

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
June 5, 1985

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. JOHNSON: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague, Lloyd Hampton. I see that Lloyd has — the member from Canora, I'm sorry — has 64 plus four students in the west gallery. I'd like to introduce them to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly. They're grade 3 from the junior elementary school in Canora. They are accompanied by their teacher, Ron Hoehn. I wish them a safe trip back home again, and I hope you enjoy the proceedings this afternoon.

Lloyd is not in the Chamber today, so he asked me if I would introduce you to the Assembly. I'll visit with you after question period just a for a few minutes, if you have any questions. Would you help me welcome them to Regina.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, Hear!

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my seat mate who is not able to be in the House today, the Minister of Justice, the Hon. Gary Lane, I would like to welcome 20 students from grades 10,11, and 12 from the Bert Fox High School in Fort Qu'Appelle, to the Assembly today, along with their teachers, Marion Campbell and Eveline Faubert. I hope they enjoy they proceedings that take place in the Assembly.

I have fond recollections of Fort Qu'Appelle because when I was teaching at Wolseley we were in the same superintendency and knew many of your teachers. So I would be more than pleased to meet with you after question period, have a picture and share a drink, and answer any questions that you may have.

So would everybody welcome the Fort Qu'Appelle students here this afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, Hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Aid to Farmers for Grasshopper Control

MR. ENGEL: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to the Minister of Agriculture, and it deals with the extreme grasshopper problem n southern Saskatchewan and the financial pressures faced by farmers.

The minister has refused to provide any direct financial assistance to farmers t help them with the high cost of the chemicals. But this week, in light of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that this week the Alberta government has announced a \$6.6 million program to cover 50 per cent of the farmers' costs retroactive to May the 1st, has your government ruled out any kind of direct financial assistance to farmers hurt by this year's severe grasshopper problem?

HON. MR. HEPWORTH: — Mr. Speaker, we have undertaken several measures to assist our farmers with the grasshopper problem. I think I've reiterated them in this House before. They revolve around the two focal points, for the most part — number one, assuring that there are supplies available. You can spend all the money you want helping farmers defray costs, but if there's no chemicals to fight it, it doesn't make much sense. And to that end we've even gone so

far as to defray some of the additional costs of transporting quickly into the country chemicals by air transport, if that's seen to make sense.

Over and above that we were the first, I would suggest to you, out of the chute with an unprecedented action in Saskatchewan history in so far as cost-sharing the cost of chemicals for rural municipalities to spray their roadways.

I think that is a direct and clear commitment to the farmers of Saskatchewan, because in fact they are ratepayers of the rural municipalities and that goes a long ways to defraying the costs of those farmers. Other governments, as you have pointed out, may have chosen to assist differently than we have. I think the bottom line is that we're, as much as one can be, in control of the situation in terms of helping the farmers cope with this difficult period.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, Hear!

MR. ENGEL: — New question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, farmers that are particularly involved in mixed farming, that have huge acreages of pasture land, land that supports maybe six or seven or eight head of cattle per quarter, and those areas are infested with grasshoppers, severe infestation, are you not considering starting with at least helping those ranchers that if they don't spray their six and seven sections of pasture land, the hatch that's going to be there . . . Just imagine the severity that we'll have to deal with next year when we're in government.

Mr. Minister, I ask: number one, will you consider helping the ranchers? And number two, will you consider cost-sharing the grasshopper spray that the farmers are facing where grasshoppers are that severe?

HON. MR. HEPWORTH: — Mr. Speaker, our commitment relative to the grasshoppers in pastures is that we have indicated quite clearly, that grasshoppers that may be a problem on Crown lands, especially and particularly community pastures, that we will participate in co-ordinated efforts with the rural municipalities, picking up the cost of spraying on those lands.

After that, Mr. Speaker, I think those same areas are bounded by municipal roadways that tend to be a spot that grasshoppers move out of, in terms of feeding, into the additional areas of the crop land or ranch land. I think we've gone some ways there as well, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ENGEL: — One final question, Mr. Minister. Have you considered talking to your colleague, the minister in charge of crop insurance, to see if there would be reseeding coverage available for crops that have been completely destroyed by grasshoppers?

HON. MR. HEPWORTH: — Well, Mr. Speaker, hon. member, my understanding of crop insurance is that in fact it is all-risk coverage.

MR. ENGEL: — New question to the minister in charge of crop insurance. If a farmer suffers crop damage that is severe because of grasshoppers eating his crop right off now, do you have reseeding coverage similar as you would for flooding or wind erosion?

HON. MR. MUIRHEAD: — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the hon. member's question, if a crop is destroyed by grasshoppers prior to 20th of June, it is 100 per cent covered for the reseeding benefit.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the Minister of Agriculture. I wonder whether or not at this time the minister could inform the Assembly and the farmers of Saskatchewan whether or not he has taken to cabinet a proposal similar to the one instituted in Alberta, which would give money or pay money directly to farmers for half of the cost of the spray that they are using to control the grasshopper infestation.

HON. MR. HEPWORTH: — Mr. Speaker, you will know that we in fact are one of the first provinces to probably get on top of this whole issue of grasshoppers in the country, and as I indicated earlier, some jurisdictions have provided assistance one way. We have chosen to provide assistance another way.

It seems to us that when we held the meeting with all the players involved in handling this problem, and the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities had two or three people at the meeting we convened, and their recommendation to us was that we should look at cost-sharing the spray, the cost of the chemical on roadways, that seemed to make some sense to them and to us and that's what we've done.

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Minister, regarding the help you've given in bringing chemicals in, I think you announced (I heard you on the radio) \$300,000 to fly in chemical. Does that indicate a preparedness in your part when you knew this was going to be the most severe . . .

The question I have: you're prepared to subsidize the grasshopper suppliers with \$300,000 to bring the bait in that they're selling more than they have ever sold before where they have a tremendous . . . (inaudible) . . . money. You're subsidizing them \$300,000 to bring the bait in when the plans laid in advance would have had the grasshopper bait on hand, would have had the spray there now.

Why not subsidize the farmer that has to pay the severe costs of applying the grasshopper spray? The cheapest I know of is \$2.50 an acre, and on grassland in particular . . . You have a program in place for pastures, but you don't have for the owner of a pasture. Community pastures, maybe. But what about the man that has seven sections of land that's under grass? Are you going to subsidize that one as well?

HON. MR. HEPWORTH: — It's interesting. I hear him refer to the farmer with seven sections of land, and it's not that long ago, in debates in this House, when anything that I would even suggest that might be done for a farmer with seven sections was absolutely ultra vires in his mind.

In so far as what our government is prepared to do in terms of assuring the chemical supplies here, we have made the offer to all the companies, wherein they need either precursors in their manufacturing process or additional chemicals, if the chemical can be got here quicker by using some other method than ground transportation, we will pick up the additional costs of the cheaper form of transportation, and the more expensive form. It's not so much a shortage of chemicals to treat grasshoppers out there, Mr. Speaker. It's that we might have isolated shortages of individual chemicals, and that's why we're trying to make sure that all of them are available all the time, so you don't get price distortions in the market-place, Mr. Speaker.

Travel by Government Aides

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, yesterday you informed the Assembly in a long answer that in fact your principal secretary, Dave Tkachuk, did in fact go to Ottawa and Washington at taxpayers' expense to the tune of \$4,300. In your response you explained that Mr. Tkachuk had travelled to Washington, and who he had met with. What you didn't explain is why Mr. Sean Quinlan and Ron Larson travelled as well to Washington, and what was the purpose of their trip down there, and who were they meeting with while they were in Washington.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, what I did explain yesterday is that they were part of a delegation that went to Ottawa, and while they were in Ottawa talking about trade and lobbying the government with respect to capital gains tax and so forth. Then they went on to Washington. And they were talking and discussing things associated with trade and several

other things. So I explained yesterday why they made the complete circle.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — In your answer yesterday, Mr. Premier, you indicated that Mr. Tkachuk's trip to Washington was to meet with a John Zagame, who you described as a deputy White House liaison. Was that the only purpose of their trip to Washington?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, they met with several individuals, and a good part of the discussion was associated with trade, particularly the kinds of things that we do between the United States and Canada, and the discussions related to an awful lot of association between the U.S. and Canada, and they returned.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — You indicate that was their only reason for the trip. I wonder whether or not in fact this Mr. Zagame — who works in fact for the Republican National Committee, as indicated by a letterhead that I have here — that he in fact does not work for the government of the United States but is an employee of the Republican party of the United States.

Can you indicate whether or not this individual, and the meeting between the Republican Party and the Conservative Party of Saskatchewan, should in fact have been paid for by the taxpayers of the province?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, if I'm not mistaken, the President of the United States is Republican. All right. And members of his staff are Republican. And when you meet with a White House liaison, you're apt to meet with a Republican. And if you meet with the Prime Minister's office, you're apt to meet with a Conservative. And if you meet with somebody in my office, you're apt to meet a Conservative.

So as a result, when Mr. Tkachuk goes to meet the Prime Minister's staff, the member of the staff may be a member of the Conservative Party. And he meets with Mr. McKnight, who is the labour minister, and his staff, and he's lobbying him about various rules and regulations; he may be meeting with a Conservative.

So it's no surprise to me that there may some Republicans in the White House or have Republican White House liaisons when the President of the United States is Republican.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I have a supplement to the Premier. This individual works in fact not for the government, nor for Ronald Reagan, but for the national committee of the Republican party. He's not a government employee. It would be the same as your individual, Mr. David Tkachuk, flying to Ottawa to meet with the Conservative Party — not the government, but with the Conservative Party. And when you have an employee of yours flying to Washington to meet with the Republican Party, can you tell me whether or not you agree that the \$4,300 should be paid for by the Conservative Party and not by the taxpayers of the province?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to say that the President of the United States works for the Republican Party. In fact, he's their number one employee. Okay. The Republican Party of the United States happens to be in power in terms of the President. And if you meet with people in the United States associated with the White House, you're going to run into people who are Republicans. And as I said yesterday, when you make the trip and you go to Toronto and to Ottawa and to Washington, and back again, if you go into Washington when you're in Ottawa, that costs you about \$700 extra; and they made the trip when they've already been down East. And so don't tell me that it costs 4,300 because you know that's not the case, because they're already in Toronto and they're already in Ottawa, and so they can go to Washington and they can talk to people that obviously are Republican and obviously are conservative.

MR. KOSKIE: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask a question also of the Premier. Yesterday, Mr. Premier, you also read back an answer to questions we had raised in respect to last month's

week-long junket to London by your principal secretary, and your ad man, Spence Bozak, and the former PC candidate, Terry Leier. Your answer didn't explain why either Mr. Bozak or Mr. Leier accompanied the principal secretary in his trip. So I'd ask you: in what official capacity were they travelling, and why did the Saskatchewan taxpayers get in fact stuck with this bill?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, I believe I did indicate yesterday . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, I indicated yesterday that the Government of Saskatchewan is going to be offering a new issue of Saskatchewan Power savings bonds. And we want to make sure that we offer it as widely as we can and as correctly as we can.

Now we are going to make sure that the advertising is done correctly so as many people can participate as possible — because they're extremely popular, Mr. Speaker. If you go and look at the experience they're had in Great Britain, it's one of the best experiences. You can see when you look at the kinds of participation that the public is involved with.

Mr. Leier works for the Crown Management Board and is legal counsel, so he is going to be giving them advice in terms of how you deal with participating bonds in Crowns. And Mr. Bozak is involved in advertising and is one of the best advertising people we have in the province of Saskatchewan. This happens to be a Saskatchewan bond issue; so we're getting the best advice we can get internationally, bringing it home to Saskatchewan, and in fact, Mr. Speaker, I suggest the new Saskatchewan savings bond issue will be one of the most successful ever to hit the province of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, Hear!

MR. KOSKIE: — A further question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the London trip, Mr. Premier, you also failed to state all of the people that indeed travelled — because we mentioned three — and the expense, and what was the full cost of the junket to London. Can you, in fact . . . I wonder why you have evaded giving the total cost of the trip to London by your representatives, and I want to know whether there was any other than the three that we mentioned previously. What was the total cost?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — I don't believe you asked me for the cost the last time they asked. I will check and see if you did. I will give you the information. I'll go dig up the costs, and I'll provide you the information. I don't think you asked. You said, who went?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — A question to the Premier. And this deals with the Tkachuk trip to Washington, and it deals with the lengthy answer you gave yesterday which extended over 3.5 minutes.

During that entire time you did not name one employee of the Government of the United States, or one person associated with the Government of the United States in an employment capacity, who any of your staff spoke with.

Can you now give us the name of a single person employed by the Government of the United States which your staff talked to about trade?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, in 3.5 minutes yesterday I outlined what the individuals did in Ottawa and Washington, saying that they were talking to people who were associated with the Prime Minister's office, or in the White House, or associated with people that were dealing with trade, or various combinations of things that we might be looking to with respect to a new budget coming down here by the federal government.

I outlined those, and I provided the information. And the hon. member has it all.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Specifically, Mr. Speaker, I ask a supplementary question. Do you

know the name of a single employee of the Government of the United States with which your staff talked?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know the names of individuals employed by the United States government. I mean, I'm sure that there are thousands of people employed by the United States government. I don't know the names of people who work in Ottawa, in any great detail. So I described yesterday that the individuals met with people in Ottawa; they met with the Prime Minister's office and minister's office; and they met with White House staff. And as a result we discussed things associated with the budget and with trade, and that's why they went.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Premier. Can you give us either the name of the office of any single White House staffer with whom your staff talked?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, I gave the information yesterday with respect to the individuals that were visited in Ottawa, and talked to in Washington. If there are any more people that they talked to, I will bring all the names that they may have visited with or talked to the hon. member, so that he can have them.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I take that as the Premier taking notice that he will bring us the names of all of the employees of the Government of United States with whom your staff talked, Mr. Tkachuk and his associates, when they were in Washington. Do I understand you as taking notice of that?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, I will bring to the hon. member anybody that the individuals that went to Washington talked to in the United States, that may have been employed with, or around, or associated with, the Government of the United States.

Travel by Cabinet Ministers

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, supplementary. My question was not around, or associated with, but employees of the Government of the United States.

Mr. Premier, just so that we can underline that we hope we won't have to wait as long for that information as for some others, can you indicate why you have failed to answer questions about the cost and extent of your international trips more than two years ago? The same goes for the Deputy Premier. Between the two of you, you have taken dozens of trips. Can you explain why your personal staff has taken more than two years to add up the bills for your international trips, information which we asked for over two years ago?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has had his opportunity to discuss all my trips in my estimates in '82 and '83 and '84; and he'll have a perfect chance in 1985. And we've provided the information. If he wanted information we provided it, and so, I mean, you'll get another crack at me in estimates either this week or next week, or in the near future; and we'll go through all the things that I have available. Last year you received the information that we provided and you were satisfied with it — at least as far as I'm concerned you were. You quit asking any more questions. And we provided the information you wanted. Now we'll have more information because it's another year, and you'll get additional information, and you can ask your questions on that.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, there's no point in arguing with the Premier now, but I say we have never got copies of your expense accounts.

And I'll ask you one more thing. More than a month ago your Deputy Premier promised to table material as soon as possible associated with the travel to — and you will remember this — Hong Kong, Singapore, Peking, Changchung, Vienna twice, East Germany, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia, London twice, New York, Chicago, Denver, Boston, Palm Springs, Geneva, Zurich,

Frankfurt, Bonn, Cologne, and Paris, to name a few.

That was the question we asked more than a month ago. That was the question the Deputy Premier promised to give us the answer to. One month has gone by. When may we expect that information?

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is quite right when he says about a month ago I promised to deliver those returns as soon as possible. And he will also know that during that month I was away for almost all of it. And I was in Tokyo and Beijing and Changchung . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, I stopped in Shanghai to clear immigration, and then to Vancouver and then back to Saskatchewan. While we were there we signed the order for a 747 load of Holstein cattle.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, Hear!

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — We had, I think it was 10 private sector people in or delegation, who have . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please.

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, if I can answer the question, I will be dealing with my staff later this day and seeing what returns are ready, and I'm sure that most of them will be.

Highway Accident at Saskatchewan Landing Bridge

MR. LUSNEY: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Highways.

Mr. Speaker, about a week ago I asked the minister some questions pertaining to the tragic accident of May 27th on the Saskatchewan Landing bridge north of Swift Current. Specifically, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to know why the flagmen assigned to protect the crews on the highway and the travelling public, why those flagmen were positioned at the bottom of the hill rather than at the top of the hill where they could have warned the travelling public to test their brakes before they proceeded down the hill.

Has the minister checked this matter and can the minister tell us how many flagmen there were at the site and exactly where they were positioned?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd be pleased to share the information with the member opposite. It's a fairly detailed answer.

The flag persons were located 300 feet from each end of the bridge to stop approaching vehicles. There are a total of 27 signs within 2.5 kilometres of the bridge. In addition to the standard construction signing, special signs were in place advising traffic of one-lane bridge, be prepared to stop. A test brakes sign was located 2 kilometres from the bridge at the top of the hill. Flashing overhead traffic lights and a flashing arrow were in operation near the bridge, supplementing the flag persons. During periods when work is not being done on the bridge, the traffic signals operate automatically. Also, flag persons were wearing the proper attire. Mr. Speaker, the proper speed zone of 60 kilometres an hour was also posted.

Another part of the question, Mr. Speaker. The member had asked about other cars that had gone through, that flag persons had requested to stop. Yes, since commencement of the construction on May 6, 1985, one car was reported going by the flag person without stopping. The licence number of the vehicle was given to the RCM Police and the person was later charged.

On another occasion, a truck was unable to stop until he was past the flag person, but stopped

before entering the work area. The truck was found to have brake problems and did not leave until repairs were carried out.

In the other situation on question number three, Mr. Speaker: in general, in what situation are flag persons required? I believe this question was raised by the member from Shaunavon.

Flag persons are generally required when: one or both lanes are restricted due to maintenance or construction operations when traffic volumes are greater than 1,000 vehicles per day; one lane is restricted due to maintenance operation when traffic volumes are less than 1,000 vehicles per day if side distance is reduced to a vertical or a horizontal alignment; heavy construction equipment crossing highway; emergency situations such as accidents on the roadway.

Flag persons are not generally required when the conditions listed above do not exist, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 98 — An Act to amend The Management Accountants Act

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill, an Act to amend The Management Accountants Act.

Motion agreed to and, by leave of the Assembly, the Bill referred to the Standing Committee on Non-Controversial Bills.

Bill No. 99 — An Act to amend The Crop Insurance Act

HON. MR. MUIRHEAD: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Crop Insurance Act.

Motion agreed to and, by leave of the Assembly, the Bill referred to the Standing Committee on Non-Controversial Bills.

Bill No. 100 — An Act to Facilitate the Enforcement of Maintenance Orders and to Establish the Maintenance Enforcement Office

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague, the Minister of Justice, I would move first reading of a Bill to Facilitate the Enforcement of Maintenance Orders and to Establish the Maintenance Enforcement Office.

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

Bill No 101 — An Act respecting the Profession of Optometry

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of an Act respecting the Profession of Optometry.

Motion agreed to and, by leave of the Assembly, the Bill referred to the Standing Committee on Non-Controversial Bills.

MOTIONS

Referral of Bill to Standing Committee on Non-Controversial Bills

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Speaker, I would ask for leave of the Assembly to move the following motion:

June 5, 1985

That the order for second reading of Bill No. 97, An Act to amend The Critical Wildlife Habitat Protection Act (No. 2), be discharged and the Bill referred to the Standing Committee on Non-Controversial Bills.

I so move, seconded by my colleague, the Minister of Health.

Motion agreed to.

STATEMENT BY MR. SPEAKER

Ruling on Point of Order

MR. SPEAKER: — Before orders of the day, I would like to read a statement. Yesterday the member for Shaunavon raised a point of order to the effect that the Minister of Labour was refusing to answer an oral question under the sub judice convention.

I deferred my ruling in order to review the record. I refer all hon. members to *Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms*, Fifth Edition, page 118, paragraph 335, as follows:

Members are expected to refrain from discussing matters that are before the courts or tribunals which are courts of records. The purpose of this sub-judice convention is to protect the parties in a case awaiting or undergoing trial and persons who stand to be affected by the outcome of a judicial inquiry. It is a voluntary restraint imposed by the House upon itself in the interest of justice and fair play.

The member for Shaunavon is correct when he says that the sub judice convention applies only to cases awaiting or undergoing trial. Therefore there is no procedural reason under sub judice why the questions cannot be asked or answered.

However, a minister may decline to give an answer during oral question period. It is not the role of the Chair to judge the reason given by the minister. I refer all hon. members to *Beauchesne's* again, page 133, paragraph 363(1):

A Minister may decline to answer a question without stating the reason for his refusal, and insistence on an answer is out of order, with no debate being allowed. A refusal to answer cannot be raised as a question of privilege, nor is it regular to comment upon such a refusal. A Member may put a question but has no right to insist upon an answer.

I therefore rule that the point of order is not well taken.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 61 — An Act to amend The Department of Revenue and Financial Services Act

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Would the minister like to introduce his officials.

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, yes I would. To my right, my deputy minister, Mr. Keith Laxdal; behind me is Mr. Len Rog, the director of revenue policy and monitoring revenue division; and behind my deputy is Mr. Rob Dobson, the research officer, revenue policy and monitoring revenue division.

Clauses 1 to 5 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 6

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, I think clause 6 I now see as the clause which enacts Part III, which extends over an extensive period of the Bill, indeed all of the rest of the Bill, I guess. And it is clause 6 to which I wish to refer, and more particularly section 48, as it will be enacted by the Bill.

You will note that clause 6 enacts, will enact 47 and 48 viability for tax, and 48 is a substantial section with a good number of subsections. And I'm referring to subsections 5 and 6 and 7 and 8, all of which, it seems to me, give extensive powers to the staff of the minister and of the department.

Mr. Minister, as I indicated on second reading, I have no quarrel with there being relatively extensive powers in the hands of the minister and his staff to look at the books of persons who are taxpayers and who are thought to be defaulters, or to examine into other matters having to do with the taxpayers' affairs. But these sections extend much wider than that. And they say, for example — and I'm looking at subsection 6 here: "Every secured creditor who takes control or possession of the property of a collector . . ." must hold on to the property until he gets a clearance from the minister, in effect.

And I would use the example of the landlord who distrains for rent and seizes furniture — let's say, the counters and the other . . . scales and other equipment which a storekeeper ordinarily has, and which the landlord may seize, and you are saying that he must get a clearance from the minister before he can act on his right to sell that property or turn it into cash. And that's a new power, and I wonder why it's needed. I wonder why it's needed.

There are other new powers. The person who seizes must give notice to the minister — and this fellow doesn't owe a dime to the minister, let me be clear on this. We have a storekeeper who has failed in his business (I'll use that example), and he owes the minister money, and he owes a lot of other people money, as the usual circumstances when a business fails. And here is the landlord, and perhaps somebody's seizing under a conditional sale contract — whatever we call them now. He comes in and he seizes something else, and all of them now have an obligation to send a notice to the minister and await the minister's say-so before they can realize on their security.

And this is a lot of red tape, a lot of extra red tape. I can see why you're doing it, but I think it's overkill. I don't think we have needed it in the past, and there's no need to harass business people who are doing the normal thing, simply because the minister wants to have an extra safeguard. I think that we really have to ask ourselves that.

I note under subsection (8) that it says: "As soon as possible after receiving a notice, the minister shall advise the person whether any money is owing." But there's no time limit; it doesn't say, or in any case, in 14 days or anything like that. He sort of has to sit and wait, and there's no time limit in there.

I think that that's really not fair. Again these people don't owe a dime. They have not in any way transgressed a single law of the province of Saskatchewan. It is the person from whom you are trying to get money, and from whom they are trying to get money, that has been the transgressor. These are simple creditors who are trying to use their normal powers of realizing their security.

(14:45)

I'm not here, normally, to argue for secured creditors who are not out there seizing, but

they're business people like we all are, or like many people are. And unless this power is needed — unless this power to hold them up, to force them to send a notice, to force them to wait until the minister responds before they can act — then I think we should really question this.

Keep in mind that this is material which would ordinarily not sit around long before it was sold. If a car is seized or typewriters are seized or a panel delivery truck seized, efforts are normally taken to sell it, turn it into cash, and the longer it sits around, the more expense it is to somebody, and all it is is time spent waiting for the minister.

I ask the minister, shortly put, why he feels he needs these extra powers in order to enforce his rights. And has he had serious losses in the past; and is this something that he needs to have?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, the Leader of the Opposition has covered a broad spectrum of the Bill relating to the additional powers, as he puts it, that we are requesting under this Act. And rather than covering them all, I'm going to start with, I think, the first one that you talked about, which was the distress for rent. And my response to that is that, in fact, this is not the case.

It has always been our department's position that distress proceedings should have priority over tax arrears. The priorities established by section 48 and the certificate requirements only applied to secured creditors who take foreclosure or receivership sections. And since a landlord distraining for rent is not a secured creditor within the meaning of section 48 he is not bound by the requirements of that section.

Regarding the size of the problem that you highlighted in your questions, may I just tell you to what extent it is. In the 1983-84 fiscal year the department filed 43 receivership claims amounting to approximately \$440,000 and only recovered 3,900. In the most recent write-off of uncollectable accounts, of 211 accounts written off, 64 were due to receiverships and forced closure. These 64 accounts written off had a dollar value of \$442,845, or approximately 48 per cent of the \$932,000 written off.

I just add one more point to the argument, Mr. Chairman, that provisions are very similar that are currently in existence in five of eight other taxing provinces, including British Columbia, Manitoba, and Ontario, and, as well, it's under the federal Income Tax Act.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Minister, why do you say that a landlord isn't a secured creditor? There's no definition of secured creditor here in the part. There are some definitions, but there's no such one for secured creditor, and he's assuredly a creditor, and he has assuredly got some sort of security. Why would you think he wasn't a secured creditor?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, I refer the Leader of the Opposition to section 48, clause 1(e). There is a definition of a secured creditor:

... includes every assignee, liquidator, administrator, receiver, receiver-manager or other similar person who acts as an agent of, or on the instructions of, a secured creditor.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Minister, that won't do. I mean, that is obviously not a complete definition. It includes assignees and liquidators and receivers and receiver-managers, but it also assuredly includes mortgagees and the like. And this just means that you're making sure that assignees and bankruptcy and those people are secured creditors. But that was never meant to be a complete definition. It doesn't say it is; all it says is "includes." But on the face of it, it isn't, because it doesn't include the obvious secured creditors — mortgagees.

And I am saying, I want to know why you think landlords distraining for rent are secured creditors. I won't push the point, but I question your conclusion.

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well, Mr. Chairman, and hon. member, my officials tell me that the matter was referred to the Department of Justice who have advised my officials that a distraining landlord is not a secured creditor.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — One other part, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister: do you feel that . . . with respect to subsection (8), do you have a policy of saying that you will give back your notice in seven days or something, so that people aren't sitting around with a chattel which they have seized and had to simply hold it?

It could even be, you know, cattle or something like that; it's entirely possible, although unlikely. But people with relatively perishable goods mortgage them, and you will not want to keep people waiting an extensive length of time. I believe the clause should have a time period in it. If you're not going to put a time period in it, do you have a policy which indicates a given length of time?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, hon. member, the clearance certificate currently exists under the E&H Tax Act, and the turn-around time is seven days.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I want now to turn to the investigations and the offences and penalty sections, and I want to read them together. And I made the point during second reading, gave you some idea of what I was heading at here. First, there is no doubt that the investigatory powers are very wide. You can go in and require any taxpayer or collector to pay or collect tax. Fair enough. Or "any representative, agent, officer or employee on the business premises, to give them all reasonable assistance," to require any such person to attend at the place set by the minister, "for the purposes of assisting in the expeditious conduct of the audit . . ." And somewhere else it says, "require them to answer questions." And then it says, "Anyone who fails to answer any question which he is required to answer is liable for a fine of \$1,000, for a first offence; and in the case of subsequent offences, \$5,000."

And there are another series of sections which make it very unclear whether or not somebody who you were about to charge for tax evasion must answer questions. I would think that if it were to be interpreted that way, you would be in court pretty briskly. But I wonder whether you can tell me what you think the Act means, or what your legal advice is.

First, is it true that any employees on the business premises must assist you with the audit, must attend places which you name, and must answer questions which you put? You, meaning your representatives, because it's the minister or any person authorized by the minister.

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, . . . (inaudible) . . . the Leader of the Opposition; I think it would be simpler if I were to read to you the response I have in front of me, and it reads as follows:

Our previous investigation provisions were submitted to the Department of Justice for review, and it was determined that they were too extensive and not in compliance with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. A comprehensive revision of these sections was therefore undertaken in conjunction with the constitutional law branch of Saskatchewan Justice. These provisions were drafted by the Department of Justice, and it is felt that they are in compliance with the limitations on investigation powers imposed by the charter of rights and the recent case law.

In fact, these revised provisions reduce the powers their officers previously had. Our officers were previously empowered to enter any premises without consent, and they could seize records and documents without consent. Under the new provisions, the power to seize records and the power to enter private dwellings

without consent can only be used when so authorized by a search warrant.

And previously taxpayers were required to answer any questions put to them by our auditors. Now individuals are only required to answer questions that will aid the auditor in completing the audit or inspection, and no one is required to answer any question that is self-incriminating.

Furthermore, when an inspection or audit uncovers evidence of a possible offence, the auditor must immediately advise the taxpayer of his constitutional right to decline to answer any question relating to the possible offence.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, I thank the minister for that statement. I'm not sure I agree with all of it, but this is no point to get into a esoteric argument on whether or not there is sufficient protection there against self-incrimination.

It struck me that I could read sections which suggested to me otherwise. But if it's been approved by the Department of Justice, I'm not going to quarrel.

Clause 6 agreed to.

Clause 7 agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

(15:00)

Bill No. 62 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments resulting from the enactment of The Department of Revenue and Financial Services Amendment Act, 1985

Clauses 1 to 11 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 12

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I just wanted to check with you, Mr. Minister. Is this the same date as the other Bill?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Yes, it is.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — As Bill 61?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Yes.

Clause 12 agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill No. 77 — An Act to amend The Tobacco Tax Act

Clause 1

MR. LINGENFELTER: — If I could, I would just like to get from the minister the estimate of what this tax increase will mean on an annual basis to the treasury of the province. It's my understanding that it was several millions of dollars, and I just forget offhand what the finance minister said that increase in cigarettes and tobacco and cigars will mean in terms of the overall estimate of revenue increase for the year, annualized if you could.

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — From cigarettes — I think you said liquor as well — but cigarettes,

tobacco, and cigars, is \$9 million.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Minister, so the overall revenue from this source will be increased by \$9 million. Then what will the total amount be for this revenue source?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Just under \$70 million. In fact, our estimate is \$69.985 million.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — What would the increase in this tax be then in terms of percentage? Would it be around 15 per cent?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well if I had a calculator with me I'd give you the answer exactly. But nine over 60 million would be about, roughly, 15 per cent.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I just make the point, Mr. Minister, that . . . And I'm not arguing about increasing the tax on cigarettes and tobacco. And you would probably argue more than I, because I don't . . . I have no bad habits.

But, Mr. Minister, I make the point quite seriously: this bleating we hear from the government that there's no money for more programs, and there's no money for farmers to help fight grasshoppers; here you are increasing one particular tax 15 per cent. And what I would just like to point out is that the government is not getting less income from all the various sources that you deal with. And cigarettes are but one of them; alcohol the same way. And rightfully you should get more.

But what people have a hard time understanding is this: why, when we are increasing taxes in this area by the rate of 15 per cent, are we having to cut back on highway employees; why we're having to cut the highway budget by 14 per cent; and why we are having a massive deficit of \$1.2 billion. How is it when we continue to increase taxes in every area, and even bring new taxes in, that we're going in the hole and cutting programs and getting less services?

And I think the people of Saskatchewan are demanding the right to know why these massive tax increases in every area, at a time when everyone is told that we are in an era of restraint and that we should be expecting less; why is it that the government in every area is expecting more from the people of the province?

And here I say a 15 per cent increase . . . I'm not arguing the point of where you should put the taxes. If you were cutting taxes in other areas . . . But this is only one of many tax increases, and I wonder why 15 per cent was the magic number this year.

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I begin by saying that I won't discuss the member's bad habits. That could take quite some time. But I will say that the member obviously didn't listen too well to the Minister of Finance when he delivered his budget, and he didn't understand some of the initiatives that were taken by our government in improved and increased services. And I could go on with the list; I haven't brought one with me, but looking at Education, we look at Health, we look at Continuing Education, and we look at all of the other . . . Agriculture, you know.

I could come in and give the member a pretty good speech, I guess, on the initiatives that have been taken by our government in the increased spending in all of these areas. But really I don't think this is the time to debate that, although I'm prepared to do so.

The Minister of Finance outlined a very extensive increased spending program in all of these areas. If the member from Shaunavon were to make that statement, for example, to the president of the university, I'm sure he'd be laughed at. And I think if he was to quote that statement to other people in the educational field or health field of agriculture and so on, they would have a real difficulty in accepting the kind of criticism that he is expounding today. It isn't so.

He is misrepresenting the facts and misrepresenting what was delivered in the budget which, in my opinion, was an excellent budget. And we talk about 15 per cent on this one item — puts us certainly not in the high bracket when it comes to taxes on that area compared to other provinces, but in the middle.

We took that money, and we're taking that money to put into programs, as was outlined by the Premier, as outlined by the Minister of Finance in his budget address, in those areas that I think that the people of Saskatchewan want us to do that, to increase the spending.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I would disagree with you on one point. I'm not disagreeing that you're taking the taxes now, but if you look at the spending that you're talking about doing in Health and Education, it's all five years down the road that you plan on doing it.

These five-year plans — and I'm not sure where you got the idea of these five-year plans. The people out in my constituency are telling me where you got them, and the member from Morse will know what his friends in his community are saying about five-year plans, but they don't have a lot of faith in them.

But what I am saying to you, Mr. Minister, that if we look in health, for example — and I just use one example, because you brought it up, of how they increase spending — we see in the area of nursing homes the spending is going from 5 million last year to 4 million this year . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . From 5 . . . Well he brought it up. He was saying about how the spending was increasing. But with all these tax increases, you're finding 1 million less for nursing homes in 1985 than you had in 1984.

For farm programs, you'll know that there's no money for helping farmers who are facing a major frost and grasshopper infestation. There's no help. But the taxes in this tax here are going up 15 per cent. But in the area of helping farmers in purchasing automobiles, you're putting a 5 per cent sales tax on used automobiles. And what people are saying is, what are we getting in return?

And I say to you that with a \$1.2 billion deficit and massive tax increases, and no programs to help farmers who are in a desperate situation, and many people who are being told that their salaries have to be frozen — teachers, nurses, government employees — I think they would not argue with that if you were freezing taxes that you are taking. But you're doing something quite different.

You're demanding a 15 per cent increase on cigarettes. You're demanding a new flat tax of 1 per cent on anything over 10,000. You're demanding a sales tax on used automobiles. You're demanding a massive increase in property improvement grants on farm land and people's homes. And we're also running up a huge deficit.

Most business people are saying: how can they do that? How is it possible for a government to increase taxes in a massive way, run a massive deficit, and then say there's no money for the people who work for them? Because that's not logical. It simply means one thing: either there's too much money going out to your friends, your political staff, salaries for ministers to . . . and expenses to fly around the world, or mismanagement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order.

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, I don't know how we got into this debate, and I think that the member from Shaunavon and I are going to agree to disagree on what is in the budget and what we have done. And certainly I will argue the point, and I'll debate it with him at any time.

He refers to 15 per cent, and he takes that out of context, thinking that we're 15 per cent increase in all taxes. Well we can take \$15 million, which is approximately what we're talking about,

and we're talking about half, less than half of 1 per cent of the budget. Less than half of 1 per cent of the expenditures.

So don't leave the impression when you're speaking about percentages — because, you know, I can do a lot of things with percentages — don't leave the impressions that everything has gone up 15 per cent, which is absolute nonsense. And that's exactly what you're attempting to do in your debate. Then you'll have to as well bring in the minister's staff. Let me tell you, Mr. Chairman, that this government has fewer people on ministerial staff than what you ever did have. In spite of the fact that we have more ministers, we have fewer people working for ministers than what your government did.

So you know, don't take out of context and don't try to twist facts to your satisfaction or to your advantage. It doesn't work. Because the idea of throwing out figures like you have just done is irresponsible on your part and is misleading to the public what we are in fact doing.

We talk about nursing homes which you talked about a few minutes ago. The Minister of Health recently, Mr. Chairman, announced, I can't remember the figure but I believe over 1,500 new beds — over 1,500 new beds. In your term of office there weren't any. There weren't any. And all of a sudden we're . . .

Mr. Chairman, I agree with you. This isn't the time to debate that. We're talking about taxes. We're talking about an increase in tobacco tax. And I'm not sure from listening to the member whether he's disagreeing with that concept of increasing that tax or collecting money in that area. But that's what we've done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order. I'd ask the members on both sides of the House to keep their comments to Bill No. 77, and it is An Act to amend The Tobacco Tax Act. I would ask members to keep their comments on this Bill.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. MARTENS: — Could I ask leave, Mr. Chairman, to introduce some guests? Thank you. Mr. Chairman, it's an honour for me to introduce through you to the legislature this afternoon, 14 students from Rosenhof, Saskatchewan. They are accompanied by their chairpersons, Mrs. Banman, Mrs. Wiebe, Mrs. Janzen, and Mrs. Henderson, and their bus driver, Mr. Dyck.

I just want to comment on the teacher that they have there is Mr. Cliff Nickel, who's also a friend of the Minister of Supply and Services; who used to teach up in the Meadow Lake area; and I am sure they could share a lot of stories together.

I want the Assembly to join with me in welcoming them here this afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, Hear!

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 77 — An Act to amend The Tobacco Tax Act

Clause 1 (continued)

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Chairman, I don't want to belabour the point a long time about the increase in the 15 per cent on cigarettes and tobacco and cigars. There'll be many people in the province who will say that it's more than enough compared to Alberta or compared to some other provinces; that the taxation is too high; and I'm not making argument for them. But what I'm saying is that the overall taxation in this province including on tobacco and cigarettes — and we can argue whether or not the tax increase in other areas are more or less than 15 per cent, but I dare say on used automobiles it's more than a 15 per

cent but I dare say on used automobiles it's more than 15 per cent. . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order. I've asked the members on both sides of the House to relate their questions and comments to the Bill that's before the committee.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — The question to the minister that I would like to ask is: have you got a list of taxation of cigarettes and cigars and tobacco from other provinces? If you have a list, I wouldn't mind getting that from you. I think that you're probably accurate in saying we're somewhere in the middle — probably well ahead of Alberta, and well behind Quebec and Manitoba and a couple of others. But if you have that list, I wouldn't mind having a look at it.

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, I'd be more than happy to send the member a copy of it. I was right in saying that it was somewhere in the middle. We're at 77 cents on a package, and the low, Alberta, is 37 cents; British Columbia, 68; Manitoba, 77.5; Newfoundland, \$1.19. So I'll send you the list.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Minister, sort of a final question. Can you tell me whether or not . . . I know Alberta has been jacking theirs up a little bit over the last year or two, but are you having a problem in enforcing the importation of tobacco, cigars, cigarettes from our neighbouring province of Alberta? Can you tell us any strategies you have to deal with that — any changes that you're looking at or have implemented at the present time?

(15:15)

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Chairman, the member raises an interesting point. Let me say that when you have a 40-cent differential in the tax, there's no question that we are always going to be concerned about smuggling. However, because of our concern, we last summer did a review of this problem and we discovered that there wasn't a very serious problem existing. However, that certainly isn't conclusive that there isn't a problem.

But I'll just probably say one more thing and that is that we will follow up on any leads that we have with respect to cases of smuggling. But certainly we are aware of the situation. We are trying to monitor it as best as possible, and to avoid any concerns or any problems that could arise from that concern.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 and 3 agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill No. 78 — An Act to amend The Corporation Capital Tax Act

Clauses 1 to 8 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill No. 44 — An Act to amend The Venture Capital Tax Credit Act

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

HON. MR. KLEIN: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to introduce my officials. To my right, Al Dalton who's the director of The Venture Capital Tax Credit Act; Tony Koschinsky, our Crown solicitor; and Jim Zatulsky, our financial consultant.

Clauses 1 to 7 inclusive agreed to.

June 5, 1985

HON. MR. KLEIN: — Mr. Chairman, I'll move to report the Bill, and I'd like to thank my officials.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 61 — An Act to amend The Department of Revenue and Financial Services Act

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — I move the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a third time.

Bill No. 62 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments resulting from the enactment of The Department of Revenue and Financial Services Amendment Act, 1985

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

Motion agreed to and Bill read a third time.

Bill No. 77 — An Act to amend The Tobacco Tax Act

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — I move this Bill now be read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a third time.

Bill No. 78 — An Act to amend The Corporation Capital Tax Act

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — I move this Bill now be read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a third time.

Bill No. 44 — An Act to amend The Venture Capital Tax Credit Act

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

Motion agreed to and Bill read a third time.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE

SUPPLY AND SERVICES

Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 13

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Chairman, just to my immediate right is Mr. Otto Cutts, the deputy minister of Supply and Services; directly behind me is Mr. Ken Brehm, the executive director of administration; and behind Mr. Cutts is Fred Altenhof, the executive director of planning and development. There are various other officials here in the House in the back row whom I will introduce as they come forward if the need arises.

I have, Mr. Chairman, a report which I would like to give. I think I'll dispense with that at this early stage and maybe sometime before the estimates are over I'll give my report in terms of what the department has been up to since we last reported to the committee.

Item 1

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Chairman, the minister makes a terrible threat of giving one of the most boring speeches that we will ever have heard in this Assembly, and therefore members of the opposition will promise to be very crisp with their questions so the public and the people of the Assembly don't have to suffer through that. I looked at the speech and it has to be two inches thick.

I wonder about the expense of hiring staff, high-paid political staff, to write these kind of speeches. And it gets me to my first question. I wonder, Mr. Minister, whether or not you could give to me a list of your personal staff and the increases they have received over the past 18 months. And I want to be clear about increases they would have received over the last 18 months.

(15:30)

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Chairman, what I will provide to the hon. member; the personal staff as it relates to my own office, and not all of them are in the Department of Supply and Services or paid by the Department of Supply and Services, but I will provide that to the hon. member. This is the sheet with their salaries as they are now and I will send over the increases in a few minutes.

Mr. Chairman, I just reiterate, the increases that I will send over are strictly incremental increases, so it should be noted that they are strictly incremental.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well I just want to get this straight. Do you have a Patrick Jarrett, 2,928 per month, a ministerial assistant; and Ernie Gaschler, at 3,298 a month; and Mona Etcheverry for 2,037; and Ruth Gaura for 2,445 a month, ministerial assistant; and Karen Banner for 1,645 a month, ministerial assistant B.

I wonder, Mr. Minister, can you outline the duties of each of these individuals.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Well, Mr. Chairman, as I indicated to the House a few moments ago, these people are in my office as it relates to the other duties that I have besides the Department of Supply and Services, that being the Public Service Commission, which I believe we'll be dealing within days, anyway, here in the House; the Liquor Board responsibility that I have; the membership on treasury board; the legislative review committee, etc., etc.

Two of the people that are listed are secretaries, ministerial secretaries — Ruth Gaura is a ministerial secretary; Karen Banner is the assistant secretary. Three of the people are ministerial assistants in the traditional connotation of what that means. So three, in what the hon. member will have referred to as executive assistants, two of them are secretaries.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well that's what I wanted to know, is whether or not any of these were secretarial staff. And I think you've pointed out that the two individuals out of this group are, in fact, secretaries.

Mr. Minister, have you got the list of the increases handy there now? As your staff is writing out those numbers I'll ask you another question. And it has to do with the number of trips and the description of the trips taken out of the province by you and the officials in your department. Can you give me the list and cost and destination and who travelled with yourself or the staff of your department when they would be travelling out of province?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Yes, to speed up the committee, yes, Mr. Chairman, I'll provide that for the hon. member. It's coming. As soon as the sheet is out I'll send it over.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — The other thing I would like to know, Mr. Minister, is whether or not any other members of your staff, besides yourself . . . I know that cabinet ministers are allowed to purchase an automobile and have one at their disposal. Are there any other members of your staff (I believe your deputy, but I'm not sure — maybe you would clarify that) would have an automobile? And can you tell me whether or not anyone else is assigned a vehicle? Now in your department you would have access to Central Vehicle Agency car pool, and I understand that, but are there any who would have cars assigned to them?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — No, what the member is referring to is what's been called for a good number of years: executive option one vehicles. That's only myself and the deputy minister, and that is the extent of it.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — And could you give me a description of the vehicle that you have and your deputy has? And also I would like to know what the arrangement is for the upper limit when you trade your car in, your luxury automobile that you're allowed . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, well whatever it is. Can you tell me the amount of money that ministers and deputy ministers are now allowed to spend on an automobile? And I believe that the provincial taxes do not apply, but I would like to know what that amount is.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Chairman, just while I'm — for the hon. member from Shaunavon — while I'm receiving the information as it relates to automobiles, I will just give the information as it relates to my staff. He mentioned the names of the people. Karen Baner is a new employee in the department, in the office. There's no change in her salary. Ruth Gaura, there is no change in her salary. Mona Etcheverry is a new employee as a matter of months ago so there's no change there. Ernie Gaschler is a new employee as well, a change there. Patrick Jarrett, there is a change, an incremental change from 2,696 to 2,810. And I just got a . . . Well, it's on the record there, so that's good.

So that cover it. No change in the case of four of the people of the five that I listed. Patrick Jarrett from 2,696 to 2,810, incremental increases, and that's in the last 18 months as the member had asked.

As it relates to the cars, the luxury automobile that the member from Shaunavon refers to that I have access to is an '82 Pontiac Parisienne that was driven by his former colleague, the Mr. Tchorzewski, the former minister of Finance. Mr. Cutts, the deputy minister of Supply and Services, has an '82 Pontiac as well.

Just one point further in terms of the prices. The dollar allotment is agreed annually by . . . for 1985 model vehicles, option one, that's a minister equivalent type of car, \$14,450; option two, which is a deputy minister equivalent or that description, \$13,000.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Now this Patrick Jarrett who you referred to here, what was his salary increased to?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Twenty-eight ten per month.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well how is it that the note you sent over said his salary was 2,928?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — I'm sorry. In the last 18 months there were two incremental increases. One, 2,696 was what he started in the last 18 months. He increased to 2,810, and then he increased to 2,928. I'm sorry.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — And Mr. Jarrett then would have received in the last 18 months an increase of about 11 per cent, 10, 11 per cent. Would that be it?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Eight.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — The increase has gone from 2,610 to 2,298, which is certainly . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Pardon? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . 2,696 to 2,928 — 250. Well it looks like around 10 per cent to me, but it may not be. About 10 per cent.

The other thing that I had wanted was your travel. Do you have your travel, out of province travel ready for me now?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — I went on . . . there were three trips outside the province for this minister, Mr. Chairman: to Ottawa and to Toronto, or Ottawa via Toronto. It was a signing ceremony with the former minister of federal supply and services, Mr. LaPointe; and in Toronto to meet with the Hon. Bernier who is the Ontario Minister of Northern Affairs, and I had responsibility for Northern Affairs at that time. That was on May 24 to 28 of '84, I believe.

On September 10 to the 14 of '84, to Whitehorse in the Yukon for the federal-provincial meeting of ministers of Supply and Services from across the country — federal and provincial. And on November 21 to 23, to Victoria to meet with the officials of B.C.Housing. The officials with me on the Whitehorse trip were Mr. Brehm, Mr. Cutts, and Mr. Jarrett; the Victoria, B.C. trip were Mr. Brehm, Mr. Cutts, and Mr. Gaschler. And I believe that's it. That's the full report of my trips outside the province.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Yes. You'll send that complete list across so I can . . . I didn't write them all down, and I may have some questions, if you'd send that to me.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'll send a list across of what I've reiterated.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — The other list that I would want, and I want to point out here before I start, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, that I say the opposition is very disappointed in taking your word for granted when it comes to executive aircraft, because last year in estimates you gave your word that you would send me within a week, I believe, a complete list of the executive aircraft flights, which I never got. And therefore today I would like to . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, I never did. I had never received, nor did any member of our caucus receive, and I would ask you now if you would send across the list, not only for this year, but as well the list for last year because at no time did I get a list. Now, if you sent it, it got waylaid; it got shanghaied on the way to my office. And I would like to get a list not only for these estimates but for the previous year as well.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Chairman, what the hon. member is saying in terms of the report not being in his office — the report certainly was sent to his office. But I want the hon. member to look carefully now — and this is a blue book with the executive air service flight details for 1984-85. Okay? Eighty-four, five. And it's coming across the House now, and I want all of you here to witness that the hon. member from Shaunavon is receiving this.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I want to say to the minister, this is the '84-85 list, and I would like the '83-84. If you'll give that commitment of the one that I didn't receive last year, I'd appreciate it.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — I'm sure we have another copy of what we sent you before, and I'm very convinced that we did send it, but I will certainly supply that to the hon. member.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — One other list I need is the complete list of rental space that you would have agreements on in the province of Saskatchewan. And that's a fairly extensive list, but if you have it I'll get that from you.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Chairman, what I send the hon. member, as has been the case in past years as well, a computer print-out of the space inventory, both owned and rental, with the

code giving the various designations. And I believe — well in fact, I am sure — that the hon. member will find this more than satisfactory. I'm convinced o fit.

(15:45)

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Minister, can you give me the list of your deputy minister's salary in the year under review, and any increase that would have occurred there. And also what I would like is the expenses that were incurred in the past year by your deputy. Can you get that for me?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Yes. The deputy minister's monthly salary is \$6,049. It did not change throughout the year since we last reported to the committee, and I will provide a list of the expenses as well.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Can you give me the date of the last change in salary of your deputy minister, when the last increase was — increment — because I have different numbers here.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — I'm just informed they'll make a call to make sure that we give the right date on that. But yes, I'll provide that to you this afternoon.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Minister, the other part of the question was his expenses. Have you got those handy? I've got a couple of questions out of them that I would like to ask you, and if you have that list I wonder if you could send it across.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Yes, Mr. Chairman. The expenses of the deputy in the year were 6,849.99, and the reimbursement for books and membership reimbursement of various associations and so on, that our department would be tied with . . . I'll just send it over. I'll just jot it down here.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — And would this include the travel expenses or not? What are we looking at here? The entertainment, you say, is \$6,800 — \$6,800 — and books and memberships, 237. What about travel expenses? What would they add up to?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — I'll provide that within a few minutes here now, just as soon as they put the sheet together.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — One thing I would like to ask you: is there . . . How many people in the last 18 months would have been dismissed, would have been dismissed from your department? Have you got . . . last 18 months. Have you got a list of the number of people and the settlements that have been made, and those outstanding for the last 18 months?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Could I just get a clarification? What does the member mean by dismissed? People who have left the service of our department, or what do you mean by . . .

MR. LINGENFELTER: — What I would like is a list of people who have left your department over the last 18 months who would have received a severance or some settlement as a result of their leaving. This would not include, assume — I assume; I don't know that — I wouldn't assume someone being promoted to another department. But what I'm looking for is people who would have left and got some sort of a settlement from out of your department.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — I will . . . Just to clarify then, you don't mean early retirement, do you? Or do you just mean settlement on the basis of termination or . . . Okay, we will put that together and I will give you that within a few minutes as well.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Minister, I want to go out to an important issue in Saskatoon, and it's one which I was asking you questions on, I believe, last Friday when question period ended, and it has to do with the construction of a new nursing home in Saskatoon.

The building, which I believe will cost in the area of \$21 million — can you give me an update on whether or not, whether the contract has been signed, and whether or not . . . If you can give me the detail on who was awarded the contract on the construction of that building.

You will know that there has been some debate about the building of this 238-bed nursing home which was first announced in 1981 and is now reannounced every year since then, up to the budget of 1985. And I believe you are now getting around to turning sod on it. But what I would like to know is: who is the person who will actually be doing the construction, and what is the final numbers on the contract?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Okay. Mr. Chairman, for the hon. members, the Saskatoon nursing home project, which we will be . . . The contract will be awarded, I guess I would say, within two and a half weeks. I should tell the hon. member I did mention to him in question period the other day that construction, as it relates to the actual work on the site, on the ground, will be by the 15th of July. We are now down to two, and there are some very minor alterations being done to the design. We're down to two from the previous short list of four, as it relates to some program needs. We're down to two developers, or two proponents, and the one will be selected. One of them will be selected, like I say, within two and a half weeks, and that's giving us . . . It may well be before that, but that two and a half weeks is firm.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Can you give me the list of the four main contractors who you would be saying were in the longer list, and then the two who are on the remaining short list?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Chairman, the four proponents that were short-listed are the following: the Remail group, which we have known as the Remail group; another one was the Normandale group; the Boychuk group; and the Wolfe group.

The four are the Remail group — just to repeat — the Remail group, the Normandale group, the Boychuk group, and the Wolfe group.

Just to clarify, these are the names that they are known by, but each of the proponents . . . Some of them are, you know, they're contractors who have entered into agreements in terms of the proposal with architects and others, so when I say the group, that includes various professions in the group for the proposals.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I would like to know as well, in the site planning, in preparation, I wonder over the last couple of years — and let's say the last 18 months — have you had representation from groups, or petitions from groups in Saskatoon that would have wanted you to move the location of that nursing home to a different site? In particular here I'm referring to what is known as the old sanatorium site in Saskatoon. I have received a number of letters over the last month from various groups, and names on a petition, asking that the site location be changed, and that it be moved to the old sanatorium site.

And I wonder, Mr. Minister . . . I know the Minister of Health has been involved because a lot of the information has been carbon-copied to him, he being the Minister of Health, who I think many of the public assume would be building the nursing home. And have you been in touch with those groups in Saskatoon, and what has your response been? Have you met with them or discussed with them, or talked to them about future planning of a new nursing home on the sanatorium site that would be included in the program? Or what attempt have you made to deal with this issue?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Chairman, we have during the course of last year, since we last reported to the committee, I would say that there have been some representations from various people in Saskatoon regarding the site that we chose as we set out the proposals. And the sanatorium site was not part of those discussions, I would say to the hon. member. There was

what is known as the — at least in or discussions — as the Lawson Heights site. There was some discussion as to whether it should be in Fairview or in the Lawson Heights area.

But as it relates to the sanatorium site, it's something that has come up just very recently, and I know that the Minister of Health has received some representation.

But I would also say to the hon. member, I have just reiterated how far we are along in terms of the proposals and the proposals in the architectural design, and each of those is on the basis of the site which we chose in Fairview. And we're a long way along now in terms of doing anything else. And we believe very strongly, Mr. Chairman, that the site in Fairview is an excellent site, and will serve the residents of Saskatoon and, indeed, of a good deal of Saskatchewan very well.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I want to follow that up a little further on the site location. You will know that there are many reasons why the site of the old sanatorium site would be looked at as, I suppose, at the present time as the most usable from the senior citizens' point of view.

And I would like to know whether or not at the present time there are any plans to construct another nursing home on the sanatorium site, given the fact that the most recent numbers that I have seen would indicate that there's 1,300 people on a waiting list in Saskatoon. There's a short emergency list, I believe, of about 350 people, and then a longer list of 1,300 waiting to get into nursing homes in Saskatoon. And when I phoned up there on Friday they said the people who were "emergency" had to wait between six and seven months, and those other 1,300 had to wait between three and four years.

Now when you have a waiting list of 1,300 and you're building 238, if you put it into place right now you would then have a waiting list of 1,100 which is much more than it was, Mr. Minister, when you people took office in 1982, even after the new nursing home is built.

What I'm wondering at the present time: have you got plans or discussions going on between the Minister of Health and yourself, and when might we see the announcement of a new nursing home at the sanatorium site?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Well, Mr. Chairman, at the present time we are not discussing a nursing home on the sanatorium site, if that's the very direct question the member asked.

I would say to the hon. member, that while he reiterates his feelings about the waiting lists in nursing homes and so on, that's fine and I'm really pleased to see this new found concern for the waiting lists and for the senior citizens of our province. The member opposite, who was minister of social services at one time, and at that time social services had responsibility for special care homes and so on, built nothing in Saskatoon in terms of special care homes — nothing. Nor was there anything . . . And when there was something under discussion, it was just very that — under discussion. And then he asks about the site, Fairhaven site, I would say to the hon. member that the Fairhaven site was a site that had been approved by people in your government, so I mean there shouldn't be a point of any kind of contention here.

But in terms of . . . In two and a half weeks — about two and a half weeks, or within that two and a half weeks — when we announce the proposal, show the plan, and show to Saskatoon and the province just what will be built in the way of a special care home in Saskatoon — 238 beds — and I would invite the hon. member to come to that ceremony, because what the people of Saskatoon will know on that day, and most of them know now, the moratorium on the construction of nursing homes that was imposed by the former NDP government is off.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, Hear!

MR. LINGENFELTER: — The minister will know that the three and a half year moratorium on nursing home construction in Saskatoon hasn't been ended, because as he ably told us today,

there is no contract awarded, which is different than what he has been telling people over the last couple of weeks — that the moratorium is very much in place in Saskatoon, because there hasn't been a nursing home built since you took office.

And I want to say, as well, that in Regina where the nursing home freeze has been in place for three and a half years, there are no plans for nursing home construction. So when you talk about ending a freeze on nursing home construction in the two major cities where the waiting list has doubled — I want to say to you, doubled since you took office — I'm not so sure that the people of the province will be wanting to wait for the government of the day to plan the nursing homes for Regina. Because obviously the waiting list has doubled in Regina and Saskatoon, and you are now planning 200 beds which will not even deal with the increase that has occurred since you came in to office.

(16:00)

And I would just like to point out to you, Mr. Minister, and ask you the simple question: whether or not you'd be prepared to meet with the group of concerned citizens who would like to see the site changed to the sanatorium site.

I wonder if you and I, in a spirit of co-operation, could go to Saskatoon, could fly up to Saskatoon and meet with the concerned group of citizens in the sanatorium site location, if we could meet with them at a public meeting to debate the site location, because I'm sure that they would appreciate that very much. And I wonder if you would make the commitment to come with me to a public meeting to meet with these concerned citizens.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — No, Mr. Chairman, I certainly will make a commitment that our department will continue, as we have in the past, to meet with people who are expressing a point of view, whether it's location, or the construction of various buildings for various purposes in the province. There's no question our people will meet with them.

I will not say to the hon. member that I'll go to a public meeting with the hon. member from Shaunavon. He had his chance when he was in office to have public meetings and to make announcements about the construction of special care homes.

I should point out to the House, Mr. Chairman, that the last special care home . . . Now this is a very significant thing to remember, for members of the NDP caucus to even suggest anything like this. The last special care home built in this province by the government is known as the Palliser home in Swift Current. It was built in 1964, when the NDP party was not in government. That's the last one that was built in this province.

When we're talking about special care homes, we're talking about the people with very special needs — level 4, those kinds of very special needs, with some very special . . . I'm talking about special care homes and it should be . . . and the member from Shaunavon should know that. So for the hon. member from Shaunavon, a member of the NDP, to talk about putting in this delay tactic, talking about location.

We've seen it in Saskatoon. Saskatoon members, all 10 of whom are on this side of the House, all 10 of whom represent the people of Saskatoon, and they almost break down laughing, in this House and elsewhere, to hear members of the NDP party, whether they be nominated candidates in Saskatoon or elected people *pro tem* here in the legislature of Saskatchewan, who will talk about the location — whether it be the special care home, because it's a delay tactic, whether it be the arena which they did not ever suggest that they would build in Saskatoon, another delay tactic.

All these delay tactics coming up and saying, what's the reason for a new arena? What's the reason for a special care home now? Let's delay this another year. Let's put it over here. Strictly a

delay tactic by members of the NDP who think that they can make political points on the construction of special care homes for the senior citizens of the city of Saskatoon.

All 10 members in this House are in this party, and all 10 members after the next election will be from this party because of the tactics of members opposite. So keep it up; I hope you will.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — The minister should inform the Premier that he wants all 10 members from Saskatoon returned, because the Premier seems to have a different opinion of that. The Premier seems to think that some of the members who now sit in the House from Saskatoon should be changed. And I'm not saying the Premier would like to have NDP members from Saskatoon, but the press is carrying interesting stories that there are members from Saskatoon who should be changed.

But I want to ask you one question, Mr. Minister. You indicated there wasn't a nursing home built in Saskatchewan, a special care home, since 1964 — a special care home. And that isn't true. And I would like you to stand up in the Assembly and clarify that, because it simply isn't true. And if your deputy is telling you that there hasn't been a nursing home built since 1964, then he's misleading the House. And you should know better, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, because obviously in your own constituency there have been nursing homes built since 1964.

And I'd like you to take this opportunity . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well that's what a nursing home is. If Myers is so ridiculous that he doesn't know what a nursing home is . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order. I'd ask the members to refer to other members by their seat or by their position.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I will refer to . . . I could refer to him by his nickname, but I won't. Stonehead is not a . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — I'd ask the member to retract that statement.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Chairman, I never referred to the member. I simply said the words . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Are you challenging the Chair? I'd ask the member to retract that statement.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Chairman, referring if . . . I didn't refer to him, but if you believe that I referred to that member from Saskatoon as a cement head, I will withdraw it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — The member shouldn't have been using those words at all. It's unparliamentary, and the debate continues.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Chairman, just to clarify, and you know, there's no use getting into the thing about . . . I did not say nursing homes. I said special care homes. Special care homes are level 4 facilities . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, just . . . and the one that's being built in Saskatoon and what the hon. member fails to realize, this special care facility in Saskatoon, 238 beds, is just short of an acute care hospital. That's the kind of care that'll be provided for the people in very dire need. Now that type of facility has not been built in this province as a separate level 4 facility since the one was built in Swift Current in 1964, and not under your jurisdiction.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Chairman, obviously the minister is backtracking here. Are you saying that this is a level 4 institution, the one that you're building in Saskatoon? Are you saying that by the Minister of Health's definition this is a level 4 facility? I'd have the minister know there's no such classification in Saskatchewan as level 4. That was changed a number of years

ago, and the minister is . . . It's no wonder he is so far behind in saying there's been no nursing home since 1964.

I wonder where he would assume that all the nursing homes that have been built since 1964 came from. There have been literally thousands of nursing home beds built since 1964, and I agree, some of them by your government, some of them by the Liberal government, and a good number of them by the New Democratic government.

The members opposite seem to believe that there was no history in this province before 1982, that the population never grew from 1905 to 1982. They really believe that — that oil revenue in 1979 wasn't at record levels, and that there were no nursing homes built before 1982. I don't know where you think they came from.

But, Mr. Minister, between 1964 and 1982 there were hundreds and hundreds of special care — and I use the word "special care" because you're not accurate when you say there were no special care beds built — there were hundreds of them. And you are simply trying to mislead the House when you say there was any attempt by any government between 1964 and 1982 to stop the construction of nursing home beds, because that simply isn't accurate.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I mean this is . . . There's no reason whatever in these Supply and Services estimates for us to get into an argument about the semantics. And I know the hon. member from Shaunavon had his short stint in the Department of Social Services and he's into what's the definition of this and what's the definition of that.

But I will say to the hon. member and I will say to him that the people in this province, families in this province who have members of their families who are in need of acute care, whether you want to call it level 4 or whether there is a designation level 4 — and I know my colleague, the Minister of Health has that very well in hand and I will apologize to the House if I have not got everything relating to level 3 and 4 in hand.

But I do have this in hand, Mr. Chairman, is that the families of the people of this province who are in need of acute care which will be provided in this facility in Saskatoon, 238 beds, are very, very appreciative of the initiatives of this government and look with a good deal of disdain on the lack of initiatives when the former government.

And no more needs to be said, Mr. Chairman, except that in two and half weeks, I would invite the hon. member to come to the sod turning or whatever takes place at that time, and watch the feelings in the city of Saskatoon, as yet another construction project initiated by this government takes place in the city of Saskatoon.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm sure the people of Saskatoon who listened with interest in 1982 to your budget, in 1983, in 1984, promised the same nursing home in Saskatoon, exactly the same one, and the minister now says in 1985 he's announced it again, but he hasn't got around to turning the sod or taking in tenders or accepting a contract. After four or five years people begin to doubt. Believe it or not, after you've promised it to be built for four budgets, they are beginning to wonder.

I would like to ask the minister, and I am still waiting for the travel expenses of your deputy minister, and I wonder if you'll send them over now.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — The travel of the deputy is still out so I will send the . . . As it relates to the three trips that I outlined of my own earlier, I will send that over with the expenses and the salary in terms of the last date when there was an increase for the deputy of Supply and Services, May 5 of '83. I will send those two sheets over now.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Mr. Minister, I have a question with respect to the number of vehicles,

central vehicle agency. How many vehicles do we have at the current time where — you can use March 31 of '85 if you like — how many vehicles do we have?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Can you clarify? Do you mean all types of vehicles, as trucks and etc.?

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Perhaps you can break it down. How many trucks and how many cars?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, I have a sheet. The class of vehicle is just broken down by the class and groups and so on. I'll send it to the hon. member from Regina Centre.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Do these figures include vehicles that are used by the Crown corporations, in particular SPC and Sask Tel?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — They include all central vehicle agency purchased vehicles for the various Crowns — Power, Tel, etc.

(16:15)

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Mr. Minister, I wonder if any consideration has been given to using propane or natural gas in these vehicles? I know that people who I've talked to, who have propane or natural gas, tell me that there is considerable savings to be had if you put enough miles on them. By and large most of these, I suspect, would be high-mileage vehicles and I wonder if any consideration has been given to converting these to propane.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Chairman, and to the hon. member, I'm informed that we do have some vehicles in the fleet that have been converted to natural gas, others into propane — not in a big way as yet.

There have been proposals put forward to us, as I'm sure the hon. member is aware, and maybe proposals as far back as when the hon. member from Regina Centre was minister in this department. And we would continue to look at that in terms of the economic viability of some of that. But diesel fuel, propane, compressed natural gas, may be used as alternate fuels to gasoline, and we would continue to do it where it's economical and practical to do so.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — How many vehicles do you actually have that are burning either propane or natural gas?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Chairman, just for the member from Regina Centre, I don't have that number here, but I will be willing to provide that to the hon. member. It's on a test, pilot sort of project in several locations, I understand. But I would be willing to provide that to the hon. member.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Well perhaps you can give me the parameters of your test program, then. By what date are you going to evaluate it? By what date will you determine whether or not you're going to convert more cars to fuel?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Well I would say it's an ongoing thing. It goes on all the time, and has done for some time, as you know. And if technology continues to be such that conversion to some of these alternate fuels becomes more reasonable, we'll certainly be there, shall I say, on the leading edge, as we are in so many other areas.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I rather get the impression, Mr. Minister, that while you may describe it as a test program, in fact, nobody's monitoring the thing very closely, and you have no definite plans to evaluate the costs of those vehicles, vis-à-vis the cost of vehicles burning gasoline, and that in fact we never are going to determine whether or not there might be some savings to be made.

I say again, Mr. Minister, with respect to the high-mileage vehicles, it is my understanding that you can make some very considerable savings. The figures which have been given to me by people who have converted their own vehicles suggest that with respect to low-mileage vehicles you may not save very much, but with respect to high-mileage vehicles you can save a great deal, both in maintenance and the cost of fuel.

I would once again, Mr. Minister, urge you to get on with the job, evaluate the cost of the two, and if the savings are there, as I suspect they are, make the conversion and save the taxpayers some money. You people think only about increasing taxes and spending their money. You might on occasion, Mr. Minister, try to save them some money.

My understanding is that in this area, with respect to the high-mileage vehicles, of which there are a large number . . . You have 2,700 vehicles here, Mr. Minister. I suspect 2,000 of those could be described as high-mileage vehicles. With respect to 2,000 of those, I suggest to you you could save some very considerable money if anyone had any interest in the project and wanted to get on with it and get it done.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Chairman, there is . . . I can just give you an example of one of the pilots, and it sure is not many vehicles. But in Sask Power just recently . . . And one of the pilots that I referred to has just been completed. It's a compressed natural gas fuel, and vehicles for Sask Power, 20 vehicles. The study has just been completed. The decision is that at the present time it's not economical.

It is not economical to make that conversion, but that's not to say that we would just shelve that. As I said earlier, that as technology increases, as one of my colleagues has just mentioned, even the availability of natural gas as that fuel across this province is something that's happening as a result of some programs of this government over the last while, and certainly that will have an impact as well, as it relates to the availability of the compressed natural gas out in the rural, and so on, where obviously the vehicles which are high mileage that you refer to, are being used.

But we have to look at the life cycle, you know, of the . . . costing of the vehicles and how long they last, and how long it's economical to maintain them, and so on. Propane is being used, as I said before, where it's economical to use, and that is the case with some of our vehicles now.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Mr. Minister, are you prepared to share with this Assembly the study that you say SPC did and found that the natural gas was not economical?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — I'm informed it was done by Sask Power. We did some of the financial assessment on it, so it's certainly not in my purview to release it. But I would just say to them that the assessment done, both by the financial on our side and the assessment done by Sask Power, I'm informed, was such that it's not economical at this time but may well be into the future.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Would you share your assessment with us?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — We would be prepared, from our assessment in terms of some of the cost of conversion and some of those things, I would be prepared to send that to the hon. member, but I won't do it today.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Minister, returning to the proposed new nursing home for Saskatoon, can you tell me, when the construction is completed, who in fact is going to own the building and the structure once it has been completed? Will your department own the building?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — It will be on the basis of a lease purchase, and the department . . . or the government will own it at the end of the lease-purchase term which will be either 20 or 25 years.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — So what you're saying, Mr. Minister, is this \$21 million project will be privately owned with a lease-purchase option and that . . . Who in fact then will own the building? Who will own this 238-bed nursing home in Saskatoon? This is a new and interesting approach to public health in Saskatchewan where you are saying that it's going to be privately owned and then the taxpayers are going to have an option to purchase it. Who in fact will own this building when you get it completed?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — The government will own it at the end of the lease-purchase term. I remember . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Chairman, the people who come in with the proposal, the successful proposal, will own it, and we will lease it for the use of the special care facility.

Last year, Mr. Chairman, in these very estimates we heard from members of the opposition about the idea of a court-house being built on a similar basis. I would invite members of the opposition to go down . . . I believe it's on June 7th, very soon, the opening of the new court-house, a very, very good facility which has been built, and you will see that this is a good method.

So I will say to the hon. member that there is a bit of red herring being thrown in here, but certainly we're pleased with the method, and the people of Saskatchewan will be pleased.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well, Mr. Minister, I say this is nothing short of a scandal in the health program of this province that we would have a \$21 million structure that is going to be privately owned — I say to you privately owned — in the city of Saskatoon.

I want to ask you, Mr. Minister, whether or not you agree with the concept, and obviously you must, but I want to get it on the record that nursing homes, and this particular nursing home in Saskatoon, should be privately owned, and that we should be going in that direction, and whether or not you think that this principle should apply to hospitals.

You're now moving in the area of nursing homes where the government is being involved in allowing the private ownership of a nursing home, a major nursing home in Saskatoon. And do you believe that this principle should be applied to, let's say, the construction of hospitals in the province of Saskatchewan?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Chairman, the important thing to remember here is that this facility, this acute care facility that we've been referring to, will be operated under the auspices of the Department of Health, with all of the guide-lines and so on of the Department of Health. The member stands there and talks about this. The Extendicare contracts are ones that I can think of — Extendicare contracts, which are nursing homes across this province with agreements entered into by your government and by other governments, I'm sure, before that; and even agreements at the time that you were minister of Social Services.

But the hon. member from Shaunavon, as minister of Social Services, signed agreements with Extendicare. Privately owned — Extendicare I believe is an Ontario-based private sector company. They signed those agreements and we didn't argue about that then and we don't argue about it now, Mr. Chairman. Because to us the most important thing is that there are acute care facilities for the people of Saskatchewan, and who owns the brick and mortar, as long as those facilities are operated under the auspices of the Department of Health and the good care provided by the Department of Health under the Minister of Health, we feel that that's very acceptable. In fact it's excellent.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Then I want to get this point clear on the extension of this principle of private ownership to hospitals. Did I get the minister straight when he said that the concept of private ownership of nursing homes to which he is now moving into would be acceptable in the area of hospital construction? I think that's what you said, is that it didn't matter who owned the bricks and mortar, but in the area of construction of hospitals, privately owned hospitals are

within the purview of the government and that's the direction we're moving.

Now you said that very clearly, Mr. Minister, and I want to get clear . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, he talked very clearly about private ownership of the health care system in this province. And we are now moving into the 238-bed nursing home in Saskatoon. I want to say to you, Mr. Minister, that the people from the sanatorium site will be interested, that not only do they believe that it's being built in the wrong place, but they will also be very interested in knowing that it's privately owned. Because in talking to them yesterday, Mr. Minister, they were not aware that this nursing home would be privately owned and that the taxpayers of the province would have a lease option on it.

And I want to tell you and ask you here whether or not you would agree to come to a meeting in Saskatoon to deal with the people at the sanatorium site, who want it built at the sanatorium site, to explain to them the part about private ownership of nursing homes being the direction we should go. Will you agree to come to that kind of a meeting?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — No, Mr. Chairman. I clearly did not say anything about hospitals. I clearly did not say anything about hospitals. We are not here discussing any construction of a hospital. The hon. member will talk about government ownership of hospitals and so on. I know that, for example, that the St. Paul's Hospital in Saskatoon is not owned by the government. There was an attempt made by the NDP government to take it over. That's well known by the Grey Nuns order of Saskatoon that have been providing good health care and good nursing care and good hospital care to the people of Saskatoon and northern Saskatchewan for an awful long time. It's well known to them that the NDP tried to take over that Grey Nuns' hospital. And that was not a government-owned hospital nor will it be under this administration. Under that administration it would have been . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Okay.

Now all of those things are . . . The hon. member talks about hospitals. I am not talking about hospitals, nor have I talked about hospitals in terms of the discussion of the acute care facility in Saskatoon.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Minister, you will know that the St. Paul's Hospital in Saskatoon is a non-profit hospital owned by a religious order. And there are any number of them in Saskatoon — nursing homes as well. There are a number of Lutheran homes across the province that are owned, not by the government, but by non-profit religious groups. And if you're saying that you are opposed to those, that may be your opinion. But I believe that there should be non-profit groups owning nursing homes in the province, or the government. That's the position of our caucus.

(16:30)

But what you are doing is extending this to a company, to a private sector company, to allow them to make a profit at this nursing home. On the lease of this nursing home you are saying that you are now opening it up to a profit-oriented — profit-oriented nursing homes.

And you earlier said that that's a possibility of extending it to hospitals, which you have now backed off on. But I will say to you, Mr. Minister, that the concept of private nursing homes in this province, where groups will move in and build a nursing home and make a profit on it at the expense of the senior citizens — yes, and renting space and making a profit at it — should not be allowed. That's the position of our caucus.

And if you're saying the Conservative caucus and the Conservative government believes in profit-oriented nursing home care in Saskatoon, and the 238-bed nursing home is going to be run by — not run by, but owned by — a private sector company, at a profit, renting it at a profit, that you agree with that.

The Grey Nuns' hospital is owned by a private religious organization — non-profit, non-profit. And if the member who I referred to earlier isn't aware that it's a non-profit, and if he can't tell the difference, then there's obviously a reason why the Premier wants to deal with him in the way that he does.

But I will say to the minister this: that this new direction, the new direction he is taking the Health department in this province, where private ownership and profit-oriented nursing homes will be the sign of the times in Saskatoon, I think this is an interesting and new concept that the people who are working to have that nursing home built on the sanatorium site will be very interested in, because they are not aware of the fact that this nursing home is going to be built by the private sector and rented out at a profit and that the people who live in that nursing home will have to pay for it. They weren't aware of that. And this is a new revelation that you're making here today, Mr. Minister, and I'd like you to comment on whether or not you think it should be applied to the hospitals, because I'm still not clear on that.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — No, I'm sure the member's still not clear on it, all right. He referred to me earlier. I would say to him that what this department does is it serves the various departments of government.

We have a need identified to us by the Department of Health. The Department of Health says we are very much in need of . . . Because of the lack of service in the acute care area for a good number of years, we need an acute care nursing home facility in Saskatoon. We say, okay, let's build it in the best way possible and have it built for the best service of our people.

We believe that it isn't to the best advantage of the taxpayers of Saskatchewan to put major capital dollars out front — the taxpayers' dollars. There's no reason to do that. And you can develop your cash flow over a longer period of time. We believe that that's a reasonable economic way to deal with it. That's the way we have chosen to do it. There is no problem with that in our minds and we . . .

As it relates to one other thing that the member from Shaunavon raises, he says, will you come to a public meeting to get involved in the agenda of his party in terms of delaying this project, delaying whatever projects these people have identified on their agenda in Saskatoon. I will not get involved in development of your agenda in Saskatoon, but I can tell you I will be very much in developing of our agenda in Saskatoon and elsewhere in this province. And those two agendas, sooner or later, are going to come head to head at the polls, and I have every confidence that the agenda developed by the people on this side of the House — members from Saskatoon that you like to attack . . . The members from Saskatoon and myself and all other members in this House will be developing an agenda which will come head to head with your delay doom and gloom agenda, in Saskatoon and throughout this province, and I have every confidence that our agenda will come out victorious.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Minister, maybe you could outline for me why you believe private sector involvement in ownership of nursing homes is a good idea — on the one part of Health, in nursing homes, it's a good idea when you're saying this is the next step to hospitals. You said that earlier, that this nursing home is the next step to a hospital. Why is it that the private sector should own this building, but in the area of hospitals they shouldn't? Can you tell me the fine line where you believe the private ownership of health facilities should end, because I'm having a difficult time understanding where you birds are coming from in the area of health care.

You say that in a very high level of nursing homes there should be private ownership, but in hospitals there shouldn't. Why the difference?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — No, Mr. Chairman. As I have said, we have not been talking about hospitals. I'm talking about the acute care nursing homes.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Why?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — The reason we're not talking about hospitals is there are no hospitals under discussion here. There are no hospitals under discussion in these estimates, and certainly none being built by the Department of Supply and Services.

I have a little bit of information which I'd like to share with the committee, though, Mr. Chairman. The member from Shaunavon, when he was minister of Social Services, he signed the treasury board submission to change the site from the sanatorium site to Fairhaven when he was minister of Social Services, Mr. Chairman.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — That's right. And there's no question. And I want to tell the minister . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order. Order. Allow the member to make his comment.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I want to tell the minister that that's correct, that it was done with the approval of the planning committee in Saskatoon, on their recommendations. And obviously it has changed.

You have taken four years; you have taken four years . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well the minister seems to think that what was the plan four years ago, when they first came to government and planned to build the nursing home, is the same as what the people in Saskatoon want. In 1982 we were listening to the people of Saskatoon because that's where they wanted it built. What the people of Saskatoon are now saying is that they would like it built on the sanatorium site.

I want to ask you, Mr. Minister: on the point of private ownership for profit of the nursing homes, why do you think that's a better arrangement than the public or the government owning the nursing home? And very clearly, I would like you to point out the advantage of a profit-oriented nursing home in Saskatoon.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Well, first of all, you know, to get into the whole area of profit, we on this side of the House do not see that profit . . . We don't consider profit to be a dirty word. Loss is a dirty word. Profit is not a dirty word.

In terms of our philosophy as it relates to public buildings, Mr. Chairman, in terms of our philosophy as it relates to public buildings, we believe that it's not reasonable to have the . . . We believe it's not reasonable to have the . . . Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could have some order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order. I'd ask members on both sides of the House to keep some decorum. The Minister of Supply and Services.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Well, Mr. Chairman, we believe that it's not reasonable, as other parties will believe, that they should build buildings, public buildings, and name them after their . . . as monuments to the former members of their party. And I could think of Sturdy Stone, and the T.C. Douglas Building, and the McIntosh Mall, and the Kramer Place, and Auburn Pepper Square, and what is it — E.I. Wood Building in Swift Current, and so on, many of whom were reasonable and honourable people. There's no question about that.

But the question remains: what is the motivation, what is the motivation of a political party? What's the motivation of a political party to spend taxpayers' money to build these monuments so that they can name them unto themselves? And we just didn't believe that that's a reasonable thing.

We have no problem with the word "profit." Profit is not something we're against. And as far as the building of this particular facility that we're talking about in Saskatoon, we believe that

the private sector will build this cheaper than it would be built by the public sector.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well I'm still not clear in your government's policy on health care in this province. Can you explain to me clearly why it is all right to have profit, profit-oriented nursing home care, and not hospitals? Are you now planning to move into the area of profit-oriented hospitals, privately owned, profit-oriented hospitals, as you are now in the area of nursing homes? Is that where we're headed?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Well I say, Mr. Chairman, I go back once again to the . . . I mean, the member can talk about . . . We saw here he changed his mind about the location of the place. Now we're going to see . . . We saw that he changed his mind as it relates to Extendicare contracts, which were very much private sector orientated contracts for the delivery of nursing home care in this province, Extendicare being an Ontario-based firm who provides nursing home care.

That government wrote and signed contracts with that private sector firm. We do not argue with that. We continue to enter into those kinds of agreements. But the member speaks out of both sides of his mouth when he says that he would sign the contracts when he was in government but is against them when he's out of government. It doesn't make any sense.

But I'll tell you, Mr. Chairman, as it relates to a philosophy, we're not against profit; they are. We're not against the signing of contracts with private sector firms. They say they are, but when in government they were not, and in fact did sign some of those. It doesn't make any sense to me, Mr. Chairman, and I'm not sure what we will accomplish.

In terms of the last portion of his question, and as it relates to the philosophy of this government as it relates to the delivery of health care facilities, the member from Shaunavon, I believe, is the critic for health, and I know that he did have some discussion about this with the Minister of Health. We were talking about the delivery of health care in the province. He should refer that to the Minister of Health.

We in this department will continue to, through private contracts or through public building and a combination of those things, we'll continue to provide the services to the various client departments around the government.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well I would ask you one more time here. You're really skirting the issue of privately owned hospitals with a profit motive intended. You're saying that you're not opposed to profit anywhere in government.

I'll ask you one more time if you can clarify for the people of Saskatchewan: are you in favour, as you are in the area of nursing homes, of building hospitals for profit? That's a simple question. Are you in favour or opposed to it?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Chairman, I have not given it a good deal of thought, but I would say no. I would say no, we are not in favour of hospitals being built by the private sector, although we're very much in favour of hospitals which are operated by private organizations, as I mentioned, with the Grey Nuns Order of St. Paul's and so on.

Just a point that I would like to make to the hon. member. When the government builds anything — any building, whatever — the government builds that with dollars which are taxpayers' dollars but which are borrowed. So who makes the profit when the government builds? The banks make the profits, Mr. Chairman. When the private sector builds, Saskatchewan people make the profits. And that's the difference.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, Hear!

MR. LINGENFELTER: — The minister seems to find a great difference between privately owned and profit-oriented nursing homes and is opposed to that in hospitals. I wonder why. Where does your philosophy change on upper level, very high level nursing homes — you think it should be built for profit and then hospitals, level 6, they shouldn't be. Where and why do you make that line in your radical right-wing philosophy?

I'm having a difficult time fine-tuning this as to why you think there should be profit-oriented nursing homes and not profit-oriented hospitals. Can you just define that, because I'm sure I represent the very middle-of-the-road Saskatchewan people who are having a difficult time understanding this radical right-wing, profit-oriented nursing home concept, but where you stop and say it shouldn't be applied to hospitals. Where and why do you draw that line?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the hon. member drew a line when he signed contracts for nursing home care with Extendicare, a private firm, and didn't sign contracts for our hospitals. I wonder if he drew the line?

As far as the member from Shaunavon, a member of the NDP party talking about representing the middle-of-the-road anybody, any individual middle of the road, I doubt it.

Mr. Chairman, and I think we . . . I will refrain from making further remarks. I mean it's . . . That is so absurd to hear a member of the New Democratic Party talk about representing the middle of the road. It makes no sense.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — The member in this, in the heritage year, will be interested to check the history — and he may not have read it; I doubt it, being a school teacher — but from 1944 to '82 the majority of the people in the province did support the New Democratic Party and that is part of our proud heritage, Mr. Minister.

(16:45)

And if you look at the record of your party in the heritage of Saskatchewan, we've had two depressions and two Tory governments. Just a coincidence they've come at the same time because you're an unlucky lot the grasshoppers seem to show up at the same time.

But what I want to ask the minister, getting off the profit-oriented nursing homes just for a moment: have you got the travel expenses of your deputy minister? That seems to be very slow at coming. And I wonder if it doesn't have something to do with the fact that you have a deputy minister earning \$72,000, entertainment expenses of \$6,800, and he's unwilling to send across his travel expenses.

And I wonder whether or not you can get out an outline of what the deputy minister would be spending \$6,800 of hard-earned taxpayers' money on entertainment. I think this is a scandal. I think \$6,800 on entertainment, which you've sent across to me, for the deputy minister, is a scandal. And I would like a detail of the places where he had supper and charged it up to the taxpayers, alcohol bills that were paid for by this individual, and I want that list because I think \$6,800 for entertainment — for entertainment during a time of restraint — is a disgrace, and I say it is a scandal. And I would like you to send that list across.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I have said to the member that I will send it over. The only thing that isn't available here is the expenses as it relates to Air Canada. They are coming and you will have that, the expenses. In terms of the deputy minister of Supply and Services having an entertainment expense, I make no apology for that, nor will I ever, in the sense that clients and people that this department deals with all the time, we will always make very sure, and I know the hon. members were the other way. And there are many examples which could be cited.

But the deputy minister of Supply and Services, the Minister of Supply and Services, we will never be put in a position where we are being entertained, let's say, by people outside who are clients. We don't believe that that's the reasonable way for a responsible government official to operate and we will not do that. And we will be talking to the various clients and the deputy minister of Supply and Services will continue, in the consultative role that he's been in, and very well received by all people across the private sector in Saskatchewan. And we will continue to do that.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Well, Mr. Minister, I want to follow this up and I would like those expenses, the total amount of the travel expenses. Give those to me now and you can get a detailed list of the travel expenses. But I want to follow this up. Because I think when an individual is getting \$72,000 in salary out of the taxpayers' pocketbook, that getting \$500 a month in entertainment expenses is asking the people of the province, is asking of the people of the province a little much, because we're getting close at 500 a month to what a family on minimum wage earns in the year.

And I say for a deputy minister to have an expense account of \$500 a month, I would ask you what he would be spending that kind of money on. Because I'll tell you, 20 days, 20 working days in the month, we are talking about a lot of money on entertainment. What does a guy do when he goes home at night? Where do you spend \$20 or \$30 every day on entertainment? I think that is a scandal and I think we should have a look at the list of where, and on what, money is being spent. Because I don't think the taxpayers appreciate the high-flying operation that they're having to fund to keep this party in government.

And it's not only the cabinet ministers. It's not only the friends in the oil companies. It's now gotten to the executive assistants — 61 per cent increase in salary. And we now have a deputy minister, \$6,800 on one item on entertainment. And we would like to have a look at what that list would include.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Well, I have given the argument that I did a few moments ago. I just want to remind the hon. member this Department of Supply and Services deals with 4,000 suppliers in this province. Just as an example, we purchase \$130 million worth of goods in the province. We construct all the buildings except the hospitals and the schools in the province. We deal with very many, many people.

For the hon. member from Shaunavon to talk about this deputy minister working 20 working days in the month, I can tell you that this deputy minister works a lot more than 20 days a month. There's no question about that. And I make no apology for the expense allowances of the deputy minister of Supply and Services. Knowing what his work-load is, knowing the people that he deals with, and knowing why he deals with them all in terms of the many, many purchases, the many things that we do in his department on behalf of the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, I can tell the hon. member and all members of the House that they're very well served by this department and by this deputy.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — This is like your defence of the profit-oriented nursing home, Mr. Minister. I just cannot believe what I'm hearing today. Now we're hearing the defence of this minister of a deputy who has \$6,800 — \$6,800 in expenses. And I just find it amazing, Mr. Minister, that you would stand here today and defend profit-oriented nursing homes, and now a deputy minister who's earning \$72,000 a year — had an increase of about 10 per cent in 1983 — and you're now saying that he isn't getting quite enough at \$72,000; he needs \$6,800 on entertainment.

And I dare say that the list you're hiding, of his travel expenses, that the list you're hiding of his travel expenses would come close to \$20,000. I don't know that, but you're not sending me the list. And I bet you . . . I'll bet you a dollar that this list will come to over \$100,000 — that his

expenses and his travel expenses and his wages will come to over \$100,000 that the taxpayers are being asked to shell out. And I say that that kind of spending is a disgrace and is a scandal, Mr. Minister, and I would appreciate you standing up one more time and defending it, because I find it unbelievable.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — I find the hon. member from Shaunavon and his attempts — and his very attempts, I might add — to dig up scandal and so on, it's the sort of thing that's been going on for some time.

. . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm not embarrassed one bit, for the hon. member from Quill Lakes. Not embarrassed one bit. I have said that I'm not embarrassed. I believe very strongly in the work that's being done by this department, by all the officials of this department. The member from . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: — Order, order. Order. Allow the minister to make his comments.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Well, Mr. Chairman, as I said, it's not worth, when I hear the braying from some of the members across there. But I will say once again, I make no apology whatever for the manner in which this department conducts itself. And, in fact, I commend the deputy and the officials in this department for the way they have conducted themselves in the last year, and for the way in which they have planned what this department will be carrying out in the next year.

And I'll say to the hon. members, yes, the deputy minister of Supply and Services will have expenses which will be incurred on behalf of the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, and it will be money very well spent on behalf of the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you. Well, Mr. Minister, if you're not embarrassed by this figure, either you have an explanation you're not giving or you're a very difficult person to embarrass. Mr. Minister, \$6,800, Mr. Minister, — is a very high figure. That works out to an average of \$27.60 per working day. That, Mr. Minister, in almost all restaurants in Regina, will buy two people a lunch and a few drinks. Mr. Minister, that is a lot of money for entertainment.

Mr. Minister, I for one believe it is not acceptable to have any deputy minister, with one or two exceptions, spending that kind of money on entertainment expenses. Mr. Minister, you have the wrong department when you're trying to justify this. If these were entertainment expenses incurred by the deputy minister of Industry, that would be different. They do spend legitimately some time and effort trying to attract businesses to Saskatchewan.

But, Mr. Chairman, I don't know why the deputy minister of Supply and Services would have an entertainment bill of any amount. Basically this department does two things. It purchases on behalf of the government. No one in the department should be accepting, nor should they be entertaining buyers. Those people should tender according to the purchasing agreement, and there is no reason for anybody to be involved over a bottle of wine with respect to the purchase of personal property . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I can assure you it was the way I did business, and it was the way the deputy minister of the day did business when I was there.

Mr. Minister, with respect to the leases which this government buys, this government spends money on two things — purchasing personal property and leases. With respect to the leases, there is no excuse for a deputy minister to be entertaining prospective clients. They should be entertaining you, Mr. Minister, and Mr. Chairman — they should be entertaining you.

Basically, Mr. Minister, what your department has to offer is an excellent client for anybody with space to lease. And there is no excuse for a deputy minister spending \$6,800 trying to find clients, trying to find lease space. With any degree of finesse, those landlords with space to lease will beat a path to your door. You don't need to do the opposite.

Mr. Minister, I don't find \$6,800 on travel expenses by a deputy minister acceptable.

AN HON. MEMBER: — That's not travel; that's entertainment.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — On entertainment, I meant. I don't find that acceptable, Mr. Deputy Minister, unless there is an explanation that you haven't offered. I am painfully conscious of the fact that the person whose entertainment expenses are being discussed is not able to defend himself. And that is a painful fact and I wished it were otherwise.

But, Mr. Minister, if you have an explanation for \$6,800, you'd better offer it, because you owe it to your deputy minister, if you won't give it to us.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Chairman, as I reiterated earlier, I believe this and I believe it strong, and I have in fact given instructions to this deputy minister and will to any deputy minister that's under my jurisdiction, this department deals, as I said, with many, many — in fact, 4,000 — suppliers across the province. The hon. member is, if you take his argument to its logical conclusion, he suggests that the meetings . . . and I think that member also knows the kinds of schedules that are run by the deputy in this department — whether the former deputy or the present deputy, or whatever — breakfast, lunch, meetings at all kinds and hours of the day. There's no question that that's the case.

Now I will insist, and will continue to insist, that our officials in this department will never . . . will not be taking wining and dining and so on from other people out there who may be wanting to do business with government, which is exactly what went on before. That is something that I will insist will not be done because those same scandalmongers, Mr. Chairman, those same scandalmongers over there would be taking out of the other side of their mouth if that was the case. If some private sector person or group or representative of a company bought lunch for the deputy minister of supply and services, those scandalmongers would have some kind of a big scandal, and calling a public inquiry or something.

But there is no question in my mind, and I believe this to be the case, and I will insist on it as long as I'm Minister of Supply and Services, that that is the case; that this department is not wined and dined by the private sector as was the case in the old government; that this department will conduct its business and conduct their business on top of the table. And that's exactly why I provided the figures to you, and I don't mind one iota providing that figure to you. And it's expenditure, as I've said before, which is spent on behalf of the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, Hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Mr. Minister, you made the argument better than I could have. Mr. Minister, you made the argument better than I could have. The deputy minister of Supply and Services should not be breaking bread and drinking with prospective clients of his department. If they have legitimate requests for information, or legitimate complaints, they ought to meet him in his office. But they should not be meeting over a bottle of wine. He should not be meeting with people who want to lease property to the government, and he should not be dealing with people who want to lease property to the government, in that kind of an atmosphere. He should be open and accessible to them during regular office hours.

And an entertainment expense of \$6,800 is just simply too high, Mr. Minister, I just don't see how you can justify that for this particular department. I note, Mr. Minister, for this gentleman's predecessor in 1982 there were no expenses listed at all, and I expect that's the way the deputy minister under our administration conducted himself. He did not submit entertainment expenses. So I say . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well you may have, and I may not have seen it in *Public Accounts*, but it's \$6,800, I will be very surprised, Mr. Minister.

(17:00)

Mr. Minister, have you given us your undertaking to provide a breakdown of your deputy minister's entertainment expenses — a breakdown, expenditure by expenditure? Mr. Minister, I would ask you for that undertaking. Give us a breakdown of the claims for entertainment, item by item, including the people he met with, if records of that sort were kept.

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — Mr. Chairman, no, I won't provide it in that kind of breakdown that the member asks. I won't provide it. I did provide the figure and I have spoken to the House about that.

One of the ways . . . I'll just give the House an example . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, this is very much on the same topic, for the member from Shaunavon, one of the ways that this deputy of Supply and Services has been able to conduct himself and to save money for the taxpayers of Saskatchewan — here it is.

I have in my hand, Mr. Chairman, a letter from Mr. Shillington, minister of culture and youth and government services, to Mr. Dennis Foley, former deputy minister of Supply and Services, or of government services at that time, regarding (now this is the way in which we can save money compared to the way that they saved money) regarding purchase of ministers' cars:

Hon. J.R. Messer: While our general rule is (I'm quoting now, Mr. Chairman) while our general rule is exchanges should not be made below 60,000, I believe that this consideration should not apply to a minister's car. The minister's car is more than a means of transportation.

. . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I will get to what it has to do with this in a minute.

It is often a symbol of the office and driving around in an old rattletrap doesn't do much to enhance the respect the public have for the office.

Therefore, I believe that the specifications for ministers' cars ought to remain at 40,000.

Now, Mr. Chairman, at the present time under this deputy, the recommendation comes in and this is the policy now: ministers' cars are traded in after 100,000 kilometres, not 40,000, as was suggested by that member when he was minister, or his colleague, and they're traded in after four years.

All of these kinds of efficiency measures brought in by this deputy, I make no apology whatever. I make no apology whatever for the way this deputy conducts himself, for the entertainment expenses of this deputy, who works on most days of the month from 7 o'clock till 8 o'clock at night. There's no question about it. And this department is running efficiently because of that type of dedication.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, Hear!

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:05 p.m.