some people are going to say he was misunderstood; he was misinterpreted. And was he? He will say he was. His party will say he was, but I wonder. The party that says go for it in uranium in one year, and in another year says don't go for it; we'll cancel that order. You really do wonder.

The most deplorable aspect of the entire debate on the constitution was the lack of recognition and understanding and acceptance on his part that women's rights are strong enough to stand on their own, and native rights are indeed strong enough to stand on their own. What does it mean to me as a woman, if I have gained recognition of rights when the native that I work and live beside does not have that very same recognition? And how would the native feel with long-awaited rights that were traded for women's rights?

You see, Mr. Speaker, he simply didn't understand, and he still doesn't understand that the equality of rights should not be subject to negotiations for the political expediency of the state.

Well, Mr. Speaker, those are actions past and we're into the present in setting the groundwork for a positive future. Since April of 1982, this government has seen elected five female MLAs, and for the first time in the history of this province, we have two women in cabinet. We have a female, and our youngest MLA, as a Legislative Secretary. And we have two females as caucus committee chairpersons.

Mr. Speaker, our commitment to increasing the participation of women into the mainstream of society is obvious. One only has to look at some of the inroads made in just 19 short months . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker, the opposition has much to say about how this government has not put women into responsible positions. I reject that criticism based on facts, not rhetoric — facts.

For example, besides the five female MLAs, we have for the first time in the history of the Teachers' Superannuation Commission, a woman as the executive director, appointed

November of 1983. In August of 1982, we appointed a woman as the Provincial Librarian in charge of . . . We have a woman as chairperson of the minimum wage board. For the first time in the history of the Saskatchewan Transportation Corporation, Mr. Speaker, we have a woman as a chairperson.

And I look further at some of our boards and I see an increase in the number of female membership on several of the appointed boards and commissions, boards and commissions that have traditionally been thought of as a male domain.

We have seen in the Potash corporation of Saskatchewan an increase from zero percent under the NDP to 16 percent female representation under the Conservative government. The Saskatchewan agricultural research fund has gone from 14 percent to 28 percent female participation. Sask Tel, one of the higher, bigger profile corporations, they have seen an increase from 8 percent under the NDP to 27 percent female representation under the Conservative government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have made a concerted effort, and the proposed secretariat will enhance and increase the efforts made to date. We have seen 42 percent female representation on the public utilities review commission. Saskatchewan's economic development advisory committee has 20 percent female representation.

Mr. Speaker, in another area outside of the boards and commissions, we have made a deliberate effort to improve female participation in the work-force in the non-traditional areas. For one example, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sask Power. Sask Power has a 30 percent increase from 1982 to 1983 in the number of women that have been put into the non-traditional trades.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with the authority of the women's secretariat, and the expertise and commitment of the women's services branch through Advanced Education and Manpower, this government is dedicated to improving job opportunities for our women.

The advisory council on the status of women, Mr. Deputy Speaker, has been expanded and strengthened and for the first time in its history, women's organizations were formally invited to submit names. We have a membership of a total of 19, with a balanced geographical representation that was lacking before. Rural women had very little to say through the advisory council that was then speaking to the NDP government.

Three men have been appointed to that council and that council can only benefit from the diverse cross-section of its total membership, which includes interest from the community worker, to the teacher, the professor, the business woman, the housewife, the farm wife, the nurse, business man, union, doctors, and lawyers.

In another area, Mr. Speaker, our Attorney General has taken a most important first step in helping to address the issue of wife battering, and that was the matter of the policy laying charges with the incident. He has also followed that up with the announcement that they will be collecting data in order to help better address the problem in the very near future. Our Minister of Social Services has indicated that his department will set as their priority the issue of violence against women.

Mr. Speaker, these numbers and these initiatives that I have given you are facts, and I would suggest to this Assembly that it is only a beginning. It is a beginning that must be maintained and strengthened if we, as women, are to have an equal opportunity for participation at all levels of our society, including the democratic process.

Now for myself as a woman, that's all I ask for and work for. Not special status — just equal opportunity and equal recognition as a human being. Equal opportunity to participate and contribute according to my abilities and my interests. Equal opportunity to make decisions and

choices, and choice means more than deciding one way or another. It is not a simple yes or a no. A choice has to be made objectively, free of the pressures created by biases, attitudes, and stereotypes, whether they are held by female or male on either side of the spectrum.

Now, the forces that one works against to gain that equal opportunity are varied — from one's own family, friends, the work place, the norm of society, from colleagues, female colleagues. And perhaps for many women the opposing force can be from within. We have another force — did have — in this province, and I consider it to be the force of socialism that says we are all the same. It does not recognize the worth of the individual and what that individual may have to contribute regardless of their sex.

Out of those opposing forces there is another one that is very seldom talked about, and if it is it's not readily admitted to, and that is the force in the intangible matter that one calls attitude. Society's attitudes towards women are often steeped in myth and rhetoric, much of which is subscribed to by both men and women. And we've all heard them. I hear them periodically in here from across the floor.

For instance, women talk too much. Women gossip; men share information. Women change their minds more often. Women have no interest beyond their homes and their families. Women go to university only to get a Mrs. Degree. Women work just to fill in time between school and getting married. And have you heard of the myth, "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned?" Everyone knows women are poor drivers; the Minister of Highways may not agree with me. Women cannot balance a cheque-book. And everyone knows women get sick more often; so if they do, why would you want to give them an important job? And the list goes on.

While we have some myths about women, we have the same number for men. All women face these myths. I do as a legislator and a politician. The working woman does as she pursues her career goals. And the homemaker? Well, the homemaker faces these also but with added pressure. The added pressure comes from the realization that her work is often thought of by the rest of the people that it lacks status either socially, legally, or economically.

How much importance is attached to these myths? Do they really influence people's lives? Why are three out of five poor adults in Canada female? Why are most working women found in a narrow range of low-paying women's jobs? And why are approximately 65 per cent of single women over the age of 65 poor?

Could this be related to the historic undervaluing of the work that women do? To the false assumption that women don't need as much income as men because women are not heads of families? Or is it simply because women are not seen to rely on themselves for financial security? Is this linked to the fact that young girls lack an identity and have trouble visualizing their future beyond 21 years old, a wedding, and a couple of kids? Although the realities of life do not match most of those assumptions, they continue to prevail and to influence society and the way we think. I would suggest that the crux of the problem is that a myth is the result of people's expectations and attitudes, including their own biases. And perhaps the only way to debunk the myth is to change the underlying attitudes. Attitude and myth do not change quickly nor easily, and it is a very slow and painful process for all concerned. Nevertheless, that's where the greatest need and the greatest potential for meaningful change exists.

When we consider long-term goals, attitudinal change needs to be at the top of the list. The question becomes: how are they changed? What factors facilitate or speed up the process, and which ones have the opposite effect?

Well, Mr. Speaker, education is a key factor — education in a very broad sense. It includes all forms of education, ranging from the public education system to personal life styles, to the heightened awareness which comes from media attention. Now, taken together, these represent a multitude of opportunities for movement down the road towards equal rights and

equal responsibilities.

Another important factor in achieving the attitudinal change is the cultivation of a very broad base of support. And in a democratic society which sometimes we forget, support for change is a prerequisite to that change and this support is absolutely essential in order to legitimize the issues. And of course the third key factor is government and attitude.

Mr. Speaker, a lot has happened in the history of women, even from the time that the feminist, Betty Friedan, wrote the book, *The Feminine Mystique*. And some of it has been positive and some of it has not been positive. As I see it, one of the least positive aspects of the women's movement has been its alienation of a great many people, men and women alike. So where does that leave us today? Are there wounds to heal? Should future strategies attempt to attract men and women who have been left behind? I suggest they must and as I see it, that is a challenge, and an exciting one, to the women's secretariat in the future.

The feminist philosophy continues to evoke mixed reactions, much of them characterized by confusion, misunderstanding, fear, and anger. And perhaps in looking at it, it's predictable given the far-reaching and intensely personal implications involved. Unfortunately, this has often resulted in very destructive confrontations, lack of understanding, and a loss of acceptance.

It is the secretariat's intent to pursue the opening of doors for our women through understanding and acceptance. Some people might not support such an approach, because they are going to tell me it's going to lead to too many compromises and perhaps even stagnation. And my response to that is that changes achieved any other way will only be superficial, they will certainly be short-lived, and they will probably not be worth the cost.

Our goal has to be one that looks beyond the stereotypes that limit our humanity as well as our femininity and our masculinity. And our strategies need to be based on understanding, sharing, and co-operation.

Now, in considering some of the activities various groups have been involved in over the years, I've often wondered if the objective was to attract attention or achieve change. Perhaps they assumed that the attention would bring change. Unfortunately, the process of change is considerably more complicated than that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a momentum for change and it's growing every day. Some people recognize it. About eight people don't. In some quarters it grows more quietly and more slowly than in others. But it is growing, none the less. We need to tap the momentum and we need to protect it from the fragmentation by strategies which pit women against men and women against women, often in anger. The energy that is consumed by anger and confrontation must be diverted to achieving constructive change.

And so it is, Mr. Speaker, that this government seeks constructive but committed change. This past spring, this government began its process of change when it announced the reorganization of its women's division. At that time this government, through our Premier, stated no longer should women's concerns, and aspirations be isolated to one single department nor group.

The reorganization of the women's division last spring resulted in three separate units with specific responsibility for women's programming. Number one, responsibility for employment and training matters rest with the women's services branch in the Department of Advanced Education. The Public Service Commission's affirmative action unit is responsible for developing affirmative action programs for women within the public service. The labour standards branch in Saskatchewan Labour continues to monitor compliance with the equal pay and maternity leave provisions of The Labour Standards Act.

I want to emphasize, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the work being done by these units is essential

and imperative. However, the range of issues affecting women, and indeed all society, goes far beyond the parameters of these established programs.

The women's secretariat will provide a focal point for the integration of women's concerns and aspirations into government's basic policy development and decision making. The time has come to incorporate women's concerns into the mainstream. The days of confining the so-called women's issues to a single department are over. Our women's concerns will no longer be defined in terms of whether or not they come under the purview of the Department of Labour or any other department.

And no longer will the women be in only a monitoring position. That is what the women's branch in the Department of Labour had been in. And I recall a statement by a man by the name of Gordon Snyder who used to be a minister of labour, and at that time he defined the women's branch as being the watch-dog of government — the monitor, the watch-dog, in a very adversarial role. A watch-dog is on the outside looking and never on the inside where the decision making takes its process.

Our objective is to develop mechanisms to ensure that all policies, all legislation, and all programs are examined for their potential impact on women. And it is our intention to become pro-active in the development of positive policies and legislation.

The establishment of a women's secretariat is a signal to all government departments and agencies that they need to think about and to analyse their policies and programs for their effect on the female population. They, too, need to be pro-active. The secretariat's plans will be to provide the overall framework for this new, co-operative approach.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, perhaps the most significant factor facing the female status is the issue of violence against women, and it is indeed a serious problem with no easy answers. Legal status and protection from discrimination is another large and complex area. Native women, rural women — how can we ensure that their changing roles and needs are considered in the development of new social and economic policies?

Violence against women, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a social issue and a health issue and a legal issue, but it is also an economic issue — all rolled into one. It is clear that most of these matters do not concern women exclusively, nor are they straightforward issues which can be dealt with by any single department or agency, and they do indeed require an approach that allows the co-ordination to take place. But perhaps the most important factor is that they require a thorough understanding.

Up to now, the capacity to generate a co-ordinated and integrated response has been absent. The establishment of a women's secretariat will correct that deficiency.

The secretariat, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will be a free-standing agency, with its own legislative authority, a separate budget, and a direct reporting relationship with the minister responsible for the status of women. In the past, they answered to a deputy minister. They never had a direct line to the minister that was responsible. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I suggest that these indeed are important gains, not only symbolically but from a practical level. Each of these factors will give the secretariat a degree of credibility and authority that they have never before achieved.

The secretariat will have broad and government-wide responsibility. The proposed legislation formally recognizes the responsibilities and directs the secretariat to develop mechanisms to fulfil them. Its work will be concentrated on the co-ordination of provincial legislation, policies, and programs to the extent that co-ordination is needed to ensure that women's concerns are appropriately reflected. In order to be effective, the secretariat will need to develop strong communication links and close working relationships right across government. I am confident, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this process will be greatly facilitated by the strong commitment which

exists by the Premier, the cabinet, and in caucus.

In addition, the secretariat will provide a central contact point for women's organizations and also on federal-provincial matters pertaining to the status of women. It will also act as a liaison between the minister and the Saskatchewan Advisory Council on the Status of women.

In short, Mr. Speaker, this legislation recognizes that women have legitimate and diverse concerns regarding their social and economic and legal status. The establishment of a woman's secretariat will enhance the government's ability to respond to those concerns in a way which will benefit all of Saskatchewan society.

Mr. speaker, it is indeed that I respectfully move second reading of The Women's Secretariat Act.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I want to say initially that this bill represents a major retreat by this government. It represents, first and foremost, a reaction to the outrage which greeted the actions of the then minister of labour in abolishing the women's division.

I have to congratulate the women's movement in Saskatchewan. They have done something that no one else has been able to do. They've got to this government. They have got a bit of action out of this government. And no one else, apart from the big business community, no one else has managed to do that.

I want to remind members, as well, that the record of this government on women's issues is nothing sort of abominable. It is terrible . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . A-B-O-M-I-N-A-B-I-L-E.

Terrible, rotten, no good — typical Conservative, typical Conservative. It is terrible on virtually every front.

This government boasts of having five women in caucus. I wished, I really wished it were able to boast of having some effective women in caucus. It is obvious that the women in the Conservative caucus either don't understand women's issues or don't care.

I am waiting for a speech from the member from Saskatoon Westmount, the member who clapped, who applauded so loudly when the women's division was done away with. And I may say, I'm looking for a speech from the member from Saskatoon Nutana, who applauded so loudly when the women's division was done away with. I expect that you will at least be consistent and vote against this bill, because what the government is doing is bringing back what it abolished. It is a retreat; nothing more.

I also believe that this bill represents little more than cosmetics, cosmetics brought about by a complete failure on women's issues. The minister commented on a number of appointments to boards. That's easy, and it is often largely symbolism. What marks the test of whether or not you have any commitment to women is whether or not they're employed at senior levels in the public service.

I noted a distinct absence of comments by the minister on the women appointed to senior positions in government. This government had an unparalleled opportunity to appoint people to senior positions, because you canned virtually all . . . you canned virtually all of the incumbents.

And you didn't appoint any until yesterday, when the minister of international trade and economic development, the member from Cannington, appointed someone who I did not know, as deputy provincial secretary — first permanent head so appointed. I do not know the woman who was appointed. I do know something about the position, and the duties are largely nominal. That nominal position is the first one that you had the confidence to appoint a woman to.

Your record on appointment of women in the senior levels of the public service is terrible. And I address that to the member from Kindersley who has a direct responsibility for the public service commission, if I recall. I may be mistaken; it used to be, last year. You people are shuffling around so fast, no man can stay up with it.

Marjorie Gerwing achieved prominence under our government when she was active in the Bayda commission. That was the first time she was active. You haven't appointed a single permanent head. You have not appointed a single permanent head. You may have appointed them to boards, which is all you did with Marj Gerwing — she's president of a board — but in the permanent public service your record is terrible. You fired three permanent heads and you replaced them with men. And the first exception to that was yesterday, in a post which is largely meaningless — the deputy provincial secretary.

But your brilliant record of promoting women's affairs doesn't stop there. The affirmative action program, a program with admittedly some difficulties, begun by the former government, which has been put in the deep-freeze by this government . . . There have been no significant advances under the affirmative action program with this government.

Women in the public service who telephone me, most of whom supported you people in the last election, tell me that the affirmative action program in government is virtually dead. There's nothing being done. There is nothing being done.

On policy issues, the record of this government is worse. Minimum wage largely impacts on women. The majority of people who earn minimum wage are women, and you have chosen to freeze it. You have chosen to take the position that it is the women on minimum wage who are somehow or other fuelling inflation, and it is they who must bear the brunt of the cost of recovering — in contradiction to the way you have treated your own political wheel-horses, your own assistants, and yourselves, with this bloated cabinet.

The issue of violence. We have heard a lot of platitudes about violence against women. I really wished women could make some use of those platitudes that you people substitute for action, but that is all the women have got from this government — platitudes. Violence against women isn't going to be materially affected by the Minister of Justice, although I support what he does in calling for stricter enforcement of the Criminal Code sections that relate to sexual offences. But that is not going to solve the problem, nor is all the hot air which comes from the Minister of Social Services on the subject.

I will tell you what will go a good distance towards solving the problem of violence against women. It is clear that unemployment is a major factor in the violence against women. Violence against women has increased dramatically with the recession, and will continue so long as the strains caused by unemployment impact upon a family.

It is caused by excessive consumption of alcohol — that is a part of virtually every violent act against women. And this government is promoting alcohol by advertising its sale. And you are saying, "It doesn't matter, doesn't care; who cares?" I'll tell you who cares. The people who are the victims of alcohol care.

I saw an advertisement in the newspaper, in the *Star-Phoenix*, actually, over the week-end, that I thought was very apt. The advertisement stated: "Drunks Aren't Funny," and it had a picture of some children hiding from two parents who were fighting. And alcoholism isn't funny. It may be the stuff of stage humour, but it's not funny to the children who are the subject of violence. It is not funny to women who are the subject of violence brought about in part by alcohol. And you people, in promoting alcohol, are promoting violence against women. You are promoting a whole host of other social problems, but you are promoting violence against women.

The Minister of Social Services has had any number of platitudes to lay before this Assembly on violence against women. I am waiting to see what he does with respect to the funding to non-government agencies, because they played a major role in assisting troubled women in troubled circumstance. And your predecessor in office was niggardly, and I am putting it kindly. Some of the non-government agencies were cut out altogether. Some had their funding reduced. Virtually none had their funding in any sense increased. And I am waiting to see what your record is with non-government agencies. I am talking about your record when you were minister of social services on non-government agencies and it is terrible.

It is hypocritical, Madam Minister, for you to stand up and talk about violence against women, and read what I suppose was the 13th chapter out of *The Feminist Mystique* — I can only assume that's where you got your speech from — and ignore your own record, and ignore your own record . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Now, don't talk nasty. And ignore your own record on the funding of non-government agencies, because it is one that you should not be very proud of. As a former president of the Saskatchewan school trustees, you should understand what violence to children does, violence in the family can do.

But undoubtedly the blackest mark in the record, and this is quite a feat — this is no small feat — but the blackest mark is earned by the Minister of Labour, who abolished the women's division. It was by almost any mark, and almost any test, one of the best women's divisions in Canada. It had earned a national reputation for the quality of its work. And you people — I can only assume charitably that it was through ignorance — you people through ignorance abolished that division.

AN HON. MEMBER: — You are showing your true colours.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Well, perhaps. Perhaps the views espoused publicly by the members from Saskatoon Nutana and Saskatoon Rosemont were felt secretly by all of them. Saskatoon Westmount, I said. You're Rosemont; she's Westmount. I know these are trying and confusing times for members of the government benches. Yes, she's right behind you. She's the good-looking one from Saskatoon Westmount. You're the one from Saskatoon Rosemont.

Undoubtedly, the blackest mark, the blackest mark was the abolition of that division because . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — You mean, I'm not the blackest mark?

MR. SHILLINGTON: — No, you're not, although you are probably competing. You are probably competing for it.

It was easy to abolish the women's division. It is very difficult to re-establish a division of that quality, that produces that kind of work, because you can't do it with an act. You cannot recreate that with a piece of legislation such as what was put on my desk. It takes people, and you've lost most of the people. Most of them are gone. I will get to that in a moment . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

I'm glad you're listening. I'm glad you're listening, because you are going to have a real problem in staffing that women's secretariat. And I may say before I go on any further that I hope you break precedent, you do something you have not done before, and concern yourself with something other than the person's membership in the PC Party when you go to appoint the director of this secretariat. I hope you find a person who has credibility and independence, because the kind of issues upon which this secretariat should be speaking are the kind of issues that I don't think this government's going to want to hear about very badly.

I don't think this government's going to want to hear from the secretariat on minimum wage, on alcohol, on unemployment, on funding to non-government agencies, because those are the very issues which have impacted on women and so negatively.

The strains are beginning to show in the political bulwark of this government. I am informed, reliably, that Allan Gregg's polls told the government that they're losing the support of women and that this was an issue which was hurting you. That's why you brought back the women's secretariat: because women are concerned about the minimum wage; they're concerned about the abolition of the women's division; and they are concerned about day care.

I am sorry that the member from Riversdale is not here to hear this. I don't think she's going to be in the House. Ah, she is. Well, I'm pleased to see she's back behind the bar of the House. But I don't think the member's going to be in the House long enough to complete the study on day care, so it may be an academic subject. I suspect before this House resumes we will have another, and a different, member from Riversdale. But day care . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, don't extend the deadline or you will abort the whole study.

It's not surprising you're finding that, because studies which have been done in the U.S. point to a gender gap, and they note the gender gap in the U.S. Those studies note that the conservative policies of Ronald Reagan have cost him support among women. That may have made some impression on this government because you have been . . . because, unlike this government which is so secretive, the U.S. government publishes those studies. The U.S. government publishes its studies. The last thing you people published was the . . . The studies which have been done by the U.S. government are done by the Senate. They are public and you can go and get them from the library.

If the member from . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, I'm sorry if my remarks do not find favour with the member from Regina North. I was making them only because I thought he might be impressed. I am deeply disturbed that the member from Regina North does not find my remarks enlightening.

When you abolished the women's division, you outraged . . . I have made a list of 60 organizations which were outraged by the abolition of the women's division, and they were not, as the Minister of Finance said, all a bunch of NDP women. At least one of them, Dolores Honour, who was a Liberal candidate, took exception to that, being lumped in with a bunch of NDP . . . I can see the Minister of Finance desperately trying to ward off the comment. You made it. It was reported. They reacted to it, and they reacted pretty negatively . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, why don't you just go up and write the story for them? I'll excuse you, and I'll send you a copy of this speech if you want.

I list some of the groups that protested the abolition of the women's division: Action Day Care; the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women; here's bunch of NDP women — the Elizabeth Fry Society, a society which has been in existence for well over a hundred years; I suppose another bunch of NDPers — the Saskatchewan Association on Human Rights; the Communication Workers of Canada, a group called Working for Women, Saskatchewan division of the Canadian Union of Public Employees. And no doubt here's another bunch of NDP women — Saskatchewan Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs. Now here's another bunch which are rock-rib NDP — Saskatchewan Law Union, Saskatchewan Council of women. As I say, there are 60 and I will not mention them all. No doubt your establishment of this secretariat is a reaction to that. I only wish this government were honest enough to admit the error, and then you could go about setting up an agency which would do a proper job.

We are disturbed that this government refuses to assure the legislature that the secretariat will be free to publish its reports, will be staffed with people who are independent of the Conservative Party in this government, and will be provided with sufficient financial resources. And I'm going to come back to that. That is a key concern, and we will be bringing that concern to the attention of this government on more occasions than today.

Another action of this government is hurting women, and it is the cut-back in legal services. And I quote from the comments by Diane Fisher, speaking to the Elizabeth Fry Society at their annual

meeting. She stated:

Social assistance is cutting back on their (read “women’s”), on their access to money, so they shoplift, but legal aid is cutting back on their access to legal aid, so they have no defenders.

This government has proved to be anything but open in dealing with women. The Saskatchewan Action Committee on the Status of Women has experienced a good deal of frustration in dealing with this government. I quote from April 28 edition of *The Western Producer*, April 28 of this year, and the quote is as follows:

As soon as the Progressive Conservatives got into power, Buswell, the action committee’s president said the Saskatchewan Action committee requested a meeting, and after two letters were unanswered, they contacted Paul Schoenhals, Minister of Municipal Affairs. A meeting was set up, but later cancelled.

Well, that describes their frustration in trying to meet with the government after it was elected.

The Regina Healthsharing Incorporated, who I think have done some excellent work in researching problems related to women, who raised for the first time the issue of Saskatchewan’s abnormally high pre-marital pregnancy rate. That statistic has been available to this Assembly in the library for years. They were the first people who I heard raise the issue, and it ought to alarm all members of this House.

Regina health-sharing region, who have dealt with that among other issues, with 350 members, spent three years researching women’s health problems and nine months’ research into a proposal to prevent the problem, only to have this government turn thumbs down on their request. And, I’m quoting from *Leader-Post*, April 22, 1983. According to *The Leader Post*, the 10-member health-sharing board has come to the conclusion that the Devine government doesn’t see women’s issues as a priority and they say that they shared that impression with virtually every other women’s group as well.

The same minister, I may add, who brought the legislation for the women’s secretariat to the legislature, who pretends to masquerade as a friend of women — after all, he tells the House, he married one; a noble gesture, a noble gesture. I am referring now to the Minister of Social Services.

When she brought the legislation for this act to the House, she came wearing true Tory blue, the same true Tory blue colour she wore as minister of social services when she cut household and clothing allowance, those portions of the social assistance benefits for unemployed workers. How the minister squares that philosophical speech she just gave with her actions as minister of social services, I will never know.

If I can find it quickly, and I will not waste much time of the House, I want to find a quote of the Minister of Finance. The Minister of Finance has trouble with the upper portion of his body — his mouth tends to fall open at times. I am quoting, Mr. Minister, from one of the periods when you distinguished yourself by some loose comments, and I am reading from the *Prince Albert Daily Herald* of Thursday, November 24, 1983. The headline is — I can read it from there: Andrew Urges Alterations in Welfare, Unemployment Insurance — so more can be done with taxpayers’ money. The Minister of Finance apparently envisions reducing the cost of welfare by reducing the benefits, so that more can be done with taxpayers’ money. He has an . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, I certainly do not, and I’m going to comment on that in a moment.

He apparently envisions the welfare rates being so startlingly high under this government that people prefer to be on welfare rather than work, in the face of all evidence. And this, Mr. Minister . . . You may quarrel about the headline; the quote is a direct quote from your speech, and I want

to quote it back to you:

We must insure our safety net programs, unemployment insurance and social insurance, do not destroy the initiative to seek out new, and perhaps different employment or training.

AN HON. MEMBER: — What's wrong with that?

MR. SHILLINGTON: — What is wrong with it is that it suggests that the level of social assistance is so high that it encourages people not to work. I suggest there isn't a scintilla of evidence to support that, and I suggest that the Minister of Finance speaks out of both sides of his mouth. He has one set of comments which he uses for his more liberal friends — small "I" liberal friends. He has another set of comments which he saves for the business community, and the two don't always meet.

And I wonder, Mr. Minister, to what level will you be urging the Minister of Social Services to reduce benefits in the up-coming budget? To what level will you be urging her to reduce them? And that impacts pretty directly on women. That impacts more directly on women than a lot of what your colleague, the Minister of Justice, and the current Minister of Social Services have said. The vast majority of people getting social assistance are women, single parents, and for the minister to suggest that money should be taken away from them because they should be working, never mind how, or because you need the money elsewhere, as the headline suggests, never mind the injustice and inequity of that, doing women a lot more harm than the present Minister of Education will ever do for them. So I'll be interested in your contribution, Mr. Minister, and I'll be interested in knowing to what level you plan on driving social assistance rates down in the current budget so that you may do more with taxpayers' money.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the House that our caucus will be supporting the bill. We will be seeking . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . It is better than nothing at all. It is a good deal short of what you had when you came into office with the women's division, but it is better than nothing at all. We will be seeking to make some changes in the agency and we will be moving some amendments, the substance of which I will describe in a second. If those amendments are passed, we will vote for it again on third reading.

Mr. Speaker, it is key that this secretariat have the authority and the independence to publish its reports and make them public. The secretariat isn't going to serve any function if all its work is censored by the minister, whoever that may be. I don't think the minister is going to public what women would have to say, and I hope this secretariat reflects what women have to say. I don't think the minister's going to publish what women have to say about the minimum wage, about unemployment, about the other issues I raised.

We think it is key that this secretariat have the power to make its reports public and we are going to be introducing an amendment to that effect which will, in effect, include reports and a publication of its work in the annual report. And I don't envision having any difficulty getting government members to accept that — none at all. This, we will all recall, was the government which came into office in a spirit of open government. Let the taxpayers in. Let them participate. I don't envision any difficulty, any difficulty at all, in a government of that ilk adopting a simple amendment which says that their research work and their reports should be published with the annual report. I don't envision any difficulty at all, because I believe you people when you say when you believe in open government.

I'm not like 99 per cent of the other people in Saskatchewan who don't believe you. Not me. You got me. So I believe you will adopt it. I believe it will be consistent. I believe you will be consistent, and I believe you will adopt the amendment. For those reasons, I and my caucus will be supporting this bill in second reading.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MRS. BACON: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a guest.

INTRODUCTION OF GUEST

MRS. BACON: — Thank you. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have in our midst today Mr. Bert Cadieu, a former member of the House of Commons in Ottawa for the Progressive Conservatives under the administration of John Diefenbaker. He served the riding of Meadow Lake. Je dis pour mes amis, bienvenue. Would you please all welcome him.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 1 — An Act to establish the Women's Secretariat (continued)

MRS. BACON: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I would initially now just like to thank the Lord for endowing me with the patience of a woman to sit so politely through the rhetoric of the member from Regina Centre. We are here today debating the birth of a new vehicle, a new vehicle to assist some of the Saskatchewan women to achieve their goals. This is not a retreat, as was said by the member from Regina Centre, but is an expansion that is going to be positive and more productive. And I ask the member from Regina Centre: I sat quietly and politely throughout your speech; perhaps you would offer me the same courtesy.

The term of reference will be the women's secretariat, but will all women use it? No, I think not. Could this vehicle be used by the men in our province who are genuinely concerned about the women's future? I hope so, Mr. Deputy Speaker. For quite simply put, the problems indicative to women in today's world are the results of attitudes toward women which have evolved over generations and generations, and only with the co-operation of men and women in Saskatchewan will the secretariat achieve its goal.

I wish now to backtrack to my first paragraph to clarify why I said, "some" women and not "all" women, for I believe the practice of collective judgment is primitive and dangerous. Many women in Saskatchewan do not want their role changed, the role involving homemaking or the rearing of children. Many women are content to delve into hobbies rather than a career. Many women are extremely confident. Those women will take on a challenge and go it alone. And then there are the career wishers, the battered, and the abused. They are neither confident nor content, the group who want to change their lives but know not how to go about making that change nor whom they should consult.

This is the group that I believe will be using the women's secretariat and making it the functional body it is to be. And for those women in the province who do not want such a body, it will not interfere with their lives. For those who have already attained their goals, the valuable resource of experience will be offered and shared with the women's secretariat.

People helping people in a good slogan, Mr. Speaker. And really isn't that what life is all about? I mentioned earlier that attitudinal problems are largely responsible for many of the problems and tasks the women's secretariat will be dealing with. An attitude is a settled mode of thinking and with the Home Sapiens' ability to reason, we know that attitudes can be changed. A particular mode of thought can become unsettled. Attitudes cannot be legislated, nor were they formed overnight with regard to women.

The attitudes out there in the real world are products of evolution, just as were you yourself and myself, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Racism is an attitude. Bigotry is an attitude. They are simple attitudes, primitive attitudes, negative and destructive. They have moulded and

changed their ugly format through time, and they are not consistent throughout the world, but they have been there since the beginning of time.

And so it is with that that I should like to dwell for a while on the reality of the situation before us.

I deal with basic concepts, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for I am a realist. The reality is as follows: women are people first, as are men. Children are simply small people. We are mammals. We are warm-blooded. We have hair or fur on our body. And we suckle our young on milk. We are of the genus *Homo*, and of the species *Sapiens*. Humans are called *Homo Sapiens*. The order of division is further broken down to variety or breed, or from the sale of humans, race. And each breed or race can further be separated by sex. There are males and there are females. By chromosome structuring, I am of the latter category.

A further biological division is also a reality. It is the physical structure of the *Homo Sapiens*. Females are usually of a finer bone structure, usually display a more compassionate nature, and are equipped to bear young. Physically, I speak only for myself, for I am inferior to most men in the area of strength. I can shingle a roof along with any man in this room, but I cannot get a bundle of shingles to the roof. I can assist at birth and pull a calf, but I cannot lift that calf.

But mentally, the faculties that form attitudes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the faculties that assimilate and analyse information mentally, I ask: am I inferior to the men? I think not, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I have the same computer between my ears as has the male of my species. It controls my sight, the movement of my body, the workings of my heart. It performs the same tasks for the men. Simply put, we all have the same psychological equipment to work with to gather, to store, and to form attitudes.

Some people, I acknowledge, have more ability than others, but I have always put my faith in: it is not how much ability you have, but what you do with what you've got.

So what makes me so different? What sets me apart from my colleagues? What sets me apart from the majority of members in this House? Can I don a three-piece suit and tie? Of course, I can. Could I learn to play billiards? I'm sure I could. Could I achieve a law degree? Become a medical doctor? An architect? An engineer? A welder? Of course. In reality, the similarity of the sexes are infinite. The differences are factual, functional, and biological.

I am, simply put, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a female person. I am a wife; I am a grass root woman. And I represent the grass root women. And that is why I am an MLA.

In the PC Party, with this government, women have the greatest opportunity ever afforded the female gender in the history of the province. There are five elected women on the government side of the House, two of which are in cabinet.

What are the female statistics for Allan Blakeney and the NDP 11 years of tyranny?

And let me relate to you a little campaign story when I was pounding the doors in Nutana. I would hand my brochure with my picture on the front to an NDP card-carrying person, and they would say to me, "Are you married to Bacon?" And I would say, "Well, yes." They couldn't believe that they had a woman out on the doors.

Did you elect a woman in 1982? You did not. You had some candidates, but they were all defeated. Was it because they were women? Apparently not. Was it because they were NDP? Perhaps so. Was it because they were so radical they did not want to nor were able to effectively represent women like me — women like me, Mr. Speaker — the wives, the moms, and the non-abrasives of society.

How many women have the NDP elected? Did you do it in 1978? No. did you do it in 1975? No.

Did you do it in 1971? No. In fact, in 31 years you've only elected two. What is the women's role in your party? Is it making tea cakes and coffee? Doing what you're told? Can a woman ever try again?

But Mr. Blakeney says he really cares, and we know that Mr. Blakeney is an honourable man.

Interesting statistics, Mr. Deputy Speaker, facts that every man, woman, and child in Saskatchewan should note and question. Why? Why were women ostracized, and are they ostracized by the NDP? It is my opinion that the NDP is a simple party for simple men. Was it not the Hon. Leader of the Opposition who, December last, stood up and pointed to our government and said, "Stand up and fight it like a man," neglecting of course to say the other half of the story — which is his problem — of telling me how I should stand up like a man. Well I didn't think we stood any differently.

And I address the opposition now. Did you know that if we five women were members of your caucus we would be the majority? We would be running the caucus for you. We could even choose a new leader for you. The possibility just boggles the mind.

And what of the administration of Premier Devine and the Conservatives? As I stated earlier, we have five MLAs, two in cabinet. We have appointed more women to boards and commissions than you ever did. We have a woman in Executive Council — first in the history of Saskatchewan.

And the opposition portrays a caring for women. Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are not so easily conned. They know better, and I intend to remind them regularly about the former premier and his Santa's helpers. Or is it Ali Baba and the 40 thieves? But Mr. Blakeney says he really cares, and Mr. Blakeney is an honourable man.

I was at a banquet last year, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It was a fund-raising banquet and I sat at a table with a large group of people from the riding of Riversdale. And no sooner had I settled myself than they were anxious to say that they were relatively happy they had an MLA at their table — not happy because I wasn't theirs — but to be very sure that I noted that they didn't vote for me. That was fine. There was a challenge ahead of me. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I cannot tell you how shocked these people were to find out that I was not a liberated woman — that I wore a bra, and I wasn't radical. Furthermore, they could hardly stand it when they found out I was a wife, I was a mother, I had been married one time, and I still lived with my husband. What do they expect from female politicians? Exactly the kind of propaganda that they rammed down the throats of the people of Saskatchewan.

And I'm sorry that the Leader of the Opposition is not here this afternoon, for I should like to question him. As the Minister of Education said, "What was your position on women's issues during the formation of the Canadian charter?" I'll remind you, and I'll remind the people of this province. You shamefully used my rights and the rights of other women as a bartering tool, and for that I will never forgive you.

But Mr. Blakeney said he really cares, and Mr. Blakeney is an honourable man. When in power, the Leader of the Opposition pulled 400 positions from the public sector that I assume were filled mostly by women. Do you remember those nursing positions, Mr. Member from Elphinstone? Remember the 400 nursing positions that your caring and compassionate government cancelled? Tested and trusted — the people who care. But Mr. Blakeney says he really cares for women, and he is an honourable man.

You and your colleagues babble incessantly to our supposed erosion of the health care system and our so-called discrimination against women. The people of Saskatchewan are not so easily conned. Those are conjectured falsehoods. They are the product of narrow, hypocritical, and radical minds, the minds of the members opposite.

My government, the government of all the people in Saskatchewan, women included, believes and has taken the steps to ensure that equal education means equal opportunities. The public sector will no longer be a heaven for just the boys. My party and my government recognize the ability and constructive contributions that women can make to this province and to society.

Equal education for equal opportunities, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Remember that. For it is an equation long overdue in this province, and I suggest it will be well received.

The women's secretariat will soon be in place. Its success is dependent on the positive contributions from my colleagues, from my constituents, from the people of Saskatchewan, and yes, even those thin, thin ranks of the opposition.

Nonsense that was printed from the questionable mind of the member from Regina Centre in his most recent propaganda paper will hinder and not help the plight for women. Such statements from the NDP will never again be believed in Saskatchewan. Your little uranium flip-flop was the most costly proof you'll ever have to have.

The NDP cannot be trusted. You have lost your credibility. You have lost whatever credibility you ever achieved — \$600 million worth of credibility. I charge you that your trustworthiness as a party is as shabby as your attitude toward the women of Saskatchewan. Your record of government clearly establishes it. I should like to directly quote from this little piece of trivia that I received in my mailbox.

First page it says, headline . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Ned, you should listen to this: "Tory Renege on Election promises." And he names, "make Saskatchewan number one in health care, free phones for senior citizens, and more senior citizen housing." Now I thought we had 35 promises and these were three we hadn't quite come up to date yet, although health care is questionable. But after question period today I understand for sure we had 20. Three haven't been made in your eyes, so 17 out of 20 is not bad. Tell the whole truth.

Secondly, "Tories Sold Out on Intercon," and I quote:

Intercon employees were the pawns of government which put profit before people. The Devine government knew in June of the planned plant closure. They had hoped that through selling their share they could wash their hands of any blame. Instead they have shown themselves as uncaring and unconcerned about 125 Intercon Regina employees and their families.

It is my understanding that the Attorney General of Saskatchewan tabled in this House not so many days ago — I believe it was Thursday last, Mr. Deputy Speaker — exactly who decided Intercon would close, exactly when the decision was made, and exactly who the premier was at the time that concurred with the decision. Who was the premier in 1981?

And last but not least, a double-face, a double personality, and now we have a double standard from his newsletter: "Tories Hurt Women." I quote:

The Devine Tories tore down the women's division in 1982. They are now attempting to intimidate the women of this province into a solid acceptance of their women's secretariat.

It is my understanding that we did not tear down but merely moved and expanded into the educational field the women's division so that they would not be confined to Labour. Furthermore, intimidation is a tool of your party; respect is the one that we use. Respect, Mr. Speaker — simple and yet an achievable word — respect for all people, both male and female.

Our Minister of Justice has recently taken steps and initiatives to address the problem of wife

battering. To do this we must also address the attitudes of those involved and affected, directly and indirectly. This government has taken steps to ensure that the sanctity of one's body is not violated by physical assault, whether the victim be spouse or not. It is unacceptable in this society and in the eyes of the law to physically harm another human being, and wives are human beings. No longer, thanks to the initiatives of John Diefenbaker — incidentally, a Conservative — no longer are women chattels to be traded or possessed like cattle. First and foremost, we are people, and we want to be treated as such.

The government and the Conservatives are taking positive new steps to help the women of Saskatchewan while you NDP wallow in your own primitive attitudes. I respectfully ask the people of Saskatchewan — the working men, the working women, those that have something to contribute to the women's secretariat — make positive contributions to the women's secretariat and we will have a functional body. It is with pride that I will be supporting the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. MAXWELL: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. For a moment I was rather afraid I wasn't going to have the opportunity to join in the debate. And I wish to thank my good friend, the member from Shaunavon, for allowing me the opportunity. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have the privilege of addressing Bill 1, An Act to establish the Women's Secretariat, presented earlier to the Assembly this afternoon by my colleague . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Ah, welcome back, welcome back my good friend, the member from Regina Centre.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am so pleased. I'd like two comments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I may. The first one is, I thank the hon. member behind me but I think I'll manage to handle this one all by myself because I'm a big boy now, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And secondly, I was welcoming back the hon. member from Regina Centre because he made a few comments which I feel I just have to address a little further on in my remarks.

One thing I should point out, Mr. Deputy speaker, if the hon. member persists with his frivolous attitude I think it will demonstrate during this debate the complete lack of respect he is showing for the women of Saskatchewan, and perhaps . . . Welcome back to you, too, Mr. Speaker. I was just saying that perhaps members of the opposition would prefer to speak from and through the seats of their pants than from their feet.

Well, as I was saying, Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, it's my privilege to address Bill 1 in support of the bill, and also in support of my colleague, the Minister responsible for the Status of Women. It is my opinion, Mr. Speaker, that this is an excellent piece of legislation, an excellent piece of legislation, which is going to go a long way towards serving the interests of the people of Saskatchewan. And I believe the formation of a women's secretariat by this government will provide legislators, policy makers, and administrators with a unique vehicle for addressing the special needs of women.

As Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower, Mr. Speaker, I think I have become intimately aware of women's issues around the province, particularly as they relate to the field of employment and training — issues surrounding both of these. This awareness, Mr. Speaker, is in part due to the women's services branch which operates within the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower, and which I may say is alive and well and flourishing.

The creation of the secretariat, I think, serves to erase any small, minute, lingering doubts the public might have had about this government's commitment to the promotion of the interests of women. But more than this, much more, Mr. Speaker, the secretariat will provide government-wide co-ordination to the study of basic policy development and decisions by government which affect the status of women. As I said, because of the women's services

branch I think I have become aware of the special needs of women in our society. And I would like to take an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, for a few moments, to talk about what the branch within my department is doing, or attempting to do, to service those needs.

The major concern stimulating activity in the branch is access for women to non-traditional jobs and access to educational programs. Tied to this concern is the effort, and it is a major effect, Mr. Speaker, to overcome stereotyping through a public relations program that will enhance the image of women as labour market participants, as equals in the labour market-place.

There are several ways in which this public relations program is being implemented by the women's services branch. And herein, I might add, lies the principal differentiating feature between the branch and the women's secretariat, the forthcoming secretariat as proposed by my colleague, the minister responsible for the status of women.

While the secretariat will be working in-house to assist the overall government in designing, integrating policy with the special needs of women in mind, the women's services branch is a line department with educational expertise that heightens public awareness of women as workers.

The women's services branch is providing the public with educational resources and a variety of research material. The branch provides information for groups who are staging workshops, and for government departments which are engaged in affirmative action programs, or departments requiring data relating to women's issues.

The branch also prepared numerous publications and distributes them, not only across the province, but across the country, Mr. Speaker.

Career counselling is available to the public. And in this regard the emphasis and the counselling is designed to serve those women who may never have been exposed to the process of shooting for a particular career goal, people who need assistance in the preparation of resumes and applications, the simple things on how to fill in an application form, Mr. Speaker. And it's amazing when you consider that we do have 177,000 adults in the province who have less than a grade 10 education. The need is there for this type of service.

The women's services branch also offers consulting services to industry when a company is preparing to implement an affirmative action program.

One area which probably currently is fairly low-key but which will soon be very actively pursued, is that of research — research into specific women's issues. Two specific matters which are to be researched shortly are: (1) barriers that women face in entering the trades in Saskatchewan and, (2) women in other areas who are using distance education systems. Where those systems presently exist, those will be investigated, those will be researched, and possible implementation turned back to my department.

The women's services branch, Mr. Speaker — and I wish to make this perfectly clear to everyone — the women's services branch will continue to play a vital role in developing policies for employment and training, and will be operating from an excellent storefront location in the heart of downtown Regina, on Victoria Avenue.

With a staff complement of eight, an annual budget of \$423,000, the women's services branch will be the focus for issues, relating to the training needs of women, but the establishment of the women's secretariat will allow for government-wide co-ordination of policy, legislation, and programs, not just in the areas of employment and training but in other areas as well. In announcing the reorganization of the women's division last spring, the Premier stated, and I quote, "No longer should women's concerns and aspirations be isolated to one single department." As the Minister of Education, the minister responsible for the status of women, has

said, "The establishment of the women's secretariat will be a manifestation of that goal."

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the minister responsible for the status of women for introducing this imaginative and exciting legislature. I wish to say, Mr. Speaker, that I am absolutely delighted to have been given the opportunity to speak in favour of this bill and as you have gathered from my remarks, I will certainly be supporting it. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed a pleasure for me to rise and to engage in debate on this very significant piece of legislation which is now before the House for consideration. I think it's only appropriate that this bill be entitled Bill 1. The first bill that this government is bringing forward in this particular session of the legislature is a bill that will deal with issues pertaining to women. I know, Mr. Speaker, that women here in Saskatchewan are very concerned that their concerns, their legitimate aspirations, be given a serious ear by government, and it is our intention to in fact give that serious ear. We have manifest that intention by bringing forward this particular bill.

I want to commend my colleague, the hon. minister in charge of the status of women, for bringing forward this bill at this time. I think it's important for a number of reasons, and I want to elaborate on those particular reasons in a few moments.

I want to say, first of all, Mr. Speaker, that I believe this bill is in keeping with the kinds of initiatives that this government has brought forward over the past 18 months. When I think of the Department of Social Services, Mr. Speaker, we have placed a very clear and pressing importance on the matter of delivering services to seniors here in Saskatchewan. We have spoken of the concern that this government has to address the issues that natives have, and in the near future we will be, of course, bringing legislation forward to address the concerns of the disabled community herein the province of Saskatchewan. I think, Mr. Speaker, the fact that we are addressing in a very concrete way, through this particular legislation . . . I think that that indicates that this particular government is not only concerned about seniors or the disabled or the native community, but we are concerned about all communities of people here in Saskatchewan. Today we are indicating our concern as it relates to the women's community here in the province of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we recognize that the former government did in fact, at least in some measure, however deficient that measure was, recognize the need to provide services for women here in the province of Saskatchewan, and they of course established the women's divisions in the Department of Labour. And I give them credit for doing that, Mr. speaker. It's important that governments do pay attention to the needs of women.

The problem was, of course, that the Department of Labour was an isolated context from which to deal with concerns pertaining to women, and I recall my colleague beside me here stating just a few moments ago that our Premier indicated that never again will the concerns of women be isolated ton one particular department of the Government of Saskatchewan. Their concerns are too broad-ranging, too wide in scope, to be limited to one particular department.

And so I think it was only appropriate, Mr. Speaker, that we broke out of that isolated cocoon and that we took the women's division, which was in the Department of Labour, and we took the functions which were being performed there, we expanded them, and we included them not only in the Department of Labour, but also in the Public Service Commission, and I'm very pleased, as well, to say in the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower. And I think that my colleague beside me here has given a very fine exposition of the services that the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower is presently providing for women. And I can only wonder why it took so long in the province of Saskatchewan before the educational and manpower and employment concerns of women were addressed seriously in the fashion that

they presently are being addressed by this particular government.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking today and a bill pertaining to the establishment of a women's secretariat. And I think, Mr. Speaker, it is only fitting that it be this government which brings forward this bill for consideration in this Legislative Assembly, because the Progressive Conservative Party in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative government is a government of women — unlike the former government.

Consider for a minute, Mr. Speaker, the fact that this particular caucus is graced by the presence of five women. I think, of course, of the fine representative from the constituency of Saskatoon Riversdale, who is doing a very fine job on behalf of the women of Saskatchewan. And I must say, Mr. Speaker, that the ideas, the suggestions, the initiative, the drive, the behaviour, the example that this particular member is demonstrating as she works with me in the Department of Social Services is a very fine indication of the kinds of things that this particular government will be doing for the women of Saskatchewan. I think, Mr. Speaker, that that particular member has much more ahead of her in terms of advancement in future in government.

I think, Mr. Speaker, of the fine representation from the constituency of Saskatoon Nutana, and I want to commend the member for the fine speech which she gave today on behalf of women. And, of course, Mr. Speaker, that's only two women — two more than presently are in the caucus opposite, of course. I think of the fine member from Saskatoon Westmount and the concerns that she has expressed on behalf of women herein the province of Saskatchewan. And then, Mr. Speaker, of course, what can we say about the two women that presently are in the cabinet here in the province of Saskatchewan? For the first time ever, women are represented in the province of Saskatchewan in the cabinet and they of course occupy very significant and serious portfolios. Their responsibilities are certainly immense. Their responsibilities are onerous. But I think Mr. Speaker, they are carrying them out in a very fine fashion.

And I say that, Mr. Speaker, to indicate that this government is a government and a party of women. We understand women's issues. We are concerned about women's issues. And that, of course, is exactly what we're doing today. We are responding to the issues that concerns the needs of women here in the province of Saskatchewan. That's what this bill to establish a women's secretariat is all about. And I can't understand, Mr. speaker, why the members opposite, when they were in government for 11 years, never took upon themselves to establish an agency which would in fact co-ordinate and integrate and deal with the concerns of women in a fashion that this particular secretariat will.

I ask the members opposite: why? And I notice the member from Shaunavon is strangely silent. Why didn't you establish a women's secretariat? Well, of course, Mr. Speaker, it wasn't a much better system. To isolate the concerns of women in one particular department in the division of labour is not a manner adequate to deal with the concerns of women, and I don't know how the member opposite can suggest that it ever would be adequate.

Mr. Speaker, the debate on second reading of this particular bill, of course, is designated to focus in on the principle of the bill and I think we should do that. I want to speak to the House, Mr. Speaker, for a few minutes about what this bill is intended to accomplish. The secretariat's primary role will be to integrate women's concerns and aspirations into government's basic policy development and decision making. Now, I ask the members of the House: is it important to integrate women's concerns and aspirations into government's basic policy development and decision making? Is it important to do that? I ask the member from Shaunavon, who has been criticizing this particular bill. Is it important to integrate women's concerns and aspirations into government's basic policy development and decision making?

Mr. Speaker, I can only respond that of course it is important. Who in their right mind would disagree and say it's not important to integrate the concerns of women? The question we then have to ask ourselves, that logically follows: have we in fact been integrating the concerns of

women into government? Has there been a mechanism in place which will accomplish that? And I don't think there has been a mechanism in place which will accomplish that, Mr. Speaker.

I looked to the former women's division in the Department of Labour and while it was undoubtedly accomplishing some very laudable objectives, was it in fact adequately integrating the concerns of women into the government decision-making process? And I don't think it was, Mr. Speaker. So it seems to me natural that the members of the House would want to support a bill which establishes such a secretariat, which will integrate women's concerns and aspirations into government's basic policy development and decision making.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if I can expand upon this particular responsibility of the women's secretariat to be established, the minister has indicated that the functions of this particular secretariat are as follows:

To provide a focal point for the integration of women's concerns into government decision making.

And I have to ask, Mr. Speaker, is there at present a focal point which can adequately address all of the concerns of women in the Government of Saskatchewan? And I think if we survey all of the departments, all of the agencies, all of the commissions, all of the advisory councils which have been established over the years, I think we will find, Mr. Speaker, that the government of Saskatchewan has been lacking in the past. There has not been a free-standing agency which will act as a focal point for the integration of women's concerns into government decision making. So surely it is incumbent upon us all, would you not agree? Surely it is incumbent upon us all to provide a focal point for decision making.

Mr. Speaker, this secretariat will, as well, provide government with the capacity to respond in a co-ordinated and comprehensive manner to women's concerns.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in the short time that I have been involved in government, it has become apparent to me that one of the great lacks over the past 10, 15, 20, 30, even 40 years, I suppose, in the Government of Saskatchewan has been a lack of co-ordination, of policy making, of policy delivery. Co-ordination is key to the success of government ventures. That, Mr. Speaker, is why in the Department of Social Services we have developed a senior citizens' bureau which is going to act to co-ordinate the concerns of seniors. I use that argument by way of analogy. If we're going to co-ordinate senior citizens' issues, certainly it's incumbent upon us to co-ordinate women's issues. I ask the member opposite: would you not agree? I don't think he's listening. I question whether or not he is seriously concerned about his bill to establish a women's secretariat.

Mr. Speaker, co-ordination is essential. Without co-ordination, Mr. Speaker, the taxpayers' dollar is not going to be adequately spent. Co-ordination is essential to the effective delivery of any government service. Surely if we're going to co-ordinate services to the native community, to the seniors community, then we must co-ordinate services to the female community in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I see here that the third activity and responsibility that this particular free-standing secretariat will carry out is as follows: to provide a visible central contact point for non-government agencies and on federal-provincial matters pertaining to the status of women. Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry to say that one of the deficiencies that I came upon when I entered my particular portfolio was a lack of a communication mechanism which would adequately deal with the non-government agencies herein the province of Saskatchewan. In my particular Department of Social Services there was no one individual, there was no one agency in my department, which had overall responsibility to communicate with, to liaise with, the non-governmental sector herein the province of Saskatchewan.

I think it's a very laudable measure that is being proposed by the minister, because certainly many of the non-governmental agencies that our government relates to deal directly with women's issues. In fact they have been established for the primary purpose of providing services directly for women, and for women only in many instances. So surely it's important, Mr. Speaker, that there be some focal point, some place where the non-governmental agencies that relate to women's concerns can come to the Government of Saskatchewan and say, "Here are our concerns." I think that the non-governmental organizations in Saskatchewan are going to be pleased that they will now have this particular agency that they can relate to. Formerly it was not there.

Then, Mr. Speaker, I see that this particular free-standing agency is going to act as a catalyst on a government-wide basis for the analysis of policies and programs for their potential impact on women. Now, Mr. Speaker, I think all members of the Assembly would agree that the policies and programs of government impact upon women. There is no disagreement on that. I think everyone would agree. If that is the case, Mr. Speaker, and since we have unanimous agreement here in the House that that is the case, then surely it is important, Mr. Speaker, that someone within government act as a catalyst, a motivator, a stimulator, to cause government to reflect upon the manner with which it is addressing the concerns of women.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think that the former women's division, while as I indicated earlier, did perform many laudable functions, I don't think, Mr. Speaker, that it had a broad enough scope of mandate to really act as an effective catalyst to deal with all of the concerns of women and to ensure that policies, that programs, are being evaluated in an ongoing manner as they should be. And I think that the free-standing secretariat which is being proposed today, Mr. Speaker, will go a long way towards acting as a catalyst on the government-wide basis for the analysis of policies and programs for their potential impact upon women.

And so, Mr. Speaker, the question we have to address in second reading of this particular bill, is as follows: is there a need in the province of Saskatchewan for a free-standing women's secretariat which will in fact carry out the mandate that I have just articulated for the House this afternoon? Is there a need for such a free-standing secretariat?

And I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that all members, not only on this side of the House but indeed on the other side of the House, would in fact concur with me, that they would say, "Yes, Mr. Speaker, there is a need for such a free-standing secretariat."

And I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that all members, not only on this side of the House but indeed on the other side of the House, would in fact concur with me, that they would say, "Yes, Mr. Speaker, there is a need for such a free-standing secretariat."

And I think, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite, if they were honest with themselves and were sincere in their own self-criticism as they reflect upon their past 11 years of mismanagement, that they would agree that they should have established a free-standing secretariat such as this, years ago. And I think that the female segment of the population of Saskatchewan will indeed be delighted that this particular free-standing secretariat is in fact being established.

I want to comment, Mr. Speaker, for a minute or two, on a few of the words which the member from Regina Centre had to say about this particular bill. He indicated that this particular government is simply offering platitudes to the women of Saskatchewan as it regards the violence against women issue in our province and in our country.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take issue with this. The matter of violence against women is a very serious matter. It is one that we should not, and can not, treat lightly, as it may have been done in the past on some occasions by some people. Mr. Speaker, I think one of the fundamentally important things which needs to be done in our province, and in our country, is to raise the consciousness of the people of this province, and of the people of Canada, with regards to the violence against women issue. And one of the most effective ways to raise the consciousness of people, to educate them, to sensitize them to this particular issue, is to speak out, to speak out, Mr. Speaker, to indicate to the people that there is a problem, that the government recognizes

that there is a problem, that the government is going to take steps to address the problem, Mr. Speaker.

Unless we speak out, and educate, and sensitize the public, it will not be a concern, as it should be. And, Mr. Speaker, I have to ask the members of this Assembly, and I have to ask the province of Saskatchewan, how much did the former government speak out on this particular matter of violence against women? How often, Mr. Speaker, did the members opposite speak out against the scourge of pornography in Canada in the province of Saskatchewan? I ask the member from Shaunavon: how often? I ask the member from Shaunavon. I ask the member from Shaunavon again. How often, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Speaker, I honestly cannot recall one instance in which the former government spoke out in a very serious and concerned fashion on the scourge of pornography in our society.

AN HON. MEMBER: — What are you doing about it?

HON. MR. DIRKS: — We are speaking out against it. You never even spoke out against it. You never even spoke out against it. Mr. Speaker. The first step is in fact to speak out. It's a primary function of government, in its leadership capacity, to educate and to sensitize people about issues. And unless government does, that government should not be. It should be replaced. And I suspect that's one of the reasons why your government was replaced. You chose not to speak out against it.

I want the member opposite who says, "What are you doing about this issue?" to know that in the short time that I have been Minister of Social Services I have met with the Sexual Assault and Crisis Line people in Saskatoon and listened to their concerns. I have met with the transition house people in Saskatoon and listened to their concerns. I have met with them in Regina and listened to their concerns. I likely met with more groups in the first three months of my particular tenure as Minister of Social Services than certain ministers of social services opposite met in their entire tenure. Mr. Speaker, that is the first step that any government needs to take. Before you take action in terms of programs and policies, one needs to find out what the community of Saskatchewan says is the particular problem and what they think should be done about it.

The worst thing that any government can do is to act prematurely. This government has no intention of acting precipitately in making mistakes. We want to ensure that what we do is in fact that which should be done. And I think, Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what we're doing. And, as it relates to a women's secretariat, Mr. Speaker, we have in fact listened to the women of Saskatchewan. We have met with them in many forums, on many occasions, and we believe, this government believes, that a women's secretariat is in fact one of the best ways that we can address effectively the issues of women.

Mr. Speaker, also, the member opposite indicated that he felt that the secretariat would not be able to table reports, and I notice here in the bill that in fact the secretariat will have to prepare and submit a report and lay it before the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to participate in this particular debate this afternoon. I think it is fundamentally important that all members on this side of the House, and on the other side of the House, take seriously this particular matter of supporting a free-standing secretariat which will integrate and co-ordinate and respond to the concerns of women and act as a catalyst on their behalf. For that reasons, Mr. speaker, I would urge all members of the Assembly to support the legislation that is before us today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MRS. CASWELL: — First of all, I am extremely disappointed in the poor turn-out in the corner over there. As usual, the members on the opposite corner are not interested in listening to a

woman unless that woman agrees with their socialist agenda and they can use that women for their own political reasons.

I would like to make a quote. Mr. Speaker, at first it may appear that it is not on the subject, but I assure you, it is. This is *Hansard*, December 8, 1975:

Mr. Speaker, if Bill No. 1 passes, 1978 will be recorded as the year the socialists in this province nationalized the potash industry. If Bill No. 1 passes, 1975 will be recorded as the year the government disregarded agreements made by a former NDP government which guaranteed the potash industry fair taxes and no danger of expropriation. If Bill No. 1 passes, 1975 will be remembered as the year the Saskatchewan government kicked out of our province people a former government invited and encouraged to locate here. People, while believing the promise of a former NDP premier, invested millions in risk capital to build and develop mines, mines that we neither had the money nor the expertise to build on our own.

Mr. Speaker, 1975 will also be remembered as an election year, an election year where nationalization of the potash industry was not . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please. I fail to see that the things that the hon. member is dealing with do relate to the subject, and I would ask you to get on the subject.

MRS. CASWELL: — Mr. Speaker, if you will bear with me just for a few more quotes, it does relate to it. May I have the privilege of finishing the quote?

MR. SPEAKER: — You'll have to be very brief, because I don't see the relationship.

MRS. CASWELL: — I will be very brief.

The realization of the consequences of the sweeping powers of Bill 1 were applied to other resources such as land or private business, strikes fears in the hearts of every thinking citizen in this province. Mr. Speaker, many people are living in fear and their business operation is on a day-to-day basis. People are asking what group will be next in the government's grab for more control and more government take-overs. People in Saskatchewan are not the only ones showing concern.

And it goes on and on. The relevance to that, Mr. Speaker, was that speech was made by a woman, Mrs. Edwards. Did the NDP in 1975 listen to the hon. member, Mrs. Edwards? No, of course they didn't. Did the NDP, realizing there was an active, intelligent woman who could get elected, stand up and speak on the potash take-over — the most controversial debate in this House? Was she appointed to the potash mine? No, of course she wasn't. Was she appointed on a board to talk about women's concerns? No, of course she wasn't. Did the NDP give Mrs. Edwards any recognition for the years that she spent as an MLA? No, of course they didn't, Mr. Speaker.

And I hope you realize, Mr. Speaker, the point of this is: the NDP listen only to NDP women. The NDP are not at all interested in women per se. They are interested in NDP women, that is if they can't find an NDP man to take their place.

Now, I think the fact, Mr. Speaker, that many people on both sides of the House were wondering, was why was the hon. member from Westmount talking about potash when we're talking about women's concerns. Obviously, this Mrs. Edwards thought, as a woman, that she should speak up for democracy; she should speak up against government control; she should speak up against the hypocrisy of a government that campaigns on one issue and delivers something else.

And she goes on to talk about:

The ordinary people I've talked to, whether it is senior citizens, a young married couple, working people raising a family, blue collar workers, or professionals — the people I've talked to from all walks of life think buying the potash industry is a bad business deal.

Now obviously, Mr. Speaker, this woman felt she was not only speaking for herself, but what she called the ordinary people — the people who did not get elected and who supported her. She was pleading in this House that these people would not live in fear that their businesses would not be taken over.

Did the NDP listen to Mrs. Edwards? Of course they didn't, because the NDP kept on going in 1975, 1976, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, with the same policies of expropriation, of government control, of listening to no one but the doctrinaire socialists who are running their program.

So, Mr. Speaker, this hypocrisy of dealing with women's issues is a smoke-screen. What they are concerned about is socialism and not women. They're concerned about statism and potash mines — while women in this province, in 1975 and earlier, were standing up in the House and fighting for democracy, were fighting for a free economy, were fighting for the ordinary person, were fighting that people had a right to live without fear.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MRS. CASWELL: — I believe it is public record, for a few short months or possibly a year or two, I flirted with the ideas of socialism. But there is one key reason that stopped me from pursuing that course, and it was the total hypocrisy on women's issues. The way that I saw the socialists — who then became amalgamated in the government — used women, treated women, and silenced and muzzled women who did not fit their philosophy; those who exploited women for their own political gains.

To repeat, did the NDP allow Conservative women to speak out on these issues? Did they put them on agendas? No, they did not, Mr. Speaker.

I have something else here. It's called the *Project for St. Paul's Hospital, Grey Nuns of Saskatchewan*. Now, this is a book — it's not one that we made. Grey Nuns Hospital put it out to explain their project of expansion, to explain their project of development. And there's a picture in the back of the hon. member from Wolseley, the Minister of Health. Our Minister of Health has his picture and a little note here to explain how he supports and respects the integrity and work of St. Paul's Hospital. The courageous band of Grey Nuns in Saskatoon lived in my constituency. They have provided aid and service to my family. And I'd like to tell this House, I would like to tell this House a little bit, just a little bit, of the harassments that courageous band of nuns experienced from the past NDP government.

First of all, over and over again, they wanted to bring the Grey Nuns to their knees by not funding them, by not giving them money to replace equipment, by not giving them space for operations, for surgeries, by not providing enough money for staff, so that nursing orderlies and nuns and nurses and nurses' aides were laid off with back problems, possibly never working again, because they couldn't find two people to help lift their heavy patient. They tried to bring the Grey Nuns to their knees by seeing that the staff morale was so low because they were understaffed and underpaid. And the Grey Nuns pleaded with the past government and said, "give us more funds. We're providing a service. We're providing a service for all Saskatchewan, in northern Saskatchewan in particular. We're providing services to members in Athabasca and people in Cumberland."

Did they listen? No, they did not. What they did was they decided they were going to take over

St. Paul's Hospital. They were going to expropriate St. Paul's Hospital, because they didn't like it because the government didn't own St. Paul's Hospital. They couldn't stand it that a courageous band of nurses — still nuns — still ran a hospital. A courageous band of women still ran a hospital. They couldn't stand it that this courageous band of women administered in this hospital, ran this hospital, and worked as the most efficient businesswomen I have ever seen in this province. And the Grey Nuns survived because they have the philosophy of survival. But no thanks to that government.

And I want it on record, while this was happening, they had an alderman who is a very prominent NDP woman. I really think, Mr. Speaker, that what they did to Grey Nuns' Hospital is possibly the clearest example of this type of government — this type of past government that we had — and their treatment of women, these women who did not ask for special privileges for an exciting career, but these women who asked that they have the means and money from this government to run their efficient, caring hospital.

You will notice, as I said before, in the Grey Nuns' pamphlet, put out by the Grey Nuns, there's a picture of our Minister of Health. They know who their friends are.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MRS. CASWELL: — They know that our Minister of Health does not bully nuns.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to say, it's too bad in some ways . . . It's also too bad that we can't have some of those past members who did this sort of stuff in the House today. I don't mean of course in seats, but I would like it if they were sort of floating around sometimes, so that they would hear this because I hate to attack somebody who's not faced, who I can't face. But, of course, they did it all the time.

The minister of health at that time, whose name was Herman Rolfes . . . And Herman Rolfes went to a meeting where I attended and he said, "Well, the premier knows my position and knows that I am a Catholic, and that's why he made me minister of health." I really wonder, do we really have a premier, or had a past premier, that used Herman Rolfes to make it look as if they were not doing exactly what they were doing; that Herman Rolfes was used as a smoke-screen for their devices to take away the leading St. Paul's Hospital — St. Paul's Catholic Hospital? And everyone knew when St. Paul's goes, the autonomy of Humboldt and all the other hospitals would go as well.

Now, we do not use smoke-screens in our government and we do not parade our religion and we don't impose our philosophy on a hospital like St. Paul's. And I assure you that St. Paul's, I believe, is grateful.

I could go on and on, Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm glad you noticed. But I think that I would like to mention one woman who was inadvertently helpful in my election. Her name was Freda Moosehunter. She was part of the Aboriginal People's Party and she was a native woman. Why, Mr. Speaker, if the NDP are so concerned about minority rights and so concerned about women, why was Freda Moosehunter running as a candidate against the NDP government? And the reasons why she was doing it, because she saw that the NDP government was destructive to her native people. She hated the policies and programs and the way they attacked native people and native families. Why is it that someone such as Freda Moosehunter who, as I say, a woman and a native, would campaign against the NDP? Precisely because she sees when the NDP talk about caring and talk about being concerned about natives and concerned about women, they want to control them.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that there is nothing more sinister than what the NDP have done in the women's issue; that they have continually silenced and muzzled people — women who do not agree with them. I remember one time a friend of mine, a housewife such as myself, Mrs. Bastian,

and I screwed up our courage and we were going to talk to the Attorney General and plead with him to help parents have more of the say in education. And we finally got a hearing in the Executive Council meetings. And we were a little bit flapped out because we had a lot of children to look after and things to do.

But we finally got there and we made our presentation and concerns, and of course he was pretending to listen, etc., etc. And he says, "Well, you know, I don't see anything really wrong with that," etc., etc. "But, you know," he said, "if you're really concerned about these issues, why don't you run for public office?"

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm usually very co-operative with people, and I like to put on record that I even listened to the NDP's Attorney General.

And we found the same barriers in health and social services, when women were saying, "Well, there's another side to this issue. There's another approach to this. How will it affect the family? How will it affect children? But we're concerned about some literature that seems to be pornographic at our schools." Did they give us a listen? No, Mr. Speaker. They said it should be mandatory. And they loved the word mandatory.

Mr. Speaker, I think that I can assure one thing to the women of Saskatchewan, that no one on this side of the House and over there in that large corner will ever say that one or two women can speak for all of the women in the province. But continually we were told that. We were told that some appointed women, appointed by the government, could speak to all the women and the other side was not presented.

I congratulate the member from Riversdale who is working hard on a day care project. While she was going through that project she noticed a box of past briefs that were presented to the former day care committee, and she noticed there was one from Gay Caswell. And she said that she had found this brief and she was kind of surprised, and I said, "Oh, yes, I presented that brief and some of my friends presented some on certain issues, but of course we weren't listened to. Of course our concerns didn't fit their philosophy, so we got . . . Our brief was put in an apple box in their office."

When we have a day care hearing we listen to everyone, and I think that as I see how we are approaching all subjects, that we will not circumvent the certain democratic process. We will not have a handful of people speaking for a group, but we will allow a public forum where issues can be discussed. And I might add that obviously from Mrs. Edwards' comments there's no issue that is not a woman's issue.

And I support this bill, and I support the people, such as the Minister of Education, who have brought it up.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to become involved in this debate. I have listened with a great deal of interest to a number of members of the government talk about anything and everything except the legislation that we have before us, and I think, more importantly, why in fact we are now dealing with a piece of legislation which in effect, I suppose, is a bit of a cleansing of the soul of the government for the dastardly deed done earlier of doing away with the women's division in the Department of Labour.

My colleagues here in the opposition, I think, will be all voting for the bill. We will be looking at amendments and trying to include more rights for women in the Saskatchewan by amending this piece of legislation, which is very non-committal in a number of areas.

But I think the important thing, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that a little over a year ago this

government was involved in the process of doing away with what at that time was a very effective and a very good operation in terms of supporting women's issues in the province of Saskatchewan and in the Government of Saskatchewan.

Just to read into the record a number of the groups who were absolutely opposed to the government doing away with the women's division in the Department of Labour, and I know my colleague from Regina Centre has gone through this, but I think after what has been said, it's important to know that this government we have today is not in the vanguard of defending women's rights, but in fact is reacting to public pressure which has been building over the last six months.

At the time that the women's division was done away with, 60 groups in the province expressed outrage at the fact that this government would move backwards rather than forwards on women's issues, even though in fact they had five women elected to their caucus. How in the world those five women ever allowed that division of the Department of Labour to be done away with, seems inconceivable. But these groups included: the Action Child Care of Saskatoon, the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, and a number of other groups, including the Saskatchewan Law Union and the Saskatoon Council of Women.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the applause that is coming from members about this great deed they have done, when in fact it is merely cleaning up their act and trying to defend a mistake that was made earlier on, is not going unnoticed to the public of Saskatchewan.

I would like to just quote from remarks of the Action Committee on the Status of Women and their reaction to this bill. In part, the article says, and this is dated today, in the *Leader-Post*:

The Saskatchewan Action Committee on the Status of Women has a lot of reservations about the women's department that the government hopes to have in operation by the next year.

Palma Anderson, the action committee president, said the government's major problem will be integrating the secretariat work with the work of other government departments.

Anderson said the government's refusal to raise the minimum wage, its consideration of allowing profit day cares, and its investigation into ways of taking abortion out of medicare coverage is doing nothing to show that different government departments will be supportive of the secretariat.

Given the fact that various ministers are acting in ways that are diametrically opposed to women's groups, "how is the secretariat going to work a miracle?" Anderson said.

Well, Mr. Speaker, these are not the words of NDP opposition members or NDP groups within the province of Saskatchewan. These are the words of the Action Committee on the Status of Women, which I believe very fairly and adequately represents the views of a large number of women in the province of Saskatchewan.

I say to the government, who is looking at applauding itself, that there are things they could do for women in the province of Saskatchewan. There are things they could do very quickly, without a great deal of study and without a great deal of consultation, because they have the facts before them.

One of them is in the area of day care. It came with a great deal of surprise to a number of single women and unemployed women last year, when the minister of social services at that time cut the subsidy to women who were looking for work, from three months to one month. That meant

that if they were thrown out of a job — and I might add, 750 women approximately were thrown out of work by this very government — these women when they were looking for new jobs in fact could only get subsidy for day care for one month, while under the previous government they got it for three months. In fact there has been no increase in the subsidy that is paid to families who have children in day care centres, and a large number of these are working women who have no alternative but to use the day care centres which are increasing their rates due to very high utility costs, which again must fall back, at least in part, on the government of the day.

The member for Rosemont, and I'm sorry that he's not at his desk, has made a great deal about wife battery, and spouse battery, and says all the things that he's going to do to solve the problem. But I think it's interesting that the transition houses at La Ronge, La Loche, and Yorkton have been cancelled or the funding withheld by that very minister who comes to this House and sanctimoniously says how concerned he is about the plight of women from broken families.

I think another example that this government could be moving on very quickly was mentioned by the Status of Women in this article. That is the minimum wage. Of the 60,000 people who are on minimum wage, a good number of them are single-parent families — many of them being women — who are bearing the brunt of the decision made by the Minister of Labour along with his colleagues at cabinet — two of them being women, the member for Swift Current and the member for Maple Creek. I say that if you're serious about the plight of women in Saskatchewan, promoting women in Saskatchewan, go back to the cabinet table and do away with this goofy idea of freezing the minimum wage in Saskatchewan for two years.

I think another area where the women of Saskatchewan are not being allowed the freedom to take part in our society, and the benefits that are provided in it, are the many aged people, and a large percentage of them are in fact women. Here again we can go to nursing home rates, we can go to the cancellation of the shelter allowance program, the cancellation of the home repair program, the increases in other areas like utility rates, where this group of women is again being taken advantage of.

I know my member from Regina Centre mentioned the negative impact on women and the family of alcohol advertising, and I just want to point that out as another area that this government is moving in the wrong direction when it comes to dealing with women issues in the province of Saskatchewan.

There's one other area where I think it indicates very clearly that this government is on the wrong track, and that is in terms of the number of children in care of the Minister of Social Services. Since taking office, the number of children who have been taken out of the home has increased from 2,100 to 2,500, or an increase of 20 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, this in part, or in large part, due to the fact that unemployment in this province has increased, and increased drastically. Many studies that have been done would indicate that family breakdown, wife abuse, child abuse, increases proportionately with the unemployment. And I say to this government that if you are serious about the problems facing families and women in this province, then look at the record, find the mistakes you have been making, and correct them. Setting up a department with flowery accolades to yourselves, is not going to solve the problem.

And I would like to very clearly put on record that this government is aware of the problems, but is unwilling to put the money into the programs that would deal with women's issues. I say that the future will tell whether this department serves any useful purpose, but we are willing to give the government that opportunity.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's getting late and perhaps just a few brief closing remarks on the debate today.

Firstly, let me acknowledge the understanding and the commitment that has been shown by the MLAs that have chosen to take part in this debate on this bill today. I can only hope that with some time that the members in the opposition will show even a very small degree of that same understanding. In time — and I would suggest to this Assembly that it's going to take you some time, if the remarks that I heard coming from two of your members today are any kind of an indication of the depth of understanding that you have.

I want to refer to something said by the member from Regina Centre. He talks a lot. One of the myths around on women and the attitudes that is directed towards them — and he heard me earlier — was that they talk too much and they talk fast. And yet he stands there when he is on record a year ago in *Public Accounts* when it came to the women's issues and affirmative action programs, etc., as saying, and I quote, "I think there is a biological difference there too."

That was in regards to women, Mr. Speaker, and men in certain professions. He said, "They could talk faster than men." He had no indication of any kind of recognition of the female's ability when it comes to being an auctioneer. Simply a myth, that they can talk much faster than men. That is the kind of attitude that continues to prevail, particularly from the NDP.

The member from Shaunavon, the hon. member from Shaunavon. He says this initiative is "because we did away with it." You know, it's the same old thing. It was the medicare. They're going to do away with it. I suggest that you take a trip to Victoria and Broad. There's a door there for the women's branch. We didn't do away with it. We transferred it. Go down. I would also suggest that you would benefit from some of the material and counselling that comes in that branch too.

Two issues to show the difference in philosophy and perhaps why there is a very sincere need for an initiative such as this. And it has to do with the minimum wage and the issue of violence to women.

The NDP says, "Don't freeze the minimum wage. Increase the minimum wage because the largest percentage on minimum wage are women." And they continue to talk about that. That's great. You keep upping it and you keep upping it. And what do we get? We still have women on minimum wage. It never changes. Not once, Mr. Speaker, have I heard any kind of encouragement that women can do better in jobs other than minimum wage jobs. There has been absolutely no encouragement and no motivation to slot women in jobs other than minimum wage jobs. No recognition at all.

The violence of women. I would suggest to the hon. member from Shaunavon that, yes, there is some studies around that indicate what he has said. There are also other studies around to indicate that it is indeed through all of society, including the middle class and the upper class. It is not necessarily an alcohol problem. In some cases it is, but in other cases it is not. And I suggest that he perhaps do some more research on that.

The transition houses, Mr. Speaker. We can keep building transition houses. As I said to the member from Quill Lake, about a week ago, that's great. We just keep building and somebody just keeps beating. That doesn't solve the problem. The problem is doing away with the beating so you don't have to do the building.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that indeed there is some optimism for the future, as long as the attitude and the mentality that prevails from the opposition changes with a very high degree of understanding. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

YEAS — 40

Muller	Maxwell	Schmidt
Birkbeck	Young	Meagher
Andrew	Domotor	Zazelenchuk
Lane	Folk	Martens
Taylor	Petersen	Weiman
Hardy	Bacon	Morin
McLaren	Parker	Blakeney
Garner	Smith (Moose Jaw South)	Thompson
Smith (Swift Current)	Hopfner	Lingenfelter
Baker	Myers	Koskie
Duncan	Caswell	Lusney
Sandberg	Gerich	Shillington
Klein	Boutin	Yew

NAYS — Nil

The Assembly adjourned at 5 p.m.