

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

May 31, 1985

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**MR. LUSNEY:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you, and through you to the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, a group of 20 grade 11 and 12 students from the Arran high school. They are accompanied by their principal, Mr. Thelander, and their teachers, Mr. Folk and Mrs. Maga.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome the students here this afternoon, and hope that they find the proceedings here interesting and informative, and that they have a nice visit to Regina while they're in the city. I also wish you a nice visit to the city, and may you have a safe journey home. I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming them here today.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. DOMOTOR:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you, and through you to this Assembly, a group of grade 7, 8, and 9 students from Colonsay, numbering 43 in total. They're situated in the west gallery.

I hope they find the Assembly interesting and informative, and have a safe trip home. I'll be meeting with them at 10:30, and I'd like all members to welcome them here, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Minimum Wage Increase

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Premier and the Minister of Labour, and in view of the fact that the Deputy Premier is making one of his infrequent visits back to the province. . .

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Wouldn't know the answer.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — And would not know the answer, I suppose my question will have to be directed to the beleaguered Minister of Finance. Mr. Minister, will you confirm that your cabinet has recently approved a proposal to increase the minimum wage by 25 cents an hour, effective August 1st of this year?

**HON. MR. ANDREW:** — Mr. Speaker, whenever cabinet makes a decision cabinet will announce the decisions, and we're not in the habit, nor is any other parliamentary form of government in the habit, of divulging discussions in a cabinet.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Well will the minister agree that 25 cents an hour represents an increase of only 5.8 per cent, and that is to be contrasted with a rise in the increased cost of living of 21 per cent sine the last increase in minimum wage? I'd ask you, Mr. Minister, to explain the fairness of an increase of that magnitude vis-à-vis a 61 per cent increase for your political advisers. Seven thousand dollars a year for your political advisers, and 25 cents for the working poor. Would you explain the fairness of that, Mr. Minister?

**HON. MR. ANDREW:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the question is purely hypothetical. The only thing that is not hypothetical, Mr. Speaker, is the position of the members opposite and Nadine Hunt, that the minimum wage should go to \$6.54 an hour, and we don't subscribe to that view.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Minister, I wonder if your cabinet is able to understand the impact of the minimum wage freeze on the working poor. Someone working full-time at the minimum wage makes \$8,840 a year. Since 1982 the increase in cost of living has gone up by 21 per cent. That means a decrease in their purchasing power of \$2,200. Will you not admit that the minimum wage, Mr. Minister, has meant a serious erosion in the purchasing power of the working poor? Will you not admit that the freeze in the minimum wage has hurt like the devil with respect to the working poor?

**HON. MR. ANDREW:** — Well Mr. Speaker, we in this side of the House have tried to focus our emphasis on doing what we can do, and we're really quite proud of it; and that is to try to create and maintain as many jobs for the people in this province as we possibly can. Our view is that we do that in many ways, and one is that we do not have to lead the nation in highest minimum wage. We are there now. We believe that the programs that we have undertaken should be geared towards creating the most and maximum number of jobs, and quite frankly, we're very proud of our record in the last three years in that regard.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — To put it mildly, Mr. Minister, others are less impressed.

Mr. Minister, when you announce the 25 cent an hour minimum wage hike, I assume a day or two after the session ends, will you at least have the decency to make public the results from your Minister of Labour's phoney survey with respect to the minimum wage and the working poor? After all, that stalling tactic is what you have used for the last two years to justify — not increase the minimum wage. So will you at least release the results so we can see how biased and incomplete the minister's survey was?

**HON. MR. ANDREW:** — Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan, as I indicated, will do whatever it needs to do. To indicate the direction it's going to take, Mr. Speaker, our interest primarily is to maintain and create the maximum number of jobs that we can for the people of this province. Since the three years that we've been in office, we have consistently been the best in this nation in job creation, the best in this nation in maintaining jobs, the best in this nation in having the lowest unemployment rate of any place in this country consistently over the last three years.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

#### **Salary Increases of Minister's Staff**

**MR. LUSNEY:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the minister in charge of the crop insurance. Mr. Minister, Mr. Speaker, it has to do with salary increases for the political staff of the minister. This week he has justified a salary increase of some 16 per cent for his chief political adviser, one by the name of Gerry Williams, with the claim that he has been promoted from ministerial assistant to a special assistant to the minister.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, please. In *Beauchesne's*, paragraph 359(8), it says, "A question that has previously been answered ought not to be asked again."

And I believe that question has been asked several times and answered several times.

**MR. LUSNEY:** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the minister in charge of the crop insurance board.

Can the minister explain why his chief adviser, Mr. Gerry Williams, has received three separate salary increases?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, please. The question has been asked and it has been answered, and I would ask you to move on to another question.

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — I wonder if the minister could explain why a Mr. Williams has received three separate salary increases in the past 22 months, which has seen his salary go from 32,000 per year to just over 52,000. Can you explain that to us?

**HON. MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to explain this once more to the members opposite. This was explained several times in estimates, and the reason for it has been reclassification of jobs. He is my chief adviser, plus he is a full employee also of the crop insurance corporation. That's where he maintains an office, and you've been told that many, many times in estimates.

**MR. LUSNEY:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question to the minister of crop insurance. Mr. Minister, for the benefit of some of the teachers that are here today and the other people in the public sector, could the minister explain why or how he can justify a 61 per cent increase for his chief adviser in the past 22 months?

**HON. MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite are playing with figures here when they're talking about 16 per cent or 61 per cent.

We'll talk, Mr. Speaker, about the schoolteacher. If there's a schoolteacher that has been changed of position to a principal, they'll have a change of salary. It's a reclassification of jobs and it's that way throughout this province. It always has been and it always will be.

**MR. LUSNEY:** — Another new question to the minister of crop insurance. Mr. Minister, for the benefit of some other people then, the single parents, the working people, anyone that's on minimum wage working in this province, can you explain to them the fairness in a 61 per cent increase to a chief political hack in 22 months, Mr. Minister?

**HON. MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker. It's the same thing with someone on minimum wage. If you're on minimum wage and you happen to get a different job, regardless of what it is, it's a reclassification of jobs and you do not stay at the minimum wage; you take the new salary.

**MR. LUSNEY:** — Mr. Minister, supplementary. I'd like to say, Mr. Minister . . . Are you telling us that this individual is doing something different than he did 22 months ago, today, other than just a reclassification in a title? He is still working in your office doing the same job, and in 22 months he received a 61 per cent increase. What was the difference in his position?

**HON. MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite were told, and they were told, and they were told, in my estimates, that yes, when he first began working for me when I became minister, he was working entirely for me.

But there has been several changes in his duties. He is working for crop insurance and there has been a difference, and that is being responsible for individual coverage for winter wheat, and he has an office in crop insurance he is the man that is completely responsible. So there has been a change in his duties. You have been told there's been change in his duties and that is very plain and simply, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — I have here a sheet that outlines the increases of one Mr. Gerry Williams. On August 1st of 1983 Mr. Williams was being paid \$2,695 per month or 32,340 per year; January 1st of '84 he got an increase to \$3,051 per month or 36,612 per year; February 1, 1984 another increase to \$3,740 per month, 44,880 per year; now on January 1st of '85, an

increase to 4,340 per month or 52,080 per year. Mr. Minister, this is a 61 per cent increase for this individual in 22 months — a \$20,000 a year increase.

Can you tell us whether or not you think this is fair in light of the fact that teachers and nurses and potash workers are being told there's no money for them for the work they're doing?

**HON. MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite are just asking the same questions they asked me in estimates. They know that when I brought Mr. Williams into the office that he had a certain job to do. I didn't know what his qualifications would be to get him to do more work; what he would be doing for the crop insurance board. Mr. William is also now being paid — and he's had different duties given to him from the crop insurance board. He is working for the crop insurance corporation of this province, and also working for my office.

If you just go back and read *Hansard*, you're just asking me the same questions that you asked me for two hours in estimates. And I just cannot give you any more than that because you've already had the answers. It's as simple as that.

And you're talking about your 61 per cent increase. Those are your figures; they are not my figures, Mr. Speaker.

### **Perquisites Enjoyed by Minister's Staff**

**MR. KOSKIE:** — A question, Mr. Speaker,, to the minister in charge of crop insurance. I ask the minister: can the minister tell us what perks this high-paid Mr. Williams receives as a political adviser, in addition to his salary of more than \$52,000?

Is it not correct, Mr. Minister, that in addition to the \$52,000 per year paid to Mr. Williams, that he has a government car for personal business, personal and business use, a Visa card with unlimited coverage for his meals and hotels, entertainment expenses, and season tickets to the Saskatchewan Roughriders — all this paid by the Saskatchewan taxpayers?

And can the minister deny any of these perks?

**HON. MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Mr. Speaker, yes, I sure can. Mr. Gerry Williams has never ever been at a football game using a crop insurance ticket.

The members opposite know quite well that Mr. Gerry Williams has not got a car of any kind assigned to him. They know that quite well, that there is a car signed to crop insurance, if they're doing crop insurance work, the same as when they were in government. You don't take your own car out to do government work, do it for the crop insurance corporation. But he has no car assigned to him — absolutely none. It's absolute false.

**MR. KOSKIE:** — A supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister aware that in 1984 and again in this year that the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation has paid for four Saskatchewan Roughrider season tickets? Five hundred and twenty dollars each was paid out by the crop insurance corporation, section . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, please. Order. I'm going to ask the members to contain themselves a bit. You can't hear what the member is asking. The minister couldn't possibly answer.

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously they're hurting very badly and they can't refrain from heckling.

I ask the minister again: is he aware that in 1984 and again in this year the Saskatchewan crop insurance has paid for four Saskatchewan Roughrider tickets? Five hundred and twenty dollars each was paid out by the corporation in section 2, row 8, seats 15 to 18, I believe. Is the minister

denying that these payments were made? And I ask him who, in fact, if not Gerry Williams — whether Gerry Williams in fact uses any of those seats, and how can he explain why hard-pressed Saskatchewan farmers should be paying for his football tickets.

**HON. MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Mr. Speaker, I told the member opposite that Mr. Gerry Williams has never been to a football game on his own, or under crop insurance — has never been. And if we have crop insurance football tickets to the Roughrider games, it would just be the same practice under the prior government. It did come to my attention last year that in 1984, if I had a use for them to entertain someone, I have them. But I didn't even do that, Mr. Speaker.

So if there's . . . If the crop insurance corporation has tickets for the football Roughrider games, it would be the same practice as the last 11 years that many Crowns do have Roughrider game tickets, and there's been no change. If there's been crop insurance tickets, Mr. Speaker — in crop insurance — it's been the same practice for the last 11 years.

I have made no change; I have given no orders; and I don't even know whether they have them for '85 or not. I don't know anything about it other than I was asked if I needed them in 1984, and I said no.

**MR. KOSKIE:** — A further supplemental final one, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the minister: are you stating in this House that other than in '84 and '85, that in previous years that the crop insurance had, in fact, been purchasing football tickets? Is that what you're saying? Because I'll tell you that no tickets were purchased, Mr. Minister, so you'd better be pretty careful.

I'm asking you, Mr. Minister: have you the information that supports your presentation that there's been no change in policy, and that tickets were purchased other than '84 and 85?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, please. Order.

**HON. MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Mr. Speaker, all I do know when it comes to Roughrider tickets, I have my own tickets; I've paid for them for 13 years, and I've never used them. And I have to come back with that answer because I don't know for sure. I've never been told.

But I as minister have never okayed any additional tickets. So if there's tickets there, they probably were through the past years, but I will have to find out for sure. I will find out for sure, Mr. Speaker.

#### **Travel Expenses of Minister's Staff**

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — . . . (inaudible) . . . in charge of crop insurance. It has to do with travelling done by his ministerial assistant, one Miss Debbie McNabb, in June of last year. Can you explain why or how or for what reason your political assistant ran up a bill of \$688 in air flights between Regina and Moose Jaw, paid for out of CVA account?

Can you tell me what your ministerial assistant was doing using the executive aircraft to fly from Regina to Moose Jaw? Can you explain that little item?

**HON. MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll have to take notice on that.

#### **Conflict of Interest — Sedco Official**

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I address my question to the Minister of Tourism and Small Business, and the minister in charge of Sedco. And it deals with what I consider to be a blatant conflict of interest whereby he approved an investment in a Regina real estate firm by the president of Sedco, Mr. Doug Price.

Last week the minister claimed again and again, and I think that's fair, that he gave Mr. Price approval for the purchase in accordance with Sedco's conflict of interest guide-lines. At that time, Mr. Minister, you were unable to quote from the guide-lines or to supply them to the Assembly.

Will you be supplying a copy of the Sedco guide-lines to the Assembly, guide-lines which permit the authorization which you gave to Mr. Price?

**HON. MR. KLEIN:** — Mr. Speaker, I have absolutely no problem in supplying the guide-lines of Sedco regarding conflict of interest. They were established at Sedco quite some time by the Blakeney administration, and we are still abiding and using those same guide-lines. Mr. Price was definitely within them at the time that the approval was given to him, and I have no problem at all in supplying that.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, will the minister give us . . . Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Minister, will you give us an undertaking that you will table the guide-lines? Because they seem to be very elusive and we haven't found them.

**HON. MR. KLEIN:** — Mr. Speaker, in the last series of questioning I very clearly stated that I had no problem in stating those guide-lines and I was prepared to take notice. They did not accept my offering at that time. If they would like me to accept that offering now and table those guide-lines, I have absolutely no problem and I will do that just as soon as I possibly can.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Minister, last week you claimed that Mr. Price had already taken steps to sell off his shares in Frances Olson Realty Ltd. Can you advise the House whether or not that transaction has been completed, or whether the shares are still owned by the president of Sedco?

**HON. MR. KLEIN:** — Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, Mr. Price was making arrangements to divest himself of that particular investment. I know that negotiations have been continuing from that day forward. I don't know what state they're in, whether they're completed at this point in time or not. Hopefully those arrangements have been made by this time, but I can't honestly say that as fact this morning.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, supplementary. Would the minister assure the House that the shares have in fact been divested and have not simply been transferred to another member of Mr. Price's family, such as his wife or his father-in-law or some other close relative? Can you give an assurance that the shares will have been effectively divested?

**HON. MR. KLEIN:** — Mr. Speaker, at the time that Mr. Price decided to divest himself, it was clearly understood that it would be a divestiture clean and totally arm's length, and I don't appreciate that line of questioning one bit.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Whatever the minister appreciates, I would appreciate if the minister would advise me whether the complete divesting was going to be to the former member from North East, Mr. Sutor.

**HON. MR. KLEIN:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't know what he's getting at about the former member from Regina North East. To my understanding he had absolutely nothing to do with anything concerning the investment. That has been clearly indicated to me. And I don't know where they get their information from, and I can even comment on that kind of a stupid question.

**MR. KOSKIE:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the member, Small Business and Tourism.

Mr. Minister, I would like to know, in this here infamous purchase by Mr. Price and Mr. Seaman,

can you advise the House whether in making that purchase they sought any provincial assistance in respect to it? That is, was there ever an application for provincial assistance, or whether there was any Sedco money advanced to Price and Seamans in the infamous purchase of a share in the Frances Olson real estate?

**HON. MR. KLEIN:** — Mr. Speaker, that's the most ridiculous question I've ever heard. Are you asking me, did Sedco finance his private investment? And if you are, the answer is clearly no.

### **Nursing Home Construction — Saskatoon**

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Health, and it has to do with the announced 238-bed nursing home in Saskatoon.

Mr. Minister, what I would like is if you would give us an update report on the progress of that construction project — whether the final site analysis has been completed and we know the location, and whether any sod has been turned or actual construction started on that 230-bed nursing home.

**HON. MR. TAYLOR:** — I think it would be best referred to the Minister of Supply and Services, who's in charge of building the home. I'd ask him to answer.

**HON. MR. McLEOD:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker, what I would say to the hon. member: the real construction should be started as early as July 15 of this summer. The site analysis has been completed. The site has been chosen. When I say, "real construction," Mr. Speaker, I'm talking about the foundations and into the ground, and the sod turning will certainly have been completed.

I would invite the hon. members opposite to come to the sod-turning ceremony. I know the people in Saskatoon were very excited about this project. I'm not sure that NDP members look all that excited about the project, but I would invite NDP members and others in the province to come to the sod turning which will be within weeks, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Mr. Speaker, supplement to the minister. The people of Saskatoon were excited four years ago when it was first announced, and it has taken a long time to get to that point.

But my question to you, Mr. Minister, is that in the process of the last four years there has been a good deal of concern, and I think a growing concern, that the site location . . . and as I understand it, over four years the opinion in Saskatoon has changed, and a large number of people in groups . . . and you have got petitions that the site possibly be changed from the present location to the old sanatorium site.

And what I would ask you, Mr. Minister, is whether or not at this time you're considering moving the new 238-bed nursing home from the present location, where you have identified it, to the old sanatorium site? And I ask that merely as an information point.

**HON. MR. McLEOD:** — Well the short answer to that, Mr. Speaker, is no. I might add to the hon. member that as it relates to what he suggests is waffling on site location and so on for this project, is something that is clearly not true.

The hon. members opposite, Mr. Speaker, will talk about the site of a nursing home in Saskatoon. I understand that NDP members in Saskatoon are even entering the debate as it relates to the site of an arena in Saskatoon. We talk about construction in Saskatoon, we talk about construction in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. The hon. members opposite have really no place in the debate when you consider 11 years . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, please.

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

### **Grasshopper Control Program**

**HON. MR. HEPWORTH:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to announce today to you and to the members of the legislature, an emergency program to deal with the severe grasshopper problem that much of Saskatchewan is experiencing.

It is the view of this government that we are not prepared to see the grasshoppers destroy our farmers' crops, and in fact eat into our framers' incomes. As a result, Mr. Speaker, we are undertaking a grasshopper control program which is unprecedented in the history of Saskatchewan. And this, Mr. Speaker, is over and above the programs and the policies and the positions that I announced earlier this week in the House.

The announcement today, Mr. Speaker, will indicate to you and to members of this House that this government is prepared now to assist and cover one-half the cost of insecticides bought by rural municipalities to control grasshoppers on road allowances.

The grasshopper situation is a major concern, and it requires action of this magnitude if it is to be properly controlled. Under the past control legislation in this province, rural municipalities are responsible for grasshopper control on road allowances. By splitting the cost of insecticide with rural municipalities, this government will substantially reduce the financial cost to municipal governments, and hence, their farmer ratepayers. By taking part in this program rural municipalities can set examples for farmers by removing sources of infestation before grasshoppers move into adjacent fields and cause crop losses.

The bottom line is that rural municipalities and individual farmers can and must assume major responsibility for battling grasshoppers. Our government has provided them with the means to do that. Provincially-controlled community pastures may be a source of grasshoppers which invade adjacent privately owned land. To ensure that this does not take place, and to ensure that the provincial government does ensure to control the grasshopper pest, provincial pastures will be sprayed where outbreaks occur.

All the pesticides and money in the world, Mr. Speaker, are useless in the fight against grasshoppers unless farmers know and use proper treatment procedures. Getting information to farmers is essential to the success of this control program. Through a major education program we'll ensure that the best technical information and specialists trained in pest control are readily available to farmers, rural municipalities, and others affected by grasshoppers.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to respond to the minister on the most important issue of the plight of farmers in Saskatchewan today, and especially as it relates to the grasshopper infestation in the province.

Mr. Minister, you will know that as early as last November your department had predicted an outbreak of grasshoppers in this province, the likes that we haven't seen since 1931. And I think you mentioned that the other day in question period.

And I would say to you, Mr. Minister, that the people in south-west Saskatchewan have completed their grasshopper spraying program. They have completed their grasshopper spraying program. And I would like to say to you, Mr. Minister, that this is much like planning winter works program in February and March, that you traditionally do.



Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate that the minister is responding to the lobbying that was done from the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, and I would say to you, Mr. Minister, that at a time when farmers are facing massive tax increases, that this will do little to help them out.

But I wonder if you would do one more thing for the farmers of this province and for the people of this province, whether you will immediately instigate a study into whether or not there's any connection between massive outbreaks of grasshoppers and Tory governments in this province.

## **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

### **Bill No. 94 — An Act to amend The Income Tax Act**

**HON. MR. ANDREW:** — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill, an Act to amend The Income Tax Act, and this Act is the beginning, Mr. Speaker, of what we hope will be a major reform to the tax system in this country, Mr. Speaker, ultimately leading to a modified flat tax in this country.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — The minister knows that in introduction of a Bill, all you can do is introduce it and move first reading.

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

### **Bill No. 95 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Insurance Act**

**HON. MRS. DUNCAN:** — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Saskatchewan Insurance Act.

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

## **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

**MR. MYERS:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you, 10 students from the Saskatoon Community College. They are seated in the east gallery, and they are accompanied by their instructors, Debby Menz, Dan Fitzgerald, and Ron Golden. The Community College is in the constituency of Saskatoon Centre, and on behalf of my colleague from Saskatoon Centre, I would like to wish them a warm welcome to the Assembly, and would hope other members would join me in welcoming them.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

### **ROYAL ASSENT TO BILLS**

At 10:38 a.m. His Honour the Lieutenant Governor entered the Chamber, took his seat upon the throne, and gave Royal Assent to the following Bill:

Bill No. 93 — An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of Money for the Public Service for the Fiscal Year ending on March 31, 1986

His Honour retired from the Chamber at 10:39 a.m.

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

### **Bill No. 54 — An Act respecting Apprenticeship and Qualification for Certification in Certain Trades**

**Clause 1**

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Would the minister introduce his officials?

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to introduce my officials. Sitting to the right of me is the deputy minister, John Law; and to the left of me is Dan Roberts, who is the director of apprenticeship and trade certification branch; and immediately behind Dan is Jane Sather, who is the Crown solicitor for the legal services division.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Minister, would you begin by giving me a list of those whom you consulted with respect to the Bill? I have received some complaints, Mr. Minister, from some segments of the public that they were not consulted. That inevitably causes a good deal of alarm, and I would ask you, Mr. Minister, if I could make myself heard over the goon from Lloydminster, who you consulted?

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Mr. Chairman, in reply to the question asked by the hon. member, we have consulted with the following groups: with the provincial apprenticeship board; with the trade advisory boards (by that I mean the 26 designated trades), and I would point out that they have equal representation of employees and employers; we consulted with a representative from the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour; with the north and the south building trades; with the Saskatchewan mining association; with the various trade unions — virtually all the trade unions interested in apprenticeship training.

(10:45)

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Do I take it from that that you did not consult with any trade unions directly? Your consultation consisted solely of the provincial apprenticeship board and the trade advisory board?

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, the trade unions, or the trades people, nominated their representatives. For instance, the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour nominated a representative who would serve on the provincial apprenticeship board.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Minister, consulting with the trade advisory board serves a different purpose than the trade unions themselves do. Heretofore government has always consulted with the trade unions directly, with the SFL.

I am disappointed to see that the minister is a subscriber to the Lorne McLaren school of politics which suggests that you avoid everybody who doesn't agree with you. That's a difficult way to govern a province, Mr. Minister. That is the way the Minister of Labour does it. But I'm disappointed to see that the wisdom of that has permeated the Department of Advanced Education.

There's a good deal of concern with respect to this Bill, some of which might be misplaced; some of which might have been dispelled had you met directly with the SFL and directly with the unions which represent the trades.

Mr. Minister, some of those concerns are with respect to the Bill itself. And if you have no objection, I will ask a series of questions under the first heading, which in fact in some cases touch upon other sections.

Mr. Minister, subtrade is not defined in the Act. Was that an oversight or was the job too challenging for your department? Or why didn't you define subtrade? The concept is certainly an integral part of the Act.

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I'd have to respond at least a little bit to the inferences and the innuendoes made by the member from Regina Centre.

In answer, no, I'm not taking on anybody else's political views. I take on my own political views. And I'm not sure that I uphold the old traditional thinking politically. I do believe, and I have believed all my life, in consultation with other people, and particularly with people who have vested interests. And I am completely satisfied that there was sufficient, that there was adequate, that there was an extreme amount of consultation with all of the groups involved, either directly — and in many cases it was directly — or indirectly through their representatives.

And if that isn't in keeping with the principle of consultation, then I quit. I quit. I don't know what the hon. member over there is asking for. So I just want to clear that for the record.

And as a matter of fact, just a couple of days ago we did meet with the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour. They raised a number of these same kinds of things, and it appeared to me that they were adequately answered.

Now getting to this issue of the subtrade, this was something that was asked for by the trades. It was asked for specifically in the area of two areas: one was the autobody repair area and the other was in the area of crane operator. It's something that they want to point, to be able to give credit to those people who specialize within a major trade such as those two trades are.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Well, Mr. Minister, is you used . . . When you said that there was an extreme amount of consultation, the normal meaning of that is that there's too much. Mr. Minister, if you're labouring under the fear that you've consulted too much, may I put your mind at rest. You didn't make that mistake.

Mr. Minister, I asked you as second question. That as with respect to subtrade. The concept is used; it is not defined. I wonder why, and what you mean by the term.

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Mr. Chairman, this review has been going on since 1982, and in view of the fact that the Act has not been changed since 1953, at first it was thought that we could make the changes in the general regulations. But as far as the subtrade part is concerned, the subtrade does appear in the regulations, and it appears to be defined in the following manner:

Subtrade means a branch of a designated trade recognized as a subtrade by trade regulation.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Minister, I gather part of what you're saying is that although it's a new Act, this portion of the Bill hasn't been changed since time immemorial. I gather that is the thrust of your comment.

I'm not a subscriber, Mr. Minister, to the theory that merely because an Act was badly drafted and we have made do with it for 50 years is an adequate excuse for incorporating that into it.

One of the reasons for that, Mr. Minister, is we have not, I think, in the history of the province, had a government in office that is as anti-labour as this government. I don't think there's any equal to this government.

Mr. Minister, the fear of the trades . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm getting so much assistance here. Mr. Minister, the fear of the trades is that the government will use the broad regulatory power here to restrict the definition of trades, and thus restrict the protection given by the Act. And that is a real fear, given the history of this government's treatment of working people in labour. There is no evidence of that, Mr. Minister. It would just be consistent with your past behaviour.

So I'd ask you, Mr. Minister, to respond to that fear that you will in fact use the broad regulatory power, including the power to define such key terms as "subtrades", to restrict the ambit of the Act and thus restrict the protection of the Act.

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't share the member's concern about a fear that we are . . . What has happened has happened in consultation with the trade unions, with the employers and employees, and it has happened as a result of their desire to make these changes in the Act. They have felt that the Act has been too cumbersome in the past, that it has been completely out of date with what the needs of the industry — and by industry I mean employers and employees — have been in this province. And so it's an attempt to satisfy the needs of the industry.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 and 3 agreed to.

#### **Clause 4**

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Chairman, I would ask the minister to give us a definition of permit. What is meant by permit?

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Yes, I'd be pleased, Mr. Chairman, to supply a definition of a permit. The permits will replace the certificates of registration cards. Permits will only be issued when a voluntary apprenticeship trade becomes a compulsory apprenticeship trade. The permit will be issued on application to non-journeymen and non-apprentices already working in the trade. This will enable individuals to continue working in their trade once it becomes a compulsory apprenticeship trade.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Is that, Mr. Minister, in the regulations? Was that part of your ministerial briefing book? Or where did you get the definition from?

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Thanks from the briefing, yes, that I've received. But that's part of the regulation.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Minister, do you have the draft regulations that you're going to use under this Act with you? Could you table them? That is a customary courtesy when you're bringing in a new Act which has extensive regulatory powers, to table the draft regulations. It doesn't of course commit you to those specific regulations, but it does assist us in making some sense out of the Bill.

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Yes, Mr. Chairman, we have a draft copy of them and I'll send them over to the hon. member immediately.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — May I then ask you what section I find the definition of "permit" in. What section or subsection of the regulations is it?

#### **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

**MR. HODGINS:** — Mr. Chairman, it's my pleasure on behalf of my colleague the member from Kelsey-Tisdale to introduce to you, and through you to all members of the Assembly, a group of 14 grade 9 students who are visiting with us here from Bjorkdale. They are accompanied by their teacher, Bill Dovell, and their bus driver Wayne Beeching.

I understand they are seated here in the Speaker's gallery, and I do also understand that will soon be, or are now, enjoying the benefits of a new gymnasium in their school.

I will be meeting with you for pictures and drinks a little bit later on, and I would invite all members of the legislature to welcome this group from Bjorkdale.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

### **Bill No. 54 — An Act respecting Apprenticeship and Qualification for Certification in Certain Trades**

#### **Clause 4 (continued)**

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Mr. Chairman, the permit is defined in section 2(n), and I'll be sending the regulations over. We only have the one copy here at the present time so that we have to share it for the matter of the committee. So the permit is defined in section 2(n), and it applies to section 11, the section under compulsory apprenticeship trade, and specifically to subsections (6) and (8) of 11.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. That's satisfactory. I appreciate the courtesy in giving us the regulations. We can move on to the next section, Mr. Chairman.

Clause 4 agreed to.

(11:00)

Clauses 5 to 12 inclusive agreed to.

#### **Clause 13**

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, this is a very odd clause. Or I read it and it seemed, to me, strange. I'm not sure what it means to say. It seems to say that apprenticeship contract may, subject to the approval of the director, be terminated by consent of all the parties, or may be cancelled by the director.

It seems to suggest that an apprenticeship contract may not be terminated without the approval of the director. Indeed that's the reading that anyone would take from it. Now you will know, Mr. Minister, that an apprenticeship contract is a contract of employment, and there is just no way that you can have a contract of employment that can't be terminated by the employee. There may well be some cause of action or something, but we just don't have in our country contracts of employment which are binding on the employee indefinitely. That indentured servitude went out a century ago.

And I am asking you what this clause means to say. As I say, on the face of it it seems to say that a contract may be terminated by the consent of all the parties if the director approves, and leaves the suggestion that if the director doesn't approve, it can't be terminated.

Now obviously a contract of apprenticeship can be terminated by the apprentice at any day of the week. Certain things may flow from that, but you cannot maintain someone in a condition of servitude. What are we driving at with respect to this particular section?

## **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce a group of students from Kipling, which is in my riding of course — grades 4, 5, and 6, seated, I understand, in the west gallery, but given the number — 80 in number — I would suspect that

some of them might as well be in the Speaker's gallery.

They are here, of course, to visit the legislature. I hope that they find their visit interesting. I will be meeting with them at about 11:30 for pictures and drinks in the members' dining room. And I would like to as well indicate that they are accompanied by their teachers: Charlotte Shoemaker, Jane Fischer, Gordon Bates, Karen Carson, and a number of chaperons of whom I won't take the time to mention and take the time of the House.

They are as well accompanied by their bus driver, of course, Don Neudorf. And I would just like to ask all members of the Assembly to join with me in wishing them a good visit here, a safe trip home, and we hope we can have you back again some year. Thank you.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

### **Bill No. 54 — An Act respecting Apprenticeship and Qualification for Certification in Certain Trades**

#### **Clause 13 (continued)**

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Mr. Chairman, in reply: the contract of employment and the contract of apprenticeship are two different kinds of contracts. They co-exist simultaneously. The contract of employment may be terminated without terminating the contract of apprenticeship. All that the director is actually doing is cancelling the contract of apprenticeship as a result of the cancellation of the employment contract.

Clause 13 agreed to.

Clauses 14 to 19 inclusive agreed to.

#### **Clause 20**

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — I just have one further question with respect to this Bill, and I can ask it here. And it deals with the same subject as my colleague from Regina Centre was dealing with, and that is the matter of permits, certificates and permits, and that phrase recurs throughout the Bill, and "Certificate" is defined in the Bill and "permit" is not, and you have now pointed out to us that permit is defined in section 2(1) of the regulations.

My short question is this: was the term "permit" used in the previous legislation, and has there been any significant change in either (a) the definition, or (b) what is conceived of as covered by permits in this legislation, as opposed to the previous legislation?

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Mr. Chairman, the answer to the first question is no, the permit did not exist in the previous legislation. What did exist were certificates, certificates of registration, and we made this change of terminology to avoid misleading the public.

Previously, the certificates were granted on the basis of number of years in apprenticeship, that is 1, 2, 3, and 4, and this was misleading. And at the suggestion of the trades advisory boards we have introduced permits so that . . . A permit is less suggestive of qualifications than was the certificate. Where a certificate, a person could have had . . . having had one year in apprenticeship would have been classed as an apprenticeship with a certificate 1, people were led to believe that this was the highest qualification and that it had something to do with qualifications, so that the permit would be less suggestive of the qualifications.

Clause 20 agreed to.

Clause 21 agreed to.

**Clause 22**

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Minister, one just tiny question. I note that you are requiring the name and address and the social insurance number of the tradesmen who appear on records. There once was a time when Progressive Conservatives took the position that social insurance numbers, this social regimentation should not be used other than for the purposes for which it was intended. I take it you have abandoned that proposal and are now using a social insurance number as your general record, as well as the use that has been give to it by the federal government, not only in the social insurance field, but also in the income tax field.

So far as I'm aware, this is the first provincial legislation which requires a social insurance number to be given. I could be wildly wrong on that, but I'm asking you whether or not you believe that to be true?

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — I would just prefer to give my own opinion. I can't give the opinion for the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, but I believe that we should preserve, as much as we can, confidentiality of all information from the point of view of individuals, and in so far as its application to this At is concerned, it appears that it is very essential to use the social insurance numbers in order to administer the Act. And all parties agreed, and so I would concur with that directive.

Clause 22 agreed to.

Clauses 23 to 28 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

**THIRD READINGS**

**Bill No. 54 — An Act respecting Apprenticeship and Qualification for Certification in Certain Trades**

**HON. MR. CURRIE:** — Mr. Speaker, I move the Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a third time.

(11:15)

**SECOND READINGS**

**Bill No. 87 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Medical Care Insurance Act**

**HON. MR. TAYLOR:** — Mr. Speaker, before I get into the discussion of the passing of Bill 87, the second reading, I would like to join with my colleague, the member for Moosomin, to welcome the students and chaperons from Kipling that are here today.

Kipling was the school where I first started my teaching career. And as I look up into the gallery I see some of the people that are here as chaperons and parents were my students some 22 years ago. It reminds one that time is marching on, Mr. Speaker.

But I want to welcome you here today. And I think it's very appropriate that you're here on the day that I give second reading to what we believe, on this side of the House, is a very important

piece of legislation for the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to explain the purpose of the amendments to The Medical Care Insurance Act and to outline the main features of this Bill.

As I'm sure all members will know, the Government of Saskatchewan has recently concluded an agreement with the Saskatchewan Medical Association. This agreement, called the Saskatoon Agreement II, contains three major provision.

First, all extra billing by physicians in Saskatchewan will come to an end. Second, a new medical compensation review process will be established. And third, a mechanism will be put in place to provide for the resolution of disputes.

Mr. Speaker, my government colleagues and I are very proud of this agreement. It was reached after lengthy and intensive consultation with the SMA, and it shows that the government and the medical profession are capable of working together in a constructive way. The agreement is one that recognizes the legitimate interests of the medical profession, preserves the professional independence of physicians and, at the same time, maintains the integrity of our medical plan.

Mr. Speaker, the amendments to the medical care insurance Act are designed to provide the legal basis of the terms of the Saskatoon Agreement II. Accordingly, the Bill contains the following major provisions. First, no physician who provides insured services may bill for them above the insured rate, but physicians will continue to have the right to bill patients directly at the insured rate.

Physicians will have the right to practise outside the medical care plan entirely, in which case all of the services will be uninsured, and they will not be subject to the extra billing provisions. This right will be subject to the condition that reasonable access to insured services is not jeopardized.

I should mention, Mr. Speaker, that the provisions regarding extra billing in practising outside the plan will also apply to other professions who provide insured services under the Act.

Next, Mr. Speaker, the Bill provides for the establishment of a medical compensation review committee, through which the government and the SMA will consult on determining fair and reasonable compensation for physicians. And the Bill provides two avenues for the resolution of disputes when an agreement cannot be reached through the compensation committee.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out one other major feature of this Bill. The current medical care insurance Act contains many sections dealing with collection of premiums, penalties for non-payment of premiums, and so on. These provisions are obviously not in effect because we no longer have premiums, but we are taking this opportunity to repeal all references in the Act that have anything to do with premiums.

Mr. Speaker, I have said on many occasions that our government has no intention of re-introducing any kind of premiums for medical care services. I don't know of any way to demonstrate that commitment more emphatically than by removing all legal basis for the imposition of such premiums.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatoon Agreement II is an historic document. It establishes the foundation for a close, constructive, and harmonious relationship between the government and the medical profession in the years ahead. These amendments provide the necessary legal basis for the agreement. And I am therefore pleased to move, Mr. Speaker, that The Saskatchewan Medical Care Insurance Amendment Act be given second reading.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!



**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Mr. Speaker, I will be having a look at the Bill and discussing it with some of the individuals associated with the medical profession and users over the weekend. I want to know how the impact of the automatic check-off for doctors will work, whether or not all doctors are in favour of paying what is essentially a union fee now. There are some things in the Bill that I would just like to take the time to check with doctors and users, and therefore I would beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

**Bill No. 91 — An Act to amend The Urban Municipality Act, 1984 (No. 2)**

**HON. MR. EMBURY:** — Mr. Speaker, I wish to move second reading of this Bill, An Act to amend The Urban Municipality Act, 1985.

This Bill makes some important changes, Mr. Speaker, to one of the major statutes administered by my department. It amends the new Urban Municipality Act which was passed in November of 1984.

The urban Act, as it is called, sets out the powers and duties of over 500 urban municipalities, Mr. Speaker. These municipalities include cities, villages, towns, and resort villages which contain over 70 per cent of the population of the province.

My department consulted with SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) and urban administrators for over a year and a half before the new Act was finally passed last fall. Municipalities have requested a number of new amendments which are reflected in this Bill.

Amendments to a major new Act are not unusual during the implementation phase, Mr. Speaker. However, these new proposed amendments arise from the fact that the new Act is being field tested for the first time in its new form. Frequent amendments are to be expected in an Act containing more than 300 sections, and which is used on a daily basis by practising administrators.

The requests for amendments reflected in this Bill are both of the streamlining or fine-tuning variety, as well as some new major provisions responding to new concerns in the municipal field. For the benefit of members of the House, I will not mention the minor housekeeping amendments in the Bill. I want to deal with just a few highlights.

First, let me say that the important provisions fall into two categories. The first category is a series of reforms designed to make the operation of urban local government more democratic and to provide better accessed information for municipal residents. The second category includes reforms and major urban administrative matters.

Let me simply list some of the amendments of the first category, Mr. Speaker, dealing with improved local democracy and citizen accessed information. First, in conflict of interest, we are adding a new provision which requires that a member of an urban council leave the council meeting when he declares a conflict of interest. The member of council must not return to the meeting until council has completed its discussion on the matter in question.

This protects both the council member and the local electorate, Mr. Speaker, because it ensures that a member who has declared a conflict does not, by his mere presence at the meeting, influence his colleagues to vote in a manner favourable to his interests.

This change is motivated in part by recent court cases. The courts are now ruling that it is not enough for a member of a public decision-making body to declare a conflict if he or she continues to sit at the meeting while the matter is under debate.

Secondly, rules of debate. We are putting in a new provision making it explicit that the mayor must permit debate on motions put forward in a proper manner by members of council. Also, we are saying in the Bill that a seconder for a motion is not required in a village or resort village. Often the council of a village consists of only three members, so a seconder is really impractical, and such a requirement would seriously limit debate. Taken together, these reforms will foster full and free debate, Mr. Speaker.

Thirdly, access to information. A new provision in this bill requires that the clerk of the municipality must record in the minutes of the meeting of a council every instance where a member of council declares a conflict of interest. The clerk must also record in the minutes the fact that the council member leaves the meeting while the matter on which he has declared a conflict is under discussion. This provision also applies to council committees and municipal boards. There's also a provision in the Bill to ensure that notice of completion of the assessment roll is published in the *Saskatchewan Gazette*. This will allow persons owning property in a municipality who live outside the municipality to receive proper notice so that they can appeal their assessments if they wish.

And finally there is a new provision permitting a landowner to have his tax notice mailed directly to the financial institution which holds his mortgage, if he so wishes.

In short, Mr. Speaker, we are making local government a more open system with easier access to information through these amendments.

May I now clear into the second major theme of the Bill, Mr. Speaker, dealing with significant local policy and administrative concerns.

The first area is store hours. In the area of shopping hours, Mr. Speaker, there are two amendments of consequence. First, we are removing the restrictions on shopping hours, contained in the Act, from resort villages unless the council of the resort village adopts the restrictions contained in the Act by by-law. We are simply returning to the system resort villages enjoyed until the new Act was passed in 1984. This will permit stores in resort areas to remain open to serve the influx of cottagers and vacationers on weekends, for example.

I want to add, Mr. Speaker, that the urban Act still contains provisions which prohibit Sunday shopping except in convenience stores and the like. We feel these provisions are still legally valid despite the fact that the Supreme Court recently ruled that the Lord's Day Act is unconstitutional. We feel, Mr. Speaker, that Sunday should be preserved as a day of rest.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, it is in the public interest to encourage the use of agricultural land for farming until it is needed for urban development. Some of the farm land in the province, however, is located within the boundaries of urban municipalities — in villages, towns, and in some cases in cities.

This Bill contains a provision similar to that of a number of other provinces. It will provide that farm land of five acres or more, located in an urban centre, will be assessed at the lower rural agricultural rate provided that the land over five acres is being used exclusively for farm purposes. When this land is developed for urban use, it will then be assessed and taxed at urban rates.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, dealing with municipal liability. SUMA and the larger urban centres have been requesting for some time that we amend the Act to protect municipalities from legal liability for damage caused by natural disasters where the municipality, itself, has not been negligent.

This matter was brought to a head by the severe summer rain storms of a couple of years ago which caused extensive property damage in the major cities. The cities discovered that they are

possibly at risk on the legal grounds of nuisance whether or not they are negligent in such cases.

As a result, we are including in this Bill a provision stating that municipalities are not liable in nuisance for damages resulting from the overflow of water in sewers, ditches, and the like, caused by extraordinary natural events.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on to mention other features of this Bill; for example, the new sections which ensure that the regulations under the urban Act will apply to assessment procedures carried out since the Act was passed. These are purely technical adjustments, but they are, nevertheless, of considerable importance to municipalities. They keep the municipal administrative machinery running smoothly.

However, I wanted only to cover the main new features of the Bill, Mr. Speaker. It strengthens local democracy and gives citizens more access to information of their local councils. It includes some major policy reforms that SUMA and many individual municipalities have asked for to respond to local needs. These reforms will assist the councils of cities, towns, and villages in Saskatchewan to continue to provide the honest and efficient administration their citizens have come to expect, and which we believe they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I want to urge all members to support the Bill.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — It's a busy day. Mr. Speaker, we want an opportunity to examine the Bill and, in light of the Minister's comments, would therefore beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

(11:30)

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Embury that Bill No. 72 — **An Act respecting the provision of Financial and Other Assistance to Urban Municipalities and Hamlets for Capital Works Projects** be now read a second time.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, I don't need to detain the House long on this. I'm not sure whether I will have spoken on it before, but I think not.

This deals with the capital fund that the government has set up to replace the existing capital fund, and I want to underline our regret that the fund is for two years only, and not for a longer period. It is necessary with many capital works to plan three, four, or five years in advance, and it is difficult for communities to launch into a major road construction project, or a major construction project of any kind if the guarantee of the capital funds is for a two-year period only.

It is difficult for governments, I know, to give longer-term commitments. The two previous funds were for five-year periods, the capital funds. And the cultural and recreational facilities capital fund, which was in some ways similar, was also, as I recall it, for five years. That gave people an opportunity to do some more or less long-term planning, and we urge that on municipalities; we urge that on any government. And I therefore am sorry that this fund provides only for a two-year period.

I note that its name has been changed from the community capital fund to the provincial capital fund, to make it rather than a CC fund which it was before, now it is a PC fund, and I think that perhaps if it bears that name perhaps a two-year period is sufficient, since it probably will have no further relevance under that particular set of initials.

So I underline, Mr. Speaker, the original comment of my colleague in expressing regret that it's a two-year period. We welcome the modest increase from \$20 to \$25; we are sorry that the commitment is so short; and we are amused at the change of name.

**HON. MR. EMBURY:** — Mr. Speaker, just a couple of comments in regards to the Leader of the Opposition's remarks. I would agree with the member opposite, and I am glad to see that he is agreeing with our government's general thrust on five-year planning as outlined in the budget. But I do remind him that this two years of this capital program was requested by the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, and it is the same time frame as we would expect to get our recommendations back from the Local Government Finance Commission, which will give us recommendations on long-term financing for local governments, and that's the reason for the two years. This was set up in consultation, as we always do in this government, with the organization involved. And I would urge members to support the Bill, and I move second reading of Bill No. 72.

Motion agreed to, Bill read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole at the next sitting.

## **COMMITTEE OF FINANCE**

### **CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE**

#### **WOMEN'S SECRETARIAT**

#### **Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 41**

##### **Item 1**

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Would the minister introduce her officials.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me today, in talking about the Women's Secretariat and going through their estimates, Ms. Leah Siebold, the executive director, and seated immediately behind her, Janet Wile.

If I could make a few introductory remarks before getting into any of the questions or financial clarification that the opposition would have, I will take the opportunity to do so.

This agency that we will be discussing today, Mr. Chairman, is only approximately one year old . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I assure the member from Regina Centre it won't be long, but it will be worthwhile. It's only approximately one year old, and within that one short year many things have been done within government in order to create the opportunity of equal opportunity, within various government departments, in addressing women's issues.

The agency has been involved in many issues this year, Mr. Chairman. Some of the issues are controversial; some are perhaps more business-like. But nevertheless, the impact on women is very great. Those issues deal with anything from pornography and prostitution to business information and conferences, education, guidance counselling, training, and, of course, an ongoing liaison role with the federal and other provincial governments.

We have also been involved this year, Mr. Chairman, in an action plan to be tabled with the federal government this year for the United Nations. And it is titled, what we would say, is creating a balance and the opportunity for women within our society.

If anything, within the Secretariat this year, perhaps we have tried to address too many issues at one time, instead of focusing in on two or three. Nevertheless, the issues that concern women

are multi, and we've had to deal with them and dealt with them to a great extent.

So with that, Mr. Chairman, I welcome any questions that the opposition may have and look forward to clarification on certain issues.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — I want to begin by dealing with what one might term the unpleasantries, Madam Minister. We were unaware, when we were dealing with your estimates, that ministerial assistants have apparently all received increases.

Madam Minister, I wonder if you would begin by giving me the . . . Or the Minister of Revenue and Financial Services may have some incompetent people who they just couldn't stretch the point to cover, but you're in a class by yourself then.

Madam Minister, I wonder if you would give me names, addresses . . . names . . . I wonder if you would . . . if we can get a little less assistance from the Minister of Revenue and Supply. Madam Minister, I wonder if you could give me the names, positions, and salaries of your personal staff, and the pay increase, including retroactivity.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't have any personal staff in relationship to the Women's Secretariat.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Madam Minister, that's absolute nonsense. You have personal staff in your office who serve you as a minister, and you have a responsibility to give us that information, Madam Minister. And I ask you again: give us the names of your personal staff, the incomes, the positions, and the pay increases.

It's a legitimate question. They work for you. They don't work for the Department of Education; they work for you as a minister. And that, Madam Minister, is a legitimate subject of inquiry. And I ask you to answer it.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — What utter nonsense. I've simply said I do not have personal staff, specifically and only assigned to the Women's Secretariat, within my office. Mr. Chairman, they have the information of the minister's staff within my office. It hasn't changed since three weeks ago when I gave it to them.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — What nobody on this side of this House ever imagined is that you would be so crass and so insensitive as to give them huge pay increases in a year when you're denying it to everyone else. What I want, Madam Minister, are the pay increases. And don't give me the malarkey that they all somehow readily relate to Education.

They serve you as a minister. And I will anticipate, Madam Minister, that at least some of your time, and therefore some of your staff's time, might relate to women's issues. I know it's not a priority with this government, but I would think that some of your time would relate to women's issues; therefore, some of your staff time relates to women's issues, and I ask you, Madam Minister, for the pay increases.

And frankly, I don't see the point in denying it at this point in time. All other ministers but you have come clean. All the other ministers have given us the pay increases and have attempted, however weakly, to justify it. What on earth are you trying to do by hiding something that every other minister has given us?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I can once again send the information that I sent before in doing my estimates for Education on my personal staff, and it included what they were making, and if it did not include any kind of pay increases — if there were any — then I will gladly get that to him. And as to the breakdown on how much time is spent on the Women's Secretariat, I can simply only state again there is nobody assigned specifically to the Women's Secretariat.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Madam Minister, how many days after the session terminates are we going to get the information with respect to the pay increase of your staff?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, that is better answered by another question. How many days after he asked for the first set of information in dealing with my personal staff did he receive it?

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Madam Minister, I cannot believe that any minister of this government could not have anticipated the question with respect to pay increases. It has become, Madam Minister, in the last few days, one of the central issues of this legislature: the insensitivity and hypocrisy of this government in dealing with working people.

I cannot believe, Madam Minister, you didn't anticipate a question with respect to the pay of your staff. Madam Minister, I allege that you intentionally came here unprepared. You either have it and are not giving it, or you intentionally came unprepared. Madam Minister, when are we going to get the information with respect to your personal staff? You can give it to us this afternoon if you want to.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Well I suggest that the member go through the blue book figures — the blue book figures. I do not have within the secretary's budget — that's what we're talking about — the secretary's budget. There is nothing in there for a person to be hired by my office for that area. I have no personal staff assigned to the Women's Secretariat, nor is there any money within the budget for it, nor is any of the money in the budget going towards it. So how can I give him what he asks for? He's asking for the impossible.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — What on earth is the minister trying to hide? I don't know how you could possibly look worse than other ministers. The Minister of Co-ops, who now looks like Scrooge, gave a 4 per cent increase. Nobody's been down to that subterranean level since then . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . We owe the Minister of Co-ops an apology, indeed.

Madam Minister, we then went to an 8 and 9 per cent increase with the next minister, which was the Minister of Justice. We went to 16 per cent with the Minister of Co-ops . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And 15 for the Minister of Social Services. And I frankly, Madam Minister, don't know what you're hiding. If the pay increases are higher than 16 per cent, then that is truly phenomenal. I can't believe it. I can't believe, Madam Minister, you're any worse than the other ministers. You are just a lot more arrogant in answering questions. You just refuse to answer questions. And to be the most arrogant and reticent minister in this government is quite an accomplishment, Madam Minister.

Now I ask you: when are we going to get the details with respect to the pay increases that you intentionally didn't bring today?

(11:45)

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Mr. Chairman, I can only state again: there is nothing in this budget to do with personal staff. I don't have any personal staff to do with the Women's Secretariat. However, I will once again send the information on my personal staff that is assigned to the Department of Education's budget to the member from Regina Centre — once again.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Will you ask, Madam Minister, one of the pages to go to your office, get the information, and come back with it? I can tell you, Madam Minister, that although the Minister of Social Services has not always been described by this caucus as being the epitome of humility, at least he did that last night. Will you, Madam Minister, show the same courtesy as the Minister of Social Services showed? Will you ask one of the pages to go to the office and get it? Because it is readily available, it is readily available, Madam Minister, I am sure, from any one of

the secretaries in the office. Will you send a page now and get it?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Mr. Chairman, I have a question in my mind on dealing with what is related to the budget within the secretariat. I don't mind doing what the member asks, but there's no figures in the financial estimates that we're doing . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, it isn't a cover-up. Like, you are being ridiculous and posturing for the sake of nothing. Now if the information he wants is out of the Department of Education, I will get him that information to do with the Department of Ed, but I can't do it with the Women's Secretariat. And let's decide: are we doing the Women's Secretariat, or are we doing Education?

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Madam Minister, will you show us the courtesy that the Minister of Social Services showed last night, and get it now?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — In relationship to the Women's Secretariat, I can't do that. I've already told you I don't have any personal staff within the Women's Secretariat.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Madam Minister, will you show us the courtesy that the Minister of Social Services showed last night? Send someone to your office to get the information with respect to your personal staff.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Mr. Chairman, I've already given my commitment. I will get the information as soon as possible to give to the member from Regina Centre. However, however, it will not relate to the Women's Secretariat.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Madam Minister, as galling as your behaviour is, I suspect it's not the most important issue with respect to the Women's Secretariat. The scandal, and it's nothing short of that, with respect to the pay increases of ministerial staff is already out, and you're going to have a hard time topping some of your colleagues.

Madam Minister, with respect to the role of the Women's Secretariat, what you have created is not a tiger but a clawless pussy-cat, Madam Minister. Madam Minister, you have spoken about some of the issues, but they're all the easy issues upon which there's an easy consensus.

You've had something to say about wife battering. It may come as a stunning surprise to you to know that nobody's in favour of wife battering, Madam Minister. You've had something to say about pornography. It may come as a stunning surprise, Madam Minister, to know that no one in this House is in favour of pornography. Likewise, Madam Minister, with respect to training opportunities, we're all in favour of them.

I wonder, Madam Minister, if you'd be prepared to give us your government's position on some issues that aren't quite so straightforward. I ask you, Madam Minister: what is the position of your government with respect to equal pay for work of equal value? The notion is hardly revolutionary at this point in time. It has been adopted by the Government of Canada, and is likely to be adopted by the new Government of Ontario. I wonder, Madam Minister, if this province can go as far as the province of Ontario in dealing with women's rights and women's pay.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Well Mr. Chairman, the issue of equal pay for work of equal value — I guess if I had \$10 to bet today I would bet that the member from Regina Centre cannot put it into a neat definition, nor the process to go with it.

It has raised much discussion not only within female groups, organizations, but also within male-dominated organizations like the party opposite. There's obvious, as there is to anything, advantages and disadvantages. And we have stated that we were willing to have a serious look and study — and study the issue.

The member has made reference that Ontario will probably be moving towards it. I know it is certainly in the Ontario media. However, the member should also be aware that there are some governments who have moved into the area, and are now moving out because they didn't do their homework well enough before moving into it, which brings me . . .

You know, obviously, the disadvantages are clear. One is defining or determining what is "value." That's a value judgement, and "value" often means different things to different people. The traditional attitudes devalue jobs often performed by women. That's another disadvantage. And the costs for enforcement, higher labour costs for employers, those are some of the others. Now on all of those, there is equally an advantage to be given to it.

It is our opinion that the first step on this issue is raising the public awareness and understanding of the equal pay concept. First of all, are there any difficulties within the work-force now on The Labour Standards Act that is in play? And that is, employees performing similar functions must receive similar pay. Sometimes there's minor difficulties that arise within that. We think the legislative changes must be reviewed very carefully for their impact.

The member will be aware of the Abella report that came down at the federal level not so long ago, and in there points out that the public should also consider other ways, other ways, of narrowing that wage differential. I think for the member's benefit, he should be aware that the Abella report is by a woman who recognizes some of the difficulties. She goes on to say that helpful measures include reducing occupational segregation through education and training, encouraging women in management and professional roles, and equalizing the entry pay levels, and, of course, affirmative action programs.

The member from Regina Centre should also be aware that this government, under the leadership of the minister of government services and the Public Service Commission last year, the member from Meadow Lake, went into a formalized action plan in trying to deal with some of these issues.

So I think that our position has been relatively clear on it. We are going to make sure that we know what we are talking about, and the process is outlined before moving from the standard legislation that is in play on equal work for equal pay.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Thank you, Madam Minister. The last thing this issue needs is any more study. It needs some action. The women of the province are not going to be mollified to hear that you're studying an issue which has been studied to death.

Madam Minister, does the minister who is responsible for women's issues have the courage to state her position on Bill 53?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — The Women's Secretariat, Mr. Chairman, has not taken a position on Bill 53.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Answer: no. Madam Minister . . .

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Order. The members aren't to comment on Bills that are before the House.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — I think, Mr. Chairman, a scant chance that this minister's going to comment on Bill 53, so I think there's little chance of the regulations being breached. Madam Minister . . .

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Why don't you comment on it?

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — I'm quite prepared to comment on it. I am publicly opposed to Bill 53, have been, and will be. Madam Minister . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well feel free to use it.



Madam Minister . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes. They ask the question, then they don't like the answer, Mr. Chairman. Madam Minister, with respect to the minimum wage, has the Women's Secretariat the courage to take a position on the abominable treatment working women and single parent families are receiving by the Minister of Labour with respect to minimum wage?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Mr. Chairman, the minimum wage is only one part and a very small part of a very much larger question of low incomes, the people that are in low incomes, and why they're there — particularly for older people.

We have taken the position that the way to increase incomes for women is to improve their training and employment opportunities for higher paying jobs, and that often means moving into the traditional male-orientated areas as opposed to some others. We have stated many times, you could put that minimum wage level at \$10 an hour and the reality would be if you had done nothing else on education, affirmative action, or training, you would still have women on minimum wage. And the member from Regina Centre can't seem to understand that.

What I hear the opposition saying is: it's okay for women to be on minimum wage as long as you up the minimum wage; and that's where he would like to leave it. And we don't think that's good enough.

Not only do women lose out in addressing it in that manner, but we believe that society and the economy is the big loser in the long run on it, by not taking the opportunity for a very large percentage of the adult population out there to exercise their talents and their abilities towards their province and their country.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Madam Minister, I want to repeat for your benefit something said by that most diplomatic of all ministers, the Minister of Parks and Renewable Resources. He said in a quotation in the *Star-Phoenix*, "Maxwell advocates strong birth-control education plan."

I'll read the article for you if you like, Mr. Minister, but the headline is not misleading. The Minister of Parks and Renewable Resources did indeed advocate, through our educational system, a strong birth-control education plan.

Madam Minister, does the minister in charge of the Women's Secretariat have the courage to take a position on this issue?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — My position is well known on family education including sex education, and has been for about 14 years, for the benefit of the member from Regina Centre.

As I recall, one time when he was for a very short period of time Minister of Education, I gave him my views on family education. I believe that family education is an important component of the social development of a child's life, and at certain ages the sex education component becomes important also. But I also believe that the centralized function of the Department of Education is not to delve into that but to let the local board, in conjunction with their staff and their parents, decide the kind of family life education program that is going to be delivered, in co-operation, Mr. Chairman, with other elements of the community, whether it be the home, community agencies, perhaps the church; there's several that I could think of that will, and many do take part in the delivery of a family life program.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Well once again we find the minister is not prepared to take a stand on the issue, but talk around the issue. Madam Minister, you come down on so many sides of these issues you've got us completely surrounded — which is a fair stunt.

Madam Minister, with respect to the Schneider report, does Madam Minister intend to release the report, and does the minister in charge of the Women's Secretariat have the courage to take

a stand on this issue as well, Madam Minister?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — I have been fully supportive of the Minister of Health's initiative to involve the community, and particularly Mrs. Schneider, with her experience and her background in the whole area of not only family life but teen-age pregnancy within the school.

(12:00)

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — It's nice to know, Madam Minister, that you think Mrs. Schneider is a reasonable and decent person. To put it mildly, that was not what I asked. Madam Minister, there have been some changes recommended by the Law Reform Commission with respect to The Matrimonial Property Act. I think it is a fair summary the reaction by feminists in this province has been one of outrage and opposition to those recommendations which are thought to be retrogressive. I wonder, madam Minister, if the minister in charge of the Women's Secretariat has the courage to take a stand on this issue.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Mr. Chairman, I have met with several women's groups plus several individuals over the initial report as it came out, which I want to remind the member that it was the Law Reform Commission report. And the final recommendation after public hearing and further discussion has not come into the Attorney General yet. I take some disagreement with certain parts of the initial report and I think I have probably let that be known. I don't think that . . . I think it would be unfair and prejudgemental to lay a position out before the Law Reform Commission comes in with its finalization and the dispensing of the commission. And I will wait for that time.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Madam Minister, in December of 1983 you said the most important thing that you could do to improve the status of women in society is to change people's attitudes.

We presumed at that time, Madam Minister, that you had some idea of those attitudes that needed changing. It's been suggested to me since then that far from knowing what attitudes need to be changed, there was a need to inform the minister on what attitudes needed changing.

I am told, madam Minister, that this is a role that the Women's Secretariat was unable to fulfil and likewise that your advisory council on the status of women was unable to fulfil — able to tell you what attitudes. It's further been suggested that government money for women's programs was, in fact, fed to Tanka Resources, which is a political polling arm of the provincial PC party.

Can you tell us if it is true that any funds which were voted to the Women's Secretariat were in fact paid to Tanka Resources for any services?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Mr. Chairman, we have spent a lot of time this year on the issue of family violence and we had one survey on family violence by the firm in question, that the member from Regina Centre raises.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Chairman, I have no further questions of this minister. This is a complete waste of time, and the minister is a complete waste of time.

Mr. Chairman, this minister has refused to take a stand on any significant issues. She has refused to take a stand on matrimonial property; she has refused to take a stand on equal pay for work of equal value; she's refused to take a stand on Bill 53; she has refused to take a stand on the question of the Schneider report.

Mr. Chairman, the minister is doing nothing at all, and I don't intend to waste the time of this Assembly any more with these estimates. As far as I am concerned, Mr. Minister, these estimates can go. They're accomplishing nothing and there's no point in wasting the time of the Assembly.

Item 1 agreed to.

Item 2 agreed to.

Vote 41 agreed to.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — I'd like to thank the minister and her officials.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the officials of the secretariat who deal with many issues and deal with all government departments and the civil service. Contrary to what the member from Regina Centre has to say, I have no doubt that he did not have any further questions considering the interest that is displayed during question period in the last year and a half towards women in this Assembly.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — I would like to thank the officials. It is my sincere regret that they're not being given anything to do by the minister.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Order, order.

## **CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE**

### **SASKATCHEWAN LIBRARY**

#### **Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 29**

##### **Item 1**

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Order. Would the minister introduce her officials?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me today, on my immediate right, Karen Adams, the Provincial Librarian; I have Stan Skrzyszewski, director of professional services; and behind me, I have Marcel de Laforest, the director of administration.

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Madam Minister, I wonder, in the most recent copy of the *Public Accounts*, under the administration in this area, you will notice that the administration services are overspent, or that you budgeted \$322,000 and that the number that ended up in the *Public Accounts* is quite different. Can you outline what the changes were in that area?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Mr. Chairman, we're talking about the '83-84 *Public Accounts*. We think that it is due to a reallocation, but because I don't have this specific information I think I'd better check to make sure that that is correct, and I will get the information to the member from Shaunavon.

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — That would be fine. I would appreciate it if the information was here. Traditionally we have information out of the *Public Accounts* in spending from the previous year. But while you're at it, I noticed as well that in the area of professional services you spent almost \$35,000 less than what was estimated.

Now in an area where there is only a small amount spent, when you see changes like that you wonder why the change and where the money was moved to, or why it wasn't spent when it was budgeted, or, in other words, why the huge mistake being made. And if you don't have that information with you, Madam Minister, I would ask you to get it for us and send it to us before the end of the session, if you'd give that commitment.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Yes, I will, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — In the area of provincial libraries, in your own personal staff, have you got any idea of the salary increases for your personal staff who would . . . if you had letters to write on libraries, and I'm sure that you do, the ministerial assistant who prepares the letters for you, the increase of that individual or individuals, and secretaries who would type those letters. I would like from you if you would get me the increase in the salaries.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Well, once again, none of my office staff are assigned to this particular budget. They all come within the Department of Education so I therefore do not have one or two staff assigned to provincial libraries. I will give the commitment, as I did in doing the estimates on the Women's Secretariat, to once again send that information of my personal office staff. And I will also take the time to denote the secretary that does the typing, and the increases, if there were any.

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — The final part of that question is whether you would get it to us before the end of the session.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Yes, I can do that.

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Madam Minister, you will know that over the past number of years the regional library operation, which has functioned I think relatively well and served an important service to rural Saskatchewan and to small cities and right across the province . . . I wonder whether or not any problems exist between R.M.s or local governments in funding of the regional libraries. In your own area . . . I suppose we could use the example of the city of Swift Current which from time to time has debates and discussions on whether or not they should be contributing to the regional library system. Can you give me a brief outline of how you are making out in . . . whether all R.M.s and whether all local governments are involved now, or whether some are not, and in particular in the case of Swift Current whether or not they are part of the regional library in that area.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Mr. Chairman, let me deal with the Chinook Regional Library which is what Swift Current city is in. It is indeed true that they have had their ups and downs and discussions and withdrawal, in fact, motions tabled to withdraw at a certain point in time. I think things are moving along very nicely.

There has been some communications and negotiations which the new Act, by the way, allows the cities to negotiate. Now that that is taking place, I am told that — I believe it was this week — that things were to be given a final wrap-up on that. So that particular area is not the issue that it was at one time.

In 1985 there were 14 notices which is a decrease of three from 1984, and that also represents a considerable decrease from 47 notices in 1981 — 93 per cent of the population is participating. There were no municipalities that withdrew from regional libraries in 1984, and we have five municipalities with a total population of 3,732 of that number rescinded their withdrawal notices in, last year — 1984.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I noted that the budget is, I think, the exact same number of dollars as it was the year before, and you will perhaps be familiar with the letter written by the president of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipal Association, Mr. Herb Taylor, to your colleague, the Minister of Finance, in which . . . I will read a small portion of the letter in which it says:

We note, as well, that there is no provision for change in so far as the support to the library system, and virtually no change in support of the ambulance system.

If this is to continue, both the library boards and the ambulance boards will turn to the local taxpayer once more for additional funding to assist them in meeting their increasing costs of providing these services.

(12:15)

That prediction, I think, has been borne out, at least in some municipalities. I obviously have not checked them all.

What is the trend with respect to mill rates for library purposes across the province? I noted in Regina there seemed to be some increase. Could you give us an indication of what the trend is?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Mr. Chairman, at the time that we were doing the preparation for budget, we had looked at what zero per cent increase does to third-party grants. And we also at that time went back two, three, four years to see the total percentage increase, and of course your inflation rate and other factors that often come about in determining.

I'd been somewhat worried on the zero per cent, particularly the effect on a regional library that has a very sparse population and a lot of miles in between with no people. And we looked at the financial statements of the year before. And I guess I was somewhat reassured that given a year — and when you have a year of tight resources — that there be a reserve somewhere. And most of the, if not all, of the regional libraries has a surplus or reserve that hadn't been set aside for a specific purpose like a capital construction project or something like that. It was basically undesignated money that was in the surplus fund.

That's not to say that the libraries are rich; they're not. But they all have at least as much money as a 3 per cent increase, if that's what you would have done on a provincial grant. And while they don't specifically set a mill rate — it's a percentage that they do — we believe that in many cases there were some very modest increases that you could contribute to library expenses.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, and Madam Minister, with respect to the ones which are clearly identifiable, that is the mill rates in cities like Regina and Saskatoon which have library systems separate in an organizational sense from regional libraries, can you tell me what has happened to the mill rates in those particular communities as a result of the zero increase in funding?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Using Saskatoon as an example, within the formula, we only pay approximately 7 per cent. And I would think it would be very difficult . . . We could give it a try, but it would be very difficult, and within that 7 per cent of provincial money going in, to determine the mill rate within it.

But I could certainly raise it with the board in question to find out what they put on the mill rate within the city of Saskatoon for library purposes. But I think you have to keep it in perspective and remember what portion is municipal money and what portion is provincial money.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, and Madam Minister . . . Madam Minister, you anticipate my next question. With respect to the two major city libraries who are, I believe, becoming increasingly integrated with the regional library systems into one Saskatchewan library system which now, I believe, uses one computer installation . . . At least all the material is catalogued on a single program of computer hardware . . . software. I don't know whether . . . what the hardware arrangements are.

Do you feel it continues to be justified to pay such a small proportion of the costs of the libraries in the two major cities as they increasingly become part of what is an integrated provincial library system?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I believe that the Leader of the Opposition is basically talking about the issue of equal access, and perhaps equal grants in terms of percentage that they're getting. We have not moved off of the percentage of moneys that Saskatoon or the two larger cities get from what they got say four or five, six years ago.

However, it has been raised to me in discussion with both Regina and Saskatoon. And we have looked at some areas of service that Saskatoon and Regina may be into delivering because they have the equipment, the material, and the technology to do it.

And I have written to ask the library boards of Regina and Saskatoon if they would consider a provincially funded contract to assist with the cost of circulating films outside the cities. And so far Regina has responded and, of course, has indicated their willingness to have a look at that which would alleviate some cost in that area of helping out other boards.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, and Madam Minister, I would urge you to pursue that. In the nature of things governments deal with, with the problems which confront them, and they deal with them in the order of priority of need, and over the last 20 or 25 years it was clearly perceived to be the need to get a tolerable and something-better-than-tolerable library system in rural Saskatchewan. And it started from rather small roots. North central in Prince Albert has gone across the province, and I think all areas with the possible exception of northern Saskatchewan are reasonably adequately covered with library services. I'm not suggesting there aren't library services in northern Saskatchewan. I'm questioning possibly the adequacy.

When that is done, then one needs to address a little more fully the question, perhaps the fairness of burden bearing. The two major cities have had good library systems financed out of the public purse for a long time, and I would urge you to consider that. And I also welcome your comments that you will consider it in the light of services which they may render to the combined system, and certainly with respect to film and video and that sort of thing they have good collections in Regina and Saskatoon. One calls them, I suppose, a library of films and a library of records and the like, tapes, which we ought not to try for the most part to duplicate in many of the smaller regionals, and perhaps some provincial funding to provide that service would be welcomed. And I commend your approach along that line.

The history of these two library systems was very, very different. The cities started, I suppose, in the Carnegie days and got libraries and got grants on that basis, and the regional library system has been something which Saskatchewan people have developed themselves and in a sense pioneered themselves, since it's, I think, still the most comprehensive in Canada, and certainly when it was set up it was, over the past 20 years or so . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, probably. I would hope so. I would hope that we can look for some progress, and the member suggests that it's getting better every day.

My next question is to the minister, and how does she feel that the exact same number of dollars will produce a better library system, or even as good a library system, in '85-86 as it did in '84-85, in view of the costs which are undoubtedly increasing — costs like utilities which, with all the efficiency in the world, you're still going to have to pay more for?

As rates increase, the costs of transportation, which are not insignificant in the regional library systems if you're running bookmobiles and the like, and the costs of fuel keep increasing, particularly when we have governments in Ottawa which are increasing the fuel taxes.

We have the costs of books, a significant number of which are procured in the United States, and the cost of which has gone up rather dramatically in the last couple of years, primarily because of changes in exchange rates. Now it may not go up in this particular year, but I would be far from sanguine about whether or not that will be true.

Madam Minister, my simple question is this: with the exact same number of dollars, and knowing

that some costs are certainly increasing — and I can think of no significant cost which is decreasing — how do you propose to maintain the library system even at the level which it previously operated at, let alone the improvements which are suggested as likely to come by the member for Souris-Cannington?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, as I said earlier, when we looked at budgeting this year and a zero per cent increase to libraries, we also looked at the impact in specific areas.

You know, for instance in 1984-85 last year, Mr. Chairman, Saskatchewan led all the western provinces in our operating grants per person. We were at \$5.81, and the next highest was Alberta at \$4.47 — a whole dollar plus less than what Saskatchewan was at. And Manitoba was at \$2.66. So there's, you know, a very major difference in terms of what happened within the library budgets last year. British Columbia was down at the bottom with 2.39, but Manitoba wasn't too far off the bottom of the barrel at that rate.

And I guess that's why I alluded to the surpluses that were there, had not been designated. Certainly there are some cost factors that have gone up. But there's also changes in style of management, efficiencies, technologies that do take place.

The Leader of the Opposition made reference to the cost of books. And I would like to inform him that the average cost of a hard-cover book was gone from \$31.19 in 1983 down to 29.81 in 1984. Now if you take just that portion and examine it, along with the fact that Saskatchewan libraries received one of the larger percentage increases in their grants, and I think you can see that you obviously have a little bit of room to move.

(12:30)

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, and Madam Mr. Minister, I regret that the minister is using interprovincial comparisons. I regret because for every year in the last 10 Saskatchewan has spent more per capita on regional library services, or on all library services, than any other province. And I think we were proud of it. And for her to suggest that she's going to drop back to some other provincial standards is to indicate that she is looking at a lower standard of library service. Otherwise she wouldn't be using that.

That's certainly very, very clear. We have very different circumstances here in Saskatchewan with a widely dispersed population, and therefore a large number of our people who don't have access to book stores and other places which might be thought of in some sense as substitutes for libraries — that isn't what we have here. We, long ago, fully 20 years ago, made a commitment to top-grade regional libraries as part of an educational system and as part of making rural life more attractive, as part of keeping people on the farm. I know that some members opposite will be surprised at this, but a good number of farm people like to read, and enjoy reading, and get a lot of not only pleasure but information out of reading. There is perhaps not much evidence of it with respect to one or two of the people from the farm areas who I see about me, but know that that isn't true, it isn't true with respect to many farm people.

It has been a proud boast of this province that we had the best system. And when I hear the minister deciding that she's going to compare it to B.C., which is highly urban population, or to other provinces which have highly urban populations, then we are going to get much fewer dollars per capita. And I think that that is a clear statement that we're going to have a lowering of the quality of library services.

I regret it. She is saying she's going to spend no more per . . . no more dollars. If I can believe any of the members opposite, or if I could believe one-tenth of what they say, the population will increase. Therefore we're spending less per capita in 1985-86 than was spent in '84-85, and that certainly spells a decrease in the level of service. It's very well for the minister to say that costs are not increasing, but I think we know they are.

Costs are increasing; the number of people who might use the libraries are increasing; the number of dollars is exactly the same; the result is a lower quality of library service. I regret the government's choice to cut back on library services.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, as I had stated earlier, I think to keep it in perspective, when one is setting a budget, if you in fact do go back and you look at the previous year's budget, and you also do some comparison — not comparisons in order to bring yourself into line with other provinces, necessarily, but to see what is happening in the entire library field — I don't for a minute believe that the services have gotten worse.

In fact, I think that they've probably improved somewhat. I think they are becoming different services and that will increase over the years as more and more people go into home computers, be able to access information from various data banks, and libraries will certainly have a major challenge before them.

I would also like to remind the Leader of the Opposition that this government, when it comes to education, besides public libraries, the effect on the public library has also come from the school system. And it perhaps is fair to say that the money going into the Educational Development Fund this year, particularly into libraries and resource centres, will have some of an impact on what is happening within the public library system.

**MR. YEW:** — Thank you, Deputy Speaker. I'd like to ask the minister responsible for Saskatchewan libraries: I wonder if she could explain to me what the government's policy is in respect of the administration and operations of public and provincial libraries in northern Saskatchewan — regarding staffing, funding, the upkeep and maintenance, and the operations in general, about northern libraries.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — I welcome the questions from the member from the North, Mr. Chairman, I guess for some specific reasons, one of it being that the library service within the North has not been dealt with in past years.

For instance, in 1981 there was a legislative review committee that stated the belief that northern libraries should not be weak copies of those in the South, and that something should be done, in fact, to improve their service. But they turned down, Mr. Chairman, turned down a regional-type system of library service that has been proven to be very effective.

We are looking at staffing. We are looking at two positions whose assigned duties relate to the North within the Saskatchewan Library. We have had two training workshops for library workers held annually for northern libraries. We also, Mr. Chairman, have a northern representative, Mr. George Cook from La Ronge, who is on the minister's advisory board in dealing with library services.

New materials relevant to the needs of Northerners are being purchased and will continue to be purchased. We have arranged for native authors to hold readings in the North, and there have been regular visits made to the libraries. Access to library material is also being made available without cost to the user, Mr. Chairman, and I would think that that, perhaps, answers some of the questions that the member from Cumberland may have.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. YEW:** — Yes. I'd like to ask the minister as well: what involvement do you have with local governments in this respect, in terms of staffing and funding, and the upkeep of materials, etc. that goes into the North?

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Mr. Chairman, I did not hear all of the question. Could I have the



member repeat it, please?

**MR. YEW:** — Mr. Minister, or Madam Minister . . . Pardon me, Deputy Speaker. Madam Minister, I was asking what type of involvement, what role are local government councils playing in terms of involvement, input by those communities, by way of staffing; by way of material and literature; by way of funding the upkeep and maintenance and the promotion of Saskatchewan libraries.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — Well Mr. Chairman, it is local governments that pass by-laws for the libraries. La Ronge is perhaps a good example. And it is the local government that appoints the library board that deals with the issues that the member has raised.

Item 1 agreed to.

Items 2 to 4 inclusive agreed to.

Vote 29 agreed to.

**HON. MRS. SMITH:** — I would like to thank the officials with me today, and the Assembly, yourself, and the Clerks, and also the opposition. Thank you.

**MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Mr. Chairman, in just closing, I would ask the minister that she would send the information before the end of the session — I'm sure she will — and also thank the officials, and just point out to her that a freeze on funding in that area is . . .

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Order, order, order. The debate is over.

## **CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE**

### **URBAN AFFAIRS**

#### **Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 24**

##### **Item 1**

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Would the minister introduce his official?

**HON. MR. EMBURY:** — Yes, Mr. Chairman. To my right, Dave Innes, deputy minister; Keith Schneider, assistant deputy minister; Henry McCutcheon, executive director of planning; Gerry Stinson, the director of northern municipal services; George Dobni, the manager of accounting services; Rick Kilarski, the manager of revenue sharing; John Edwards, the assistant director of municipal grants, and Del Fuchs, as acting director of property tax rebates.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Minister, would you begin by giving me a list of your personal staff, their positions, their current salaries, and details of pay increases in the last year?

**HON. MR. EMBURY:** — Mr. Chairman, I'll send it across.

Okay, Mr. Chairman, I've sent that across. Just to explain it to the member opposite, you will see under "current salary" — obviously they're current salaries — you will see to the right the percentages in increments.

Bruce Evans, 8.8 per cent, which represents two years' increments. In other words, he hasn't had an increment for two years. Pat Murphy, zero; Pam Barber, 4.2 per cent; Vonda Renwick, zero; Margaret Marsden, zero.

(12:45)

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Minister, would you then give me the current salary, and to what date the increase was retroactive to?

**HON. MR. EMBURY:** — Those are the current salaries.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Right. Then could I have the previous salaries and the date to which they increase was retroactive?

**HON. MR. EMBURY:** — Okay, Mr. Chairman. Evans — first increment effective April 1, '84, and the second increment effective January of '85. And Barber, increment effective January '85.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Please give me the salaries, Mr. Minister, of each . . .

**HON. MR. EMBURY:** — Evans, 39,520; Barber, 32,360.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Minister, do you want to have a go at justifying a pay increase for your personal staff in almost the same breath that you have denied public servants, teachers, nurses — it goes on and on and on — anything in the nature of an increase?

We witnessed the pathetic attempts of the Premier two days ago. We didn't think anyone would up that; however, the minister of crop insurance managed to do worse today in question period.

Mr. Minister, do you want to have a go at the impossible, attempting to justify these pay increases?

**HON. MR. EMBURY:** — Mr. Chairman, I will point out that in my department, 46 employees in the department received incremental raises, or went up the step as much as my staff did. And the average increase in the department is 4 per cent.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Minister, would you give me a list of the people and positions . . . Just give me the positions, if you like, of the . . . Will you give me a list of those positions which were increased?

I don't particularly want the names. I want to know at what level you're increasing the . . . what level of people you're increasing the . . . If you give me the names, I'll treat this confidential. If you're not prepared to do that, will you give me the positions which you increased, and the pay increase of those who hold the positions?

**HON. MR. EMBURY:** — Mr. Chairman, I will . . . We will get that information for the member. What I'm trying to point out is that the members of the civil service are under the same system as the members of my staff. They have a salary range, they have yearly increments, and the increments in my staff are the same percentage increase as the increments in the civil services.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Minister, will you give me the list of positions that were increased — the names and the positions that were increased, and the amount?

**HON. MR. EMBURY:** — I already agreed to send that to you.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Minister, I want to return to an issue which we dealt with with your predecessor, now Minister of Energy, and that is the multimodal station in Regina and Saskatoon . . . in Regina and Moose Jaw.

Mr. Minister, both communities had high hopes that these buildings, which are beautiful old

buildings and an important part of the heritage of both cities, might be preserved. Your predecessor, the now Minister of Energy, was anything but encouraging when we dealt with the issue a couple of years ago.

Mr. Minister, if you could give me a status report now, is there any hope for this project, or is it dead?

**HON. MR. EMBURY:** — Mr. Speaker, I think this question was asked last year in estimates, and at that time I'd indicated to the member opposite that that had been transferred to the Minister of Transportation over two years ago. And I think if you check the record, I informed the member of that last year in estimates.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Minister, can you send me, and we are not going to complete this today — you may have it with you — can you send me in a municipality by municipality, can you send me the grants they're getting, and can you give me the urban assistance grants? I don't know the name of them. If you need the name I'll get my *Estimates* book out; I don't have it specifically in front of me. Can you give me that, municipality by municipality?

**HON. MR. EMBURY:** — Do you want the actuals, Mr. Chairman, or what they're eligible for?

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — I'm sorry; I didn't hear you.

**HON. MR. EMBURY:** — Under the new capital fund, obviously every municipality is eligible for funding capital. Most have not applied yet, obviously. So do you want what they are eligible for this year?

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Yes. With respect to the . . . I gather we're now talking about the . . . (inaudible) . . . I would ask what they're eligible for.

With respect to urban revenue sharing, I would ask for, on the municipality-by-municipality basis, what they got last year and what they go this year. And I would appreciate that, Mr. Minister, if it's at all possible, before Monday at 2:30 when I assume we'll pick this up again.

**HON. MR. EMBURY:** — No problem.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Minister, since you're being so co-operative, would the same information be available with respect to northern capital grants, northern fire protection facilities, and northern revenue sharing?

**HON. MR. EMBURY:** — No problem.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — You're leaving me breathless, Mr. Minister. We were just dealing with the Minister of Education who, as I said on one other occasion, getting simple information out of her is like drawing a bed-sheet through a keyhole. To put it mildly, you leave me in a state of shock.

Mr. Minister, I want to ask you again some questions in general with respect to the provincial capital fund. I noted on second reading that there had been in fact a modest decrease in the fund from '81-82 to '85-86. In '81-82 the CCF (community capital fund) was 17.5 million; '85-86 the PC (provincial capital) fund appropriately enough is smaller than that, is 17.3. And of course there's a very significant loss in terms of absolute dollars. There's been a 21 per cent increase; there's been 21 per cent inflation since then. So in absolute terms there's a fair decrease.

Mr. Minister, when you add in the Highways capital of 14.3 in '81-82 and a mere 5 million this year, you have in fact an almost 50 per cent reduction in the amount of capital dollars available to municipalities. And, Mr. Minister, they're feeling it. It has not gone unnoticed by the municipalities.

I just tore out of a newspaper some of the more complimentary things they're saying about your budget. *Leader-Post*, Tuesday, April 16: "Provincial government cuts blamed for higher property tax." In Regina they had to assess a special road repair levy . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, let's go to Estevan then. You may get a chance to make those comments . . . You undoubtedly will get a chance to make those comments directly to that individual after the next election. But let's go to Estevan then, if you don't like the city of Regina. And it's obvious that this government does not like this city. Let's go to Estevan.

Estevan, an operational budget calling for 1.5 mill increase in the mill rate was adopted by the city council because of your budget.

Mr. Minister, the operating grants are down very significantly. The capital grants are down very significantly. Their operating grants have been frozen. Will you admit, Mr. Minister, that what you are doing is to transfer to the municipalities the consequences of your prolific spending over the last couple of years? You come into office, Mr. Minister, with a wildly irresponsible campaign promising impossible increases in the program and equally impossible cuts in taxes. And you tried to do a small fraction of it and that has got you into financial trouble.

You are now in the process, Mr. Minister, of transferring the consequences of that prolific spending to the municipalities, and they are feeling the brunt of it.

I ask you, Mr. Minister, how you justify having the municipalities pay the cost of your mismanagement.

**HON. MR. EMBURY:** — A number of points made, Mr. Speaker, most of them wrong. But I will reply to them.

It's interesting that the member opposite wishes to use the figures of 1981 and the old CCF program. In 1981, Mr. Speaker, was the first year of what is now known as CCF-2 and, of course, the cash flow was higher in the first year. The member opposite, of course, does not want to mention 1980, the year between CCF-1 and CCF-2.

The members opposite were so concerned with capital funding for municipalities in 1980 that they replaced CCF-1 with nothing — with zero, with no capital financing for one full year for municipalities, nothing. That was their concern in 1980. 1981, they brought in what is now known as the CCF-2.

That has run out. We have introduced . . . We didn't leave a year's gap and left everybody with zero, with no capital financing at all. We came and we enriched the formula and gave them more money. That will go for two years. We handled that previously today, because that was SUMA's request pending the results of the recommendations of the Local Government Finance Commission.

The member opposite wants to leave the impression that municipalities are getting less capital dollars this year than last year. I think, Mr. Speaker, that the member opposite should be noted that there are 408 municipalities this year who are receiving more capital money this year than last year — 408. Out of that there are eight cities that received more, 387 towns and villages, 13 hamlets — all received more . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

All right. The member opposite then wants to take the capital financing and the revenue sharing, and pointed out the city of Estevan who he says is going to have a mill rate increase. Well, Mr. Speaker, the mill rate decreased in Estevan this year by 1.3 per cent — decreased, not increased, 1.3 per cent decreased . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm sorry, because you don't have the facts correctly. It's a 1.3 per cent decrease.

May 31, 1985

Mr. Chairman, I suppose that we'll continue this debate on Monday, and on Monday I will deal with specifically the city of Regina's requests and their story and we've got out . . . I'll let the House Leader go.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 1:02 p.m.