

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Hon. Mr. Swan:** — Today I would like to introduce a group of students visiting from Rosetown Division 3 School. We have 24 students from grade 8, accompanied by five adults: Mr. Ted Brumwell and Gail DeBoice as teachers; and Jim Dirks, Roz Walker, and Karen Crawford acting as chaperons.

I'm pleased to have the students with us today. I hope you enjoy the question period and the activities in the Chamber. I would be pleased to meet with you following question period for pictures and to answer any questions that you may have.

I'd ask all hon. Members to welcome these students from Rosetown.

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

**Hon. Mrs. Duncan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, a group of 40 students from Maple Creek. They arrived later than they had planned. They had a bit of bus trouble when they started out this morning. They're accompanied by their teachers, Mr. Dale Elderkin and Mrs. Linda Johnson; the chaperons are Bernice Lambert, Teri Gerbrandt, Brenda Moorhead; bus drivers, Aza Gold and Omar Murry.

I think, Mr. Speaker, we may thank them for bringing the rain, that started in the West, to this part of the province, and we hope you brought lots of it with you and left a lot at home. I'll be meeting with you at 3 o'clock for pictures and refreshments, and I do hope you enjoy your stay in Regina, not only the visit to the legislature, but the other visits you have planned for the day. I would ask members to welcome them please.

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

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### Ombudsman Report — Child Abuse

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to the Minister of Social Services and it deals with the annual Ombudsman report. In his report, Mr. Minister, the Ombudsman is extremely critical of your department with respect to the issue of child abuse. The Ombudsman states, and I quote:

In its various forms, child abuse is occurring at a rate that tests the imagination.

My question to you, Mr. Minister, is can you confirm that the Ombudsman found the problem of child abuse in some Saskatchewan foster homes to be serious enough last year that he prepared a special report with a number of recommendations and presented that report to the full cabinet; and further can you confirm that you and the

provincial cabinet have refused to act on that special report?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Mr. Speaker, the issue of child abuse is something that I think all members of society and certainly government must take very seriously. It's a matter that I have been gravely concerned about once I took on the responsibilities as Minister of Social Services.

The issue I believe that the member opposite is referring to has to do with the matter of corporal punishment as it pertains to foster parents. This is a difficult and a sensitive issue. At present our policy is that we would expect that foster parents would treat their children as other parents in the province would. We would place no more onerous restrictions than any other parent would place upon themselves.

I believe that is a reasonable policy position to take at this particular point in time. Unfortunately there will always be those parents in society at large, and perhaps there may be some foster parents on occasion who do not appropriately discipline their children, and of course we know that there are those instances in society where some parents may actually abuse their children purposely. It is a difficult situation.

The member opposite may not know, but we are presently involved in a comprehensive child-in-care review which encompasses . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . If the members opposite would be so kind as to be quiet I would be happy to continue responding to the question.

The child-in-care review is a comprehensive review. We've been fortunate that we have not had, in the province of Saskatchewan, the kinds of difficulties that other provinces have had in this particular regard. I think of the judicial inquiry in Alberta, for example. I can inform the member opposite that the child-in-care review does have two members from the foster parents association on the child-in-care review team. That review team will be meeting with all of the foster parent locals in the province. The review team will also be sending questionnaires out to all of the foster parents. So we certainly are concerned about the issue, and we want to do the best we can to look after the children in care.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The minister refused to answer the question about whether there had been a report to cabinet and whether cabinet had dealt with it. My supplementary is simply this, Mr. Minister. And I remind you first of all the words that were in the annual report of the Ombudsman. And it refers to the foster care system as "an area of urgent concern . . ." It refers to cases involving cases of physical and sexual abuse of foster children. And then the report states, and I quote again:

My recommendation (with respect to these problems) was the unsuccessful subject of Ombudsman Reports to the department, the minister and the provincial cabinet in 1985.

In other words, Mr. Minister, the Ombudsman has been asking for action on these problems through a special

report of your government since last year, but you have failed to act. Why doesn't the abuse of children in some Saskatchewan foster care homes concern your government?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Mr. Speaker, I indicated to the member opposite that the report that the Ombudsman prepared had to do with the recommendation that there be a review, a public review, of this whole matter of corporal punishment as it related to foster parents. This government reviewed that particular recommendation and decided that a public review of the issue of corporal punishment as it pertains to foster parents was not the best way to deal with this particular issue. We believe that the policy at present is an appropriate policy.

There may on occasion have been those foster parents who were excessive in their punishment. As we all know, parents at large are occasionally excessive in their punishment. Any particular person who is involved in the purposeful abuse of children, whether it be sexual abuse or whether it be any other kind of abuse, we would naturally want those particular people to be brought to justice.

As it relates to the matter of the report and the recommendation for a public debate on the issue of corporal punishment in foster homes, we did not believe that that was the appropriate way to deal with this issue. We felt the appropriate way, in fact, was to deal with it in the context of the larger child-in-care review which presently is under way in the province of Saskatchewan.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — A further question for the minister. And here again, Mr. Speaker, we see the minister saying that he is right, and the Ombudsman is wrong. He has also refused, time and time again, to undergo the scrutiny of an independent review. And I ask the minister: what are you afraid of? Why are you afraid of an independent review of this area of your department if you are so right? What are you afraid of?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Mr. Speaker, I indicated to the members opposite in my former answers that the Ombudsman's concern pertained to the issue of corporal punishment being used by foster parents. We believe that the policy at present is a reasonable policy, that we should not single out foster parents to be dealt with differently than any other parent in the province of Saskatchewan.

We also realize that the care of children, whether it be by foster parents or by any other parent, is at times a difficult issue. We are aware that there is abuse of children in the province of Saskatchewan, and we regret that deeply. This is a phenomena that we find across the world, and certainly Saskatchewan is not exempt from that, unfortunately.

We believe the best way to deal with the issue of how children should be punished or should not be punished; how they should be dealt with; how they should be controlled; what kinds of supports there should be for foster parents — that particular issue should be dealt with in the larger context of the child-in-care review, which is presently being conducted and includes substantial input

from foster parents, and indeed, there will be input from foster children themselves in this child-in-care review.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, to the minister. The minister indicates now that he is not afraid of the scrutiny of an independent review, or he implies that it isn't fear that stops him from doing it. I want to say to the minister that if you are not afraid of criticism or an open debate, will you make yourself available and vote in favour of a motion which we will be putting forward immediately following question period and before orders of the day, which section 19 of The Legislative Assembly Act and Executive Council Act provides for, that we are allowed to call before the Legislative Assembly witnesses or experts to debate and to give information to the Assembly?

And I would ask the minister that when we rise with this motion, whether you will give your support to bring the Ombudsman here to the Assembly so members can clear up whether you are telling the truth or whether the concerns of the Ombudsman as portrayed in his report are legitimate. Will you support that kind of a motion?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Mr. Speaker, the matter of whether or not there should be corporal abuse in foster homes is really the issue at question here, because that's the recommendation that the Ombudsman made. The Ombudsman has said that he questions . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please. Give the minister an opportunity to answer.

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — The Ombudsman has said that he questions whether or not foster parents should be able to use corporal punishment as a means of discipline, as a means of control, in foster homes. And he believes that that should be an issue of public review — that particular, single issue itself. We say it's more appropriate to deal with that particular issue on which we know there are extreme differences of opinion . . . It's more appropriate to deal with that issue in the context of the larger child-in-care review.

The member opposite seems to suggest that somehow we don't want policies reviewed . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I would remind . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please, and I would ask the members to control their voices a little and give the minister the opportunity to answer . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Order.

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker: I would remind the members opposite . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — I'm going to caution the member for Quill Lakes to control his voice.

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — I would remind the members opposite that it was this government that instituted the ministerial advisory council on child protection, chaired by eminent Dr. Peter Matthews from Saskatoon university, which in fact reviewed this entire matter of children in need of protection.

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please. The rules in the Legislative Assembly do not allow me to tell the minister what to say. I cannot force any minister to answer the question, and I would ask for order while the minister answers the question.

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Mr. Speaker, the gist of the question was that somehow this government does not want its policies to be reviewed. I'm simply reminding the members opposite that it was this government which instituted the minister's advisory council on child protection, chaired by Dr. Peter Matthews from Saskatoon, with 15 eminent people from the province of Saskatchewan, which toured the entire province; received over 100 briefs from people and organizations here in the province; which made recommendations to this government. And we are implementing many of those recommendations. Now for the member opposite to suggest that somehow we don't want our policies to be scrutinized or reviewed simply contradicts the facts, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I asked a short question, and I have seen in the House of Commons where the Prime Minister has been sat down for not answering the question.

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please. The member asked a very lengthy question, if the member will recall, and I would ask him to ask a short question this time.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well, we will compare the length of the answers in . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order. Does the member have a question?

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — My question to the minister is short. I want to ask him whether he will support a motion that we will put forward to call to the Assembly the Ombudsman, under section 19 of The Legislative Assembly Act, that we will put forward after question period. Will you support that motion?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Mr. Speaker, I have no intention of responding to some hypothetical motion that I have yet to see. But I can tell the Speaker that I will support whatever policies are necessary to do the best that we can on behalf of children in the province of Saskatchewan. That's the responsibility I took upon my shoulders when I became Minister of Social Services. That is exactly why we instituted the ministerial advisory council on child protection. That is why we are involved at present in the comprehensive child-in-care review in the province, and I believe that's appropriate, Mr. Speaker.

#### Authorization of Crop Insurance Letter

**Mr. Engel:** — I have a question to the minister responsible for crop insurance, and it has to do with the confusion that you've created around the crop insurance program. I have here a letter which was sent to a number of farmers recently about changes in crop insurance.

This one is dated March 27th and it states quite clearly that farmers who used air reels to harvest their crops in 1985 will be getting an additional \$8 per acre payment. The letter is signed by a one Ron Osika of Crop Insurance Corporation, and it includes a declaration which the farmer filled in and sent to crop insurance to get his special payment.

Did you, as a minister, authorize sending this letter and the declarations, and how many farmers received it?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, as I reported yesterday, the crop insurance directors, those on the board of directors, reviewed the situation with respect to air reels and said, if we're going to pay for air reels in terms of crop salvage, then we're going to have to pay for every other piece of investment and taxpayers' dollars and farmers' investments that might have resulted in a large crop being harvested, which include double swatch attachments, straight headers, spray on crop, and so forth.

So it was reviewed by the crop insurance board of directors and they said, we can't make the payment because, if you do, it's unfair to all those people who have made the investment in various ways to salvage more crop. As a result of that, I agreed with them, and I made the statement yesterday, saying that under these circumstances it would be unfair to the thousands of farmers who have invested in either its grasshopper spray, or direct headers, or straight combining, double swatch attachments, whatever, that might have been used to harvest increased production, and their recommendation makes sense to me, so I elaborated on it yesterday.

**Mr. Engel:** — I wasn't asking about the confusion you created. Did you authorize this letter?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, the letter went out under crop insurance and I assume that it was passed by the board of directors of crop insurance. They have reassessed it and said it would be unfair to all the rest of them, so they said we were going to correct it now. And rather than be unfair to the thousands of farmers, they say we're not going to pay it on air reels.

And if the members opposite . . . I mean if you're telling me that you want it paid on air reels and not on anything else, then I'll make that clear that the NDP want to pay on air reels, but they don't want to pay on headers; they don't want to pay on double swatch attachments; they don't want to pay on crop insurance, or on grasshopper sprays, or anything else. Now if that's the position you want to take, fair enough. I'll make that clear. You want that to happen.

Well the board of directors has reviewed it and they said it wouldn't be fair; therefore they're not paying it.

**Mr. Engel:** — The question simply was: why would you send out a letter like this telling the farmers they are going to receive a special payment and in just three weeks make a 180 degree turn-around and withdraw that coverage? Some farmers who received this letter have already gone to their bank or credit unions because it says right in there, point-blank — and don't say ahh to me, Mr. former

attorney general — it says right in there you will receive \$8 an acre — will receive! That assurance they took to the banks. If a farmer had 1,000 acres, he had a legal commitment for \$8,000.

I'm not arguing with you about the merits for the coverage of air reels. I think it was a stupid idea to start with. What farmers want to know is how the idea got to the point where you were authorizing letters to go to the farmers telling them they were getting extra money before you figured out that there was a problem. That's the question.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, three observations. One is, if the board of directors of crop insurance say in their judgement that it wouldn't be fair, and you agree — now you agree and a minute ago you didn't. You said all right, it wouldn't be a good idea to do it. All right. So they said they agree with you, it isn't a good idea to do it, so they made that clear.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, with respect to . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You might as well just sit and listen to this. I know you don't like to listen but you asked a question; I'll give you the answer.

Mr. Speaker, in this Assembly all the students know that the opposition doesn't like to listen to the answers. I think that the students deserve to hear the answers, and they deserve to hear the questions. The NDP never want to listen to an answer . . .

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

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — The NDP never want to listen to an answer. If you want to holler from your seat, you can holler from your seat all you like, but I want to tell you the facts. You talk about changing your mind. You wouldn't provide interest rate protection to farmers or to home owners. Now you've changed your mind. Mr. Speaker, they think that it's a good idea. They said that they wouldn't provide gas tax protection, remove it . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please. Order, please.

**Mr. Engel:** — The question was . . . He made a 180-degree turn. Are you taking the responsibility for this or aren't you? That's all we're asking.

Crop insurance sent out a letter. The farmer was promised if he had 1,000 acres — 8,000 bucks — now he's not getting it. Today he's not getting it; yesterday he had it. Are you taking the responsibility for it? — it's that simple. You made a complete turn-around. Yesterday I told you you should have made the changes. You've changed it again. Are you taking the responsibility for this, or aren't you? Or are you going to dump it on one of your staff?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite says now that he doesn't think that it's a good idea to pay for headers, for reels . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . All right, so a crop insurance board of directors . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — I'm going to ask the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg to control his hollering. We can't operate in this Chamber with that kind of noise.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, maybe I could use an illustration. Okay, I'll use an illustration. To the hon. member: we put a tax on used cars, and farmers said, and people said, it's not a good idea. So I removed it. All right. The crop insurance made a recommendation that they would look at air reels. They had representation from all over the province saying it's not fair because of all the things that other farmers have done, and they made a recommendation to me that we shouldn't make the payment because it's not fair to those that use headers — or you name it — or other people. And we made that decision.

And you agree with the fact that we shouldn't be paying on air reels, and you've agreed with the fact that there shouldn't be a tax on used cars. And you said, all right, make that change, and we did. Well, Mr. Speaker, of course, if you're listening to the people, you will make those kinds of changes. My point when I stood up here last is that the previous administration didn't believe in interest rate protection or taking the tax off gas, and they've changed their minds.

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order. Order, please. Order, please.

### Contract with Inner Dimension Design Associates

**Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you. My question is to the Minister of Supply and Services. About two weeks ago, Mr. Minister, you took notice of questions concerning the awarding of nearly \$60,000 worth of government business without tender to an interior design firm owned by your deputy minister's wife.

In response to those questions about a week ago, you told this Assembly, and I quote: "No contract has been awarded to that firm since Mr. Cutts and Miss Devitt became engaged."

In light of that clear statement, can the minister explain the document, a copy of which was sent to you a few moments ago, which shows Inner Dimension Design Associates as the interior designer on a project at the Lakeside Nursing Home in Wolseley, with the Government of Saskatchewan as client?

**Hon. Mr. Schoenhals:** — Mr. Chairman, or Mr. Speaker, I will again take notice of the question, get the details, and return to the Assembly with those details.

**Mr. Shillington:** — New question, Mr. Speaker. Last week in . . . Mr. Minister, how can you not know the answer to it? Last week in the Assembly you stood up and told us that you had checked into these allegations, that you had investigated them, and that you reported that no new contracts had been awarded this firm. On what did you base that unequivocal statement, Mr. Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Schoenhals:** — Mr. Speaker, it is quite possible that in this case there is a developer building the nursing home at Wolseley. The developer will be the person awarding the contracts. Obviously you have sent this information over. I don't have the exact details. I will get the exact details. It's my impression that it will be something awarded by the developer. But rather than mislead you, I will get you the exact details and return to

the House with them.

**Mr. Shillington:** — New question, Mr. Minister. One question which you will know the answer to, and I ask for that: on what did you base last week's answer in this Assembly? And where does your information come from? You made a clear, unequivocal statement, and it had been prepared in advance. You had taken notice of the original question. On what information did you base that statement which now would appear to be incorrect?

**Hon. Mr. Schoenhals:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, to infer that the information is incorrect is simply not an accurate statement. I indicated I will check. The information provided was provided by the Department of Supply and Services. My statement was that the Department of Supply and Services had not awarded any contracts to the company in question. Now if in fact the Wolseley nursing home, as I believe is the case, is being handled, developed, and built by a developer who is free to award contracts to whomever that developer feels is correct, I will look into it, and I will determine if that is in fact the case. At any rate I will determine what the facts are and return with them as I indicated.

**Mr. Shillington:** — New question. I invite the minister to have a look at the document which I gave him. The client is said to be the Department of Supply and Services, not the Department of Health which never does any building, nor is it a privately-owned institution. We haven't come to that yet.

Mr. Minister, I asked you the last question, on what you based your answer, for a purpose. I want to know where you get the information from. Was it your deputy minister whose answers were in question who gave you the information, or did you get it from somewhere else?

**Hon. Mr. Schoenhals:** — Mr. Speaker, as you are well aware, and as I'm sure the member is well aware, many, several projects have been developed by proposal call by various developers. I believe, but I'm not absolutely sure, that the Wolseley nursing home was developed that way. It is being built by a developer who, as I indicated, would be free to use whichever subcontractors of any trade that they chose. And consequently I will, as I indicated, get the detailed information and return to the Assembly with it.

**Mr. Shillington:** — Mr. Minister, in the Assembly you stated clearly no contract has been awarded to that firm since Mr. Cutts and Miss Devitt became engaged. You stated that they were married on June 29, '85. I want to know when the contract was awarded and when the work was performed. It would appear from the file number that the contract would have been awarded after April 1, 1985. It's number 140, so it would have been awarded some time after that. So I'd ask you, Mr. Minister, if you'll also undertake to report to the House when the specific contract was awarded.

**Hon. Mr. Schoenhals:** — Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to indicate that nothing that has been presented here today would indicate that anything I said the other day was inaccurate. I will get the details as I indicated and return with them.

## STATEMENT BY DEPUTY PREMIER

### Response to Allegations

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day I would like to take this opportunity to make a personal statement to the legislature.

Mr. Speaker, the decision to tell you this story is the toughest decision that I've ever come to. But in the view of my wife and my family and myself, the speculation that exists in the public mind about certain allegations and investigations is far more damaging to our family than the telling of this story would be.

Mr. Speaker, the last 18 days have been nothing short of hell for me and my family. Thousands of parents understand and appreciate the difficulties faced when raising a family. Jean and I are no different. In raising our four children we have faced some trying times. The great misfortune is that we must do it in the public eye. However, the meat grinder that I have been put through over the last 18 days is beyond description.

Jean and I have four children. Two of them are our natural children, and two of native ancestry were adopted some 11 years ago. We have attempted to treat all four of them equally as individuals within a family unit. We have also attempted to raise them in a Christian home with love and understanding.

Unfortunately, our oldest daughter, who was about five years old when she came to us, was and is emotionally disturbed. My wife and I have worked ever since then with her. We have done everything in our power, Mr. Speaker, to help her over the years without really understanding the depth of her problems. We have sought various kinds of professional help in her development. She remains, Mr. Speaker, a very emotionally disturbed young lady. She has a history of making false accusations about a variety of people, doing a variety of things. Mr. Speaker, many of them are a matter of record at doctors' offices, at police departments in the province, at the Department of Social Services, and at schools our daughter has attended. She is an emotionally disturbed teenager, and our efforts to help her have not met with success.

This background information, Mr. Speaker, leads me to the questions: when allegations are levelled about you and not at you, how do you prove your integrity? How do you prove your honesty? How do you prove, Mr. Speaker, that you are a decent individual?

About two months ago, my daughter was charged under the Young Offenders Act. The charge, Mr. Speaker, was assault. The details are not important. But as a result of the charges under the Young Offenders Act, it was necessary for the Department of Social Services to prepare a pre-disposition report for the court. This, Mr. Speaker, is where our family's nightmare began. Here we have a young lady in trouble with the law and being interviewed by a social worker. The anxiety of a disturbed child at any time is pretty devastating, but faced with these difficulties, she falsely alleges certain things against her family, and specifically her father. And under the present regulations,

Mr. Speaker, the particulars of these allegations have not been made clear to me or my family even to this very date.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, it would appear that as a result of her allegations certain inquiries had to be made by both the Department of Social Services and the Regina city police. Without any attempt by the Department of Social Services to verify the allegations made by my daughter, the Regina city police were brought in to investigate these allegations against me, my family, and others. My daughter, by this time beginning to realize the magnitude of the impact of the allegations she has made, becomes very anxious. After spending several hours with social workers and several more with the police, and all of this without the knowledge of the family, she realized that she has probably, and probably with the help of the social workers, painted herself into a rather serious corner.

So at this point, Mr. Speaker, this young lady takes what some people would call a very predictable course of action under the circumstances. She steals her mother's car, and a bottle of rum, and a butcher knife, and drives to a remote area outside of Regina to commit suicide. The attempt was thwarted however, Mr. Speaker, when she ran into a power pole with the car, doing considerable damage to it and to herself. And this, Mr. Speaker, was where she was found at 11 a.m. the next day by myself and the RCMP.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, I suddenly find myself and my family have become victims of the system. Because of the system, either from a policy point of view or because of certain professionals acting less than professionally, perhaps even unethically — or perhaps both — we find ourselves on a treadmill with no control.

I understand that files dealing with this type of case are normally held by the department with the highest degree of confidentiality. The fact that the file relating to me and my family was apparently treated like a news-letter and leaked to the press and others, leads me, Mr. Speaker, to no other conclusion than that people, the people handling this file, acted very unprofessionally or unethically or both.

But to what end, Mr. Speaker? In their eagerness to get at me, what have they done to help my daughter? Have they done anything in a positive way for my family, my wife, my other three children? Mr. Speaker, we have been put through a meat grinder beyond description or belief. I was shocked to find that someone, for whatever motive, leaked a story to the local press. I was even more shocked that the local press would have printed it without verification as to fact, and we all know now that the press accounts were not accurate, Mr. Speaker.

We all believe in freedom of the press, but such freedom demands responsibility. Irresponsible statements designed to be sensational cannot be condoned. The fundamental principle of our judicial system is that all people are innocent until proven guilty. It is unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that certain members of the press feel that they have the right to slander people and by innuendo convict them in the public mind when charges, or even the suggestion of charges, are not involved.

Mr. Speaker, of course we all know that we must be eternally vigilant in the protection of our young people. But this whole issue, Mr. Speaker, is a two-edged sword and, Mr. Speaker, professionals in this field must be held accountable for their actions.

All of this time and all of this publicity, and who has gained? My daughter? My family? Me? the bureaucrats who handled this case? Mr. Speaker, no one has gained; no one has been helped.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I have come to realize that if these things can happen to me and my family, if a person of my influence and resources has no recourse, how must the people who don't have these things available to them be treated?

Mr. Speaker, I intend to take any and every action necessary to protect the rights, not only of me and my family, but of all the people who may find themselves in a similar situation. I find it particularly abhorrent that the problems our family has experienced with our daughter have become a matter of public debate. But here we are, Mr. Speaker, and hopefully, when this is over, we will be able to help our daughter without further unwarranted interference.

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

(1445)

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

#### COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

#### Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Health Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 32

#### Item 1 (continued)

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Chairman, I want to spend some time with the minister on an important area that has come to light, and I know some of my colleagues want to get in on the same area because it affects them in their constituency very directly. And that is the funding formula for nursing home construction.

I wonder if you can outline the changes that were put in place and the day that they came into effect in terms of the proportion of funding from the local government, from the province, and from the federal government. There were changes that took place and if you could outline in a little bit of detail what was there, what the changes were and what is in place now, and how that has impacted on the local community.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — I think this will supply the answer that the member is requesting, that the local sponsor's share of renovation and construction cost was changed effective April 1st, 1985; and the local sponsor's share of renovation costs of existing special care homes decreased from 80 per cent to 50 per cent. Previously, if there was a

renovation the local sponsor paid 80 per cent and the government 20. As of April 1st, '85, we changed that from the local sponsor paying 80 per cent to a 50-50 split. and the local sponsor's share of construction costs of new special care homes, special care home beds, has increased from 8 per cent — it was 8 per cent previously — up to 15 per cent. And of course, in each case, plus furnishings. It was 8 plus furnishings and 15 plus furnishings.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Can you give me a list of the nursing homes, Mr. Minister, that were more or less caught in the transition period? And you'll know what I'm referring to. There were a number of nursing homes where there had been commitments made in one way or another, either by verbal consultation that went on with people in your department to communities . . . Then the policy changed, and you'll know that. And you'll have received letters, and I can get the letters for you and read some of them into the record if we want to. Or will you give me a list of those communities that were caught in that trap and how they've been dealt with? Are you feathering in some of them, extending the time period, and how are you working that through the system?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — The ones that I had announced prior to then, we gave them the option of which way they would want to go, because it would depend whether it be a renovation or new construction. If it was a renovation it probably would be advantageous to take advantage of the new formula; a new construction, they would have remained on the old formula. That was up to the point of announcement. Other ones that were announced after that, of course fell into the new formula.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I wonder, Mr. Minister, can you give me a list of those now? Do you have them with you? I'll just wait then for you to . . .

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — We'll have that in a minute or two. My officials are just pulling it together.

The ones that were given the option were Arborfield, Big River, Dalmeny, Eston, Foam Lake, Lampman, Lucky Lake, Melville, Meadow Lake, Rose Valley, Saltcoats, and Saskatoon Lutheran.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Can you give me the status of the Mankota nursing home? Which formula would that fall under?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Under the new formula.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — And that would mean that the local community would put in 15 per cent of the money from the local level?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Yes. Mankota would be the new formula of 15 per cent plus furnishings.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — The minister will know the problems that this has caused for a number of communities where they are having a more than difficult time, and I imagine you have had that problem raised to you. Can you outline what amount of difference in terms of dollars on that one nursing home, for example, that change will have meant

to the community?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — In my discussions with communities . . . I think we discussed this last year, and I'll just touch on it again. There were communities indicating to me that they could contribute more and that's why we felt that if this was the case then we would raise the formula. Certainly there has been . . . And I understand that in some communities — and I'll give you the figure for Mankota as soon as I have it; they're working those out — but it does put an added responsibility on the community. But I can say that we're being as understanding as we can and not holding them to the line that, you've got to have it on this day or something of this nature. And there has not been one community back out.

I think there's a great demand within communities, or a great pride to see that they can come up with their share of it, and communities by hook or by crook, by one way or the other, are certainly doing that. But I will give you the Mankota figures exactly when they are here.

Sixty thousand dollars is the change in the figure that that community would have to come up with as their portion of the cost of the nursing home.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — And can the minister tell me what percentage increase that is?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — About an 87 per cent increase. It's basically doubled from 8 to 15 per cent.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well I think the minister makes the point very clearly that I want to make, that this is a direct transfer of taxation, if you want to call it that, or the raising of money for public projects, from the provincial government to the local area where you are putting in — obviously putting in \$60,000 less — \$60,000 less from the provincial level and 60,000 more from the local level.

And this is a dramatic change. And I understand you to say that the communities . . . Or you're almost implying that they appreciate it because it gives them more incentive to go out and raise more money. The logic of that doesn't leap out at any of the local communities.

I wonder: what was it that established 15 per cent? Why wasn't it 12 or why wasn't it 16? What was the analysis that went into the change that it should have been 15 per cent as opposed to a different number?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well basically in consultation with various communities around the province, we felt from discussion with them, as they said they would come up with a greater percentage. And I can tell you that there are some areas of the province that came in and said, we will build it entirely ourselves — we will build it entirely ourselves. That 15 per cent would be a figure that they could live with and, as I say, there have been none that have backed out.

They get their sources at the local level from a variety of means. In many cases I see communities where the local Lions Club has spearheaded the initiative, or whatever service club may be in their area, as well as, of course, generous contributions from individuals themselves. So I

suppose that would be where we arrived at the figure of 15.

I want to explain to the Chair, though, and to the member opposite, the rationale behind this, in that we are able by this method to put more facilities in more communities. And also I think it should be noted that, to try and provide more facilities, we raise the community portion, but also on renovation we decrease the community's share so that those facilities that can be renovated to look after heavy care patients will be encouraged to do that; will be encouraged to do that.

And I think that is efficient use of Health money, to try and use those facilities that can be renovated to look after long-term-care people, heavy level 3s and level 4s, by lowering the renovation grant, and the other side, as I say, by increasing the community's share. No communities have backed out, and it's just allowed us to put more facilities in more communities.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, my colleague has been addressing the question of the change in the formula for the nursing homes, and I unfortunately had to be out during that period. I don't want to repeat what he's covered, but I've tried to get myself apprised of what he has asked you.

Undoubtedly the formula has been changed, and you have shifted to the local communities, or the local boards for the nursing homes, the construction of them, a very substantial shift in the cost of construction. And I believe he asked you, who initiated it? Who came to you and asked you to increase the formula?

I would think that if you were wanting to build more nursing homes that I find it rather difficult to believe that the SUMA or SARM or the individual towns or villages or cities would come to you saying, increase the formula for the construction of nursing homes.

And I was wondering whether you have a list of all of those that you have communicated with in coming to the conclusion that the people of Saskatchewan asked you to increase the formula for constructing nursing homes. And I was wondering whether you could sort of document the process that you used in doing what the people wanted here in Saskatchewan by more than doubling their contribution in the construction of nursing homes.

So I ask you if you would in fact give us a sort of a chronological run-down as to the process whereby they convinced you to put into place a doubling of their contribution.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Chairman, as I indicated to the member from Shaunavon previously, I had communities come to me and say to me: Mr. Minister, if we put up the total cost, the total cost of construction, will you allow to go ahead, and will you operate that nursing home? Those proposals have come from different communities around this province.

I said, I don't think that's the correct way to do it, because if I followed that type of example, Mr. Chairman, then those communities that, due to location, due to economic

development, who may have a higher taxing revenue, greater chance to access funds, may be in a wealthier part of this province, would be able to get the nursing home. And I don't think that's fair.

So I talked to communities around this province, many of them. Of the 60 communities that have nursing homes, I believe almost all of them have been in to see me at least once, and some of them more times than that, and many other communities that are wanting nursing homes. So in these discussions often I said to them, could you come up with a greater share? And they said, look, we'll go home and think about that.

(1500)

Following those kind of discussions with communities, where that wasn't put down as an impossible situation, we came to the Saskatchewan Association of Special-Care Homes convention in Saskatoon. I remember the day well. I remember calling in the Saskatchewan special care homes executive — there must have been 25 people or so — into a room, and outlined to them the discussions I'd had with communities and the intent that we were having as a department to move to 15 per cent. I discussed that with them before we moved on that direction.

Since that time, as I said, we have moved to 15 per cent by the local sponsor. No nursing homes have been refused. Communities are looking towards our year 6 announcement saying: certainly, we realize that we have to play some part at the local level; and we feel that 15 per cent at the local level, with a CMHC loan repayable over a 25 or 30 year period with the write-down interest, is a fair way for us to provide facilities for our senior citizens.

So I hope that gives the member opposite some indication of the type of dialogue that took place. The various communities — I can go through the list of them, but they're in *Hansard* for the member's . . . for his identification, and he can see these things.

And just to show you — here was one that I was out the other day to. They're getting a nursing home, a small community called Rabbit Lake. They never thought they would be able to get one. And just to show the support — and they pay 15 per cent, and they're not a very big community. I was in Rabbit Lake at their hall when we turned the sod. They're not a very big community at all.

They say this, dated April 15, 1986 — so this letter isn't very old. It says:

Dear Mr. Taylor: This letter is to express our appreciation to you for the time and effort you have given to make our project, the Rabbit Lake and district integrated facility, a dream come true. The building is progressing on schedule, with the completion date set for July 165, 1986.

So, Mr. Chairman, I believe when you see little communities like Rabbit Lake writing in and saying a dream has come true . . . I was there that day in Rabbit Lake. I sensed the sincerity of those people. I can see them in my mind's eye now as we spoke in their little town hall.



They're very appreciative. They're paying 15 per cent plus furnishings. And I think from the letter you can see they're very, very glad they're getting a nursing home in their town.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Ask a short question, get a long answer — sort of a diarrhea of the mouth from the minister.

I want to ask you, Mr. Minister, in respect to nursing homes also, is that you have published, I believe, a five-year projection list of nursing homes. And what I want to ask you, Mr. Minister, is: is that list real or is it put out for electioneering purposes? Is that what you're scheduling to go ahead with? Is it able to be altered? Does it mean anything? Once it's published, is that the schedule for the next four or five years, or are there alterations, or can you amend it according to the political whims of the needs of your party?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, if he wants to make light of the sincerity of the community of Rabbit Lake, so be it . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Certainly, he said you'd give me a long answer. There was a little community; I cited it as an example of a small community that are very, very appreciative. Now if he wants to mock Rabbit Lake, let him do that. I won't mock Rabbit Lake. I was in Rabbit Lake and I saw the sincerity of those people.

But certainly you want to look at the construction program. You look back at the three years of construction that's taken place. I invite you . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well if he wants to sit in his place and shout, as he continually does, the member from Quill Lakes always shouting, and shouting from his seat in this House and that takes more time. If he wants to sit there and shout, so be it.

Let me tell you that, that I'm saying to the member opposite, Mr. Chairman, if he wants to look at the track record of the last three years in nursing home construction, just go to the communities. I invite him to come to Wawota — go to Wawota, go to Stoughton, go to Arborfield, go to Dalmeny. Just name them all around, town after town. They've been built.

Look at the ones that are in the planning stage and the sod is turned, and they're being built now. And I can tell you that that is the blueprint of what we're going to build. Certainly society changes from time to time, but that is the intention, and I believe those will be built.

**Mr. Koskie:** — I asked you a question and I guess perhaps you forgot it again because your mouth starts rattling faster than your brain was working again, Mr. Minister. But I want to ask you this: is it not true that you put out a list, a five-year list of the nursing homes that you project to be built during the next five years.

All I ask you, without repetition of the previous, does that have any reality in fact, and is that the list that the people of the province can depend upon, or is it flexible so that it can meet the needs of the individual Tory members that may be running in the next election?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Chairman, that's a ridiculous kind of comment and the type of sincerity that this

member has towards long-term care. The member from Quill Lakes must try and politicize everything. I will indicate to you . . . you know, I would like him to get up and give something of a concrete nature of what he thinks could be done in nursing home construction.

For 1984-85 the following projects have been built: Davidson, 10 new beds, and three replacement beds for 13; Indian Head, 15 new beds and two replacement beds for 17; Kelvington, 10 new beds; Kindersley 80 replacement beds; Kinistino, 14 new beds, four replacement beds, for a total of 18; Lloydminster, 50 replacement beds; Outlook, 16 new beds and three replacement beds, for a total of 19; Regina Lutheran, 11 new beds; Saskatoon Circle Drive, 50 new beds; Stoughton, six new beds and 24 replacement beds, for a total of 30. Those are built.

Here's the ones that are under construction. Under construction at the present time: Arborfield, 36 new beds; Big River, 30 new beds; Dalmeny, nine new beds, plus 27 replacement beds, for a total of 36; Duck Lake, 30 new beds; Eston, 22 replacement beds; Foam Lake, 10 new and two replacement, for a total of 12; Goodsoil, 12 brand-new beds; Lampman, 19 new beds; Lucky Lake, 12 new beds; Meadow Lake, 25 replacement beds; Melville, 30 new, plus two replacement beds; Nokomis, 12 new beds; Rabbit Lake, that I mentioned previously, 12 new beds; Rose Valley, 12 new beds; Saltcoats, 30 new beds; and Saskatoon Lutheran, two new, plus 78 replacement beds, for a total of 80.

**Mr. Koskie:** — I asked a question, and I'll ask it again just in case you go through your little dissertation. I asked you whether in fact is it not true that you put forward a five-year proposal of nursing homes that would be built in the next five years?

I'm asking you a simple question, of whether or not that list can be depended upon by the people of Saskatchewan, whether that is the firm commitment for the future, or to what extent that is subject to change at the whim of the political needs of the party opposite?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well certainly, if you look at the ones that I've just read out, the ones that have been built, the ones that are under construction, I don't think there's any change at the whim. But just so the member opposite knows, I will give him the indication of the ones that already have approval in principle, and in most cases most of them have selected their architect. And that's for '86-87.

Cut Knife, a new 30-bed facility; Dinsmore, 12-bed integrated facility; Esterhazy, 10 additional beds; Fillmore, 13-bed integrated facility; Fort Qu'Appelle, 10 additional plus 6 replacement beds; Gainsborough, 12-bed integrated facility; Invermay, 10 additional beds; Langenburg, 10 additional beds; Lumsden, a new 30-bed facility; Mankota, which we discussed earlier, a 12-bed integrated facility; Norquay, 10 additional beds; Regina Salvation Army, 30 additional beds; Regina Santa Maria Home, 48 additional beds; Tisdale, 40 additional beds; and Yorkton, 40 additional beds. That was for '87-88.

These ones in '87 . . . that was '86-87. For '87-88, having

given approval in principle, and many of them have selected their architect: Cabri, 12-bed integrated facility; Elrose, two new and 28 replacement beds; Leoville, 12-bed integrated facility; Loon Lake, 12-bed integrated facility; Montmartre, a 12-bed integrated facility; Moose Jaw St. Anthony's Home, 160 replacement beds; Nipawin, 40 additional beds; Theodore, a 12-bed integrated facility; Wadena, seven new and 19 replacement beds.

And for '88-89, the next year of the program, and again a number of these have selected the architect: Canwood, new 30-bed facility; Craik, a 12-bed integrated facility; Eastend, six additional beds; Eaton, an eight-bed integrated facility; Humboldt, 40 additional beds; Ituna, 10 additional beds; Kyle, a 12-bed integrated facility; Midale, a 10-bed integrated facility; Rosthern, 30 replacement beds; St. Brieux, a new 30-bed facility; and Saskatoon Sherbrooke, 40 replacement beds.

**Mr. Koskie:** — In respect to Middle Lake, you either indicated 25 or 35 replacement beds. Could you indicate how many beds the previous nursing home had there, and whether in the community of Middle Lake, whether there actually, as a result of your actions, there is a decrease in the actual beds available in the community of Middle Lake.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Middle Lake was open in '85 — a brand-new 36-bed facility.

**Mr. Koskie:** — I'm sorry. I wasn't able to get that answer. Would you repeat it, please?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — In Middle Lake, I was out at the opening of it. I believe it was '85 if my memory is correct on that. It was a brand-new, 36-bed facility.

**Mr. Koskie:** — And the other part of the question: how many beds were available previously? It seems to me that there were 55 beds, and the 55-bed unit has been closed. I'm asking you whether that was closed and replaced by the 36 beds. Or have you in fact met the need of the community by allowing the existing beds to continue to operate and as well add to it the 36 beds?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Certainly I think one has to realize the type of facility that was constructed in Middle Lake. There was a 55-bed level 1 and 2 facility there which I saw and toured. The new facility is a 36-bed heavy care, level 3 and 4. The other facility that was vacated and the heavy care people moving into the brand-new one — there's discussion going on with Sask Housing at the present time, I understand, to see if it can be used as some type of enriched housing. Those kinds of questions, of course, you should ask the minister of Sask Housing when the opportunity arises.

(1515)

But certainly Middle Lake had a brand-new . . . And I was at it personally. I toured it. It's a state of the art — it's as good as they build in Canada today — heavy care facility. And the other facility — discussions are going on as to its future use.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Have you received, Mr. Minister, representations from the board at Middle Lake, in fact, to continue to operate the . . . I believe it was 55-bed, you say, level 1 and 2. Have they made representations to continue to operate that?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — What happened, if you'll recall, back in . . . I think these discussions had taken place prior to 1982. There was a feasibility study done, and on the existing facility there were some concerns of the fire commissioner. So when we came into power we built a brand-new level 3 and 4, 36-bed one. There have been discussions about the alternate use of the other building. Most recently my deputy and the head of Sask Housing have met with Middle Lake. It appears more feasible to see if it can be used as enriched housing, and I understand that Sask Housing are following up in discussions with them to see if that is a feasible alternative use to it.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Mr. Minister, I know as a fact that there have been representations to you, and there have been meetings in respect to the community of Quill Lake, requesting a nursing home facility in the village of Quill Lake. And I'm wondering whether you could indicate whether in fact you have had meetings on it, and whether you can advise me whether you have indeed made a decision in respect to the representations made by the community of Quill Lake.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Certainly I had met with people from Middle Lake. I remember meeting with them personally . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, Middle Lake. I'm still on Middle Lake. You asked me about Middle Lake. I had met with them and, as I said, most recently my deputy and the head of Sask Housing did.

In regards to Quill Lake, I know that members of my staff had been out through there some time ago to meet with representatives of that area to discuss the possibility. As far as any decision having been made, at this point in time there's been no decision made.

**Mr. Koskie:** — I know that indeed the material was presented to you, that a survey was done. I know, and I've met with groups from the community — they have presented it, supporting the need for it.

I'd like to ask you: what more does this community need to do in order to get a decision? Or will it be announced in the next provincial election by the candidate for the Progressive Conservative Party? Is that the way that you're going to deal with it? Why can't you give an answer to the community whether or not, on the basis of the evidence that they've provided to you, whether or not they are in line for a nursing home?

And the reason I say that is because under the Thatcher government, under the other previous right-wing government, there was a hospital closed and the community of Quill Lake have in fact a substantial amount of money held in trust and would be in a position to make their contribution, should the department proceed with the nursing home.

And what I'm asking, Mr. Minister: is there any further things that the community group should do in order to

precipitate a decision on behalf of your department? Can you advise me of that?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, Quill Lake will be given equal consideration with other communities throughout Saskatchewan that are requesting special care homes. I believe that the community has put forth their concerns and their documented need, as have many other communities. And one has to sit down and take a look at those and try to assess where the greatest need is and where that facility could be placed. I'm not ruling out Quill Lake. They will be given the same consideration as the other communities who have been requesting long-term care facilities in their areas.

**Mr. Koskie:** — I appreciate that you're going to be giving consideration to this matter. Would it be possible to give me an answer to my question, first of all. Is there anything further that the community should be doing to impress upon you or provide you with any further information in order that you can make a final determination. You say it's going to be considered with other communities. What I'm asking you: is there anything further that you require from the community in order that you can make a decision?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well, many communities use whatever avenues they feel that they can access the facility that they would like. If they want to come and visit me again, if they feel that would be beneficial, certainly they can set up an appointment and come in and visit me. I say they can come back and see me again if they think that is appropriate. If they feel that there has been changes . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, if you want to keep shouting from your seat, it'll take longer for me to give you the answer to the question.

I say the community could come back into my office and have a visit with me if they so wish. If the demographics in their area have changed since the period of time that they last submitted it; if they want to submit another update of what their demographics are, what their age population, the number in Quill Lake and surrounding areas; if they have brought in some more supporting municipalities; if there's been changes — by all means bring them to my attention.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Have you looked at the material and reviewed the material that has in fact been submitted to date. And can you indicate to me whether your department or your officials could advise you whether or not they're in the ball park and likely to get approval in respect to a nursing home. I have asked you whether there is anything more they can provide you in order to make a decision. You won't answer that. So what I'm asking you is: can they expect a decision? Have they provided and made a case for a particular need for a nursing home? Can you provide me with that?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well certainly any documentation that comes in to me or to my officials is certainly analysed, looked through in detail. Comparisons are made with other communities. If they have some updated information that they want to get in to me, then they should get that in.

But I cannot give any commitment to Quill Lake or any other community at this point in time. We're analysing these; we're looking at them. And I can just say to those communities, if they want to compare their last three years record with the previous one, I think they will see that whatever communities they are in Saskatchewan, they stand an awful lot better chance of getting a nursing home under this government than they did under the previous one. The member opposite stood up and said they had money for 11 years. He's been the member for a number of years. Prior to that the Speaker was the member before he pulled a short run on him and took his nomination. Before that they have been represented by the NDP through the last 11 years. If they had the money, I wonder why they didn't get a nursing home during that period of time.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Well one of the reasons is that many of the young people are leaving the province now and what we're having in our communities is primarily the older people in our communities. Many of the young people are leaving under the Tory administration, if you want to know.

Obviously the minister . . . I've asked you a straightforward question, whether they're, in your view, you've examined their application. I ask you: is there any further information that you require in order to determine whether their application should receive serious consideration and, in fact, a determination that they need a nursing home?

That's a simple question. Surely to heavens you can advise a community whether or not what they have submitted puts them into the ballpark of receiving a nursing home. Have you given the town of . . . the village of Quill Lakes any determination on their submission? What have you said to them?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Chairman, we've done the same with Quill Lakes as we've done with every other community in Saskatchewan. They come in, either see some of my officials, come to visit me personally, put forth their best proposal that they can for a nursing home — you realize this, and I think you and I had a meeting in Canwood where they put forth a very, very good position, if you can remember, with those people in that area. I can indicate to you that if Quill Lakes feel they want to bring in some more up-to-date material, my door is open to them.

It's very interesting to note that the member who stands up here and makes a big ploy for a nursing home in Quill Lakes — and he has that right to do, though, because he is the representative — but it's interesting to know, he said a few minutes ago in this place that they had the money for 11 years. And I want to just remind him that part of that 11 years, albeit small, thank goodness it was, that he was the minister in charge of nursing homes in Saskatchewan. And I wonder how much consideration he gave to the Quill Lakes submission at that time.

I can give you the assurance, and I will give him the same assurance, that the same treatment is given to Quill Lakes as is to any other community that is wanting a nursing home in Saskatchewan. And if the Quill Lakes people

want to come in and see me, just give me a ring, and we'll set up an appointment and get the most up-to-date information from their community.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Well one can't really expect to get a definitive answer from this minister. We're going into over two weeks of trying to get precise answers, and he has been stonewalling. But that's characteristic of the members opposite. They have this huge majority; they don't think they have any accountability. And that is continuing on here today.

I want to ask the minister further whether you have received representations from the community of Watson for additions or level 4 nursing facilities in the town of Watson, and if you could advise me whether, in fact, you have received that submission, and whether there's any disposition, any decision on that matter.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well we have committed a new hospital to Watson. I believe there are some discussions about some long-term care associated with it, but nothing specific has been discussed at this point in time.

**Mr. Koskie:** — I wonder if you have made a commitment vis-a-vis a hospital, whether it would make any sense to examine at the same time the feasibility of working in some nursing home facilities, level 4 beds. Certainly in my discussions with the community I know that the proposal is to attach a new hospital to the existing nursing home and the potential of adding on some level 4 beds. And I would ask you whether or not it wouldn't be advisable to at least make a decision whether or not you're going to incorporate it at the time that the hospital is being built? Shouldn't there be an analysis of both aspects?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well certainly I believe the hospital that is being added on to the special care home is the first in the province for this to happen in Watson. Most recently there has been a request that we look at the possibility of some special care beds; the designation of how many has not certainly been ascertained at this time. I'm willing to discuss this type of an option with them. I think we have to look at the feasibility of it. But certainly the new hospital is there; it's committed to go there; it is built on the existing special care home, and I think there's some cost savings in that in that we are able to use the same kitchen and things of that nature. So we will discuss further with them their request for some level 4 beds in this facility.

(1530)

**Mr. Koskie:** — In respect to the formula for the financing of the hospital — say the hospital in Watson — my information is that a new formula was put into place when we were in government under the then Health minister, Mr. Herman Rolfes, which in fact decreased very substantially the amount of commitment that would have to be made by the hospital district.

And what I want to ask you: the previous contribution I think was 60-40, and then it was changed on a basis of mill rate. And I am advised, and I'd like to confirm with you, whether over and above have you in fact altered and

put a cap on the formula which will limit the amount that the Department of Health will contribute to say, a union hospital, and the construction of it?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — The formula has remained unchanged.

**Mr. Koskie:** — My understanding is that it has been altered to the extent that a cap has been put on limiting it to 85 per cent, that the maximum that would be paid in, regardless of . . . And I just want a confirmation on that because that is the information that I've received, that there was a cap put on that the department wouldn't pay beyond 85 per cent.

Now that's what I've been told, and I'd like a confirmation of whether that was, in fact, instituted by you.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Fifty per cent and no cap — 50-50 and no cap — 50 per cent.

**Mr. Koskie:** — You're saying in respect . . . the formula that's in place for the funding for the Watson hospital will be 50-50, 50 per cent local and 50 per cent by the department. Is that what you're saying?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — My officials are working on the Watson project, so I'll give you the specific figures for that, percentages. They're working on that now.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Well would you provide me — I don't have many more questions on this — would you provide me with that information as to the formula that you'll be using in respect to the funding of the Watson hospital? And secondly, will you give me the general formula that is used by the department in respect to the funding of union hospitals?

I don't believe it's 50-50 because I believe that when we left office, and what we changed, and were in processing of changes at least, it was 60-40, and I think we gave them a substantially better deal based on a percentage of mill rates on their assessment. And it reduced it down very, very substantially. And I do believe that you put a cap on it.

But if you'd provide that information I would appreciate it.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — There's a cost protection factor in there, if it exceeds five mills over 10 years, and so on. But I want to give you exactly for Watson because that's what you're asking about. Then you want the general formula for small hospitals. I'll provide that to you, and I will give you the figures of Watson.

Now what I will be providing for you, so that we're clear on this, is the Watson hospital. I mean, the level 4 beds that we discussed three or four minutes ago are still in an embryonic form of discussion . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, they haven't said how many they want, so it wouldn't be fair to try and put that in. And then on an integrated facility there's two formulas too, you understand; you would see that.

**Mr. Yew:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. With regards to the information that you have provided in the past couple of weeks, Mr. Minister, other than what we debated on in your estimates, I haven't got any clear, concise information, you know, just to clear the air.

When I am asked by interested citizens and constituents regarding the community health worker program or the nursing care facility or the clinics or the various other health programs and services for the North, I have not got clear, concise information. And basically, I guess what I'm asking you very clearly at this point in time, is an itemized copy of what we can expect for services, programs or capital construction programs via the health estimate. Mr. Minister, is it too much to ask for that type of detailed information?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — I'll give you as much detailed information as I can. We'll try and break it down for you, and I'll provide that to you.

**Mr. Yew:** — I thank you. Then, Mr. Minister, I certainly hope I can get this as early as possible. And with that, I have no further questions.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Just as soon as I can have it drawn together, we'll provide it to you.

(1545)

**Mr. Thompson:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I only have a few questions, Mr. Minister. First of all, I wonder . . . and I don't need this information today. If your officials could pass that on to me — the number of patients that were transported south from northern Saskatchewan for health-related reasons, and the number of dollars that were spent on transporting the patients from the North to the South. That would include aircraft and cars, both. Could that be provided for me, please?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — I think the member realizes — and I think that's why he indicated that we could have a little time to put this together, because a portion of it is MediVac, you know, and a portion of it is air ambulance. So I'll have to pull those things together as the cost. But I'll provide that. To get you correct: you want to know the number of people transported and the cost of that transportation. Is that the question?

**Mr. Thompson:** — The number of patients that were transported south; and the number of dollars, including all types of transportation — ambulances, taxis and aircraft.

I want to just ask another question here, and that's related to health services in the North. Could you indicate if your director of northern health is in charge of all the provincial health related situations that we have up in northern Saskatchewan?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — So to give you the best information we can on this question — and I'm sure the first part you're aware of, that portions of the North are under the jurisdiction of the federal government, certain areas . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, I'm just outlining it to you. So some of it would be federal. Okay. He's in charge of

everything except what is under SHSP, or the Saskatchewan hospital services plan. So hospitals, he would not. And, I believe, also SADAC, which is the Saskatchewan Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission; he is not responsible for that. But your community health workers, the dental program, things of this nature, fall under his jurisdiction.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Would he handle the services to the elderly?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Yes, yes he would.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, the other day in estimates I asked you a question about a petition that had come to you from 28 citizens at Beauval, and I suggest to you, sir, that the information that you received was not accurate. I asked you where the office was for the senior citizens. You indicated it was in the town hall, to the best of your knowledge, and I was assuming that you were getting that information from your director who is in charge of the program.

And I just say to you, Mr. Minister, that that office never was in the town hall. It was in a private home. It has now since been moved out of a private home, not into the town hall, but into the friendship centre. And I just want to get that on the record and get it straightened out that the information that you did receive was really not accurate information.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — I'm sure you realize — and I don't think you're accusing me of trying to mislead at all — there's a lot of clinics to keep in mind. And if it was inaccurate information, I'll certainly look into it. I don't like to have inaccurate information. It may have been a mistake, thinking of the friendship centre as the town hall, I don't know, but I will look into that personally.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Chairman, we asked the minister about polling that was done by his department a couple of days ago, and I wonder if you can now make available to the committee the questions that were asked in the poll that was done that cost the taxpayers, I believe it was, \$37,000; a company that is run by, I believe, a Ken Waschuk, a well-known Conservative pollster. Can you tell us what questions were asked on that poll, what time period it was done, and where the results of that . . . who was apprised to the results of that polling when it was completed?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — As I indicated to you earlier, that questionnaire or research that was done was on the Christmas alcohol, and the follow-up on that and also the sampling of a way to develop a communications strategy, a consultations type of strategy which we have put in place — put that in place with the consultation that has been taking place that I have described previously, of the meetings on long-term care. So that's what the outcome of the research was.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I wonder if the minister would make available to the committee a copy of the questions that were asked, or a list of the questions that were asked on the poll.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — I don't think that's necessary. It was an internal poll. I don't think there's any necessity to . . . or shall I say not any kind of a poll of the internal type of research into this and . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Mr. Chairman, I can't be heard in this House at this time.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I think the important thing is . . . The members of the government benches are yelling so loud that we can't hear. I wonder, Mr. Chairman, if you could settle it down in here.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Does the member have a question?

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, you can hear all the hollering, and the people watching will know that the chairman is having a difficult time keeping any semblance of order in the Assembly. But we'll try to carry on with all the noise going on.

But I say to you, Mr. Minister, that this kind of polling for tens of thousands of dollars paid for by the taxpayers . . . and who knows what was in the poll. We've heard you tell your version of it, but we've heard other stories where you told us that St. Paul's Hospital had no hospital beds closed, and then when pushed on it, of course we get a different answer.

There will be people who will assume that these are political polls being done within your department — paid for by the taxpayers, the money going to a Conservative polling company. Forgive the people of the province if they assume — because you won't release the information and the results of the poll — that it was basically a political poll done in advance to an election planning.

And I say to you that the people will assume that, because obviously if you're hiding the information that was on the poll and you won't table it in the Assembly, and if the public is not accurate in assuming that this was a political poll, why won't you table all of the relevant information?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Chairman, I have indicated to the member on many occasions in this House the relevant information that came out of that research. It was research tracking the Christmas alcohol and advertisements. And I've indicated time after time that the results of that — if the member wants, I'll go back over them again.

Secondly, it had to do with a method of setting up communication strategies which I believe have been very, very successful. That's the results of the poll. And I've explained it on a number of occasions, and I will continue to explain it if the member insists on asking the same questions over again. That is the answer that I can supply to this House and this committee.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well I will accept the refusal of giving the information on the polling. I will accept that you're stonewalling the committee and won't give the information. Obviously we don't have any other choice because all we can do is ask the questions, and when we don't get the answers, then we have to move on as we have done for the past two weeks in many areas in your department. And here we have an important issue where

tens of thousands of dollars were paid to a polling company, and the minister refuses to give the information as to the questions asked, to table the answers that he received that were paid for by the public — paid for by the chairman and other taxpayers through a flat tax, through a used automobile tax — because that's where the money comes from to fund the Health department — through an increase in their income tax, through an increase in their property tax by removal of the property improvement grant.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order. Order. I don't think taxation is a matter of consideration for these Health estimates, and I would ask the member, if he has a question, to get on with it.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — The chairman is . . . Well I suppose it's difficult to ask questions about expenditure of money if you don't talk about how it's raised.

But the minister will well know that in getting the billion dollars that you are spending, part of it on polling — I believe \$37,000 on polling to a Tory polling company run by Ken Waschuk — that there is an assumption out there that that's a political poll. And the minister will know that that is the assumption of the public.

And I think it's appropriate to let the people know that this money that is being spent — \$37,000 — comes out of their taxes. And that's obviously relevant and germane to the debate that is going on. And it's been done here tens of times over the last two weeks, where we've talked about income and where the government gets money for health care — through taxes, obviously. How else would you get it?

And we can try and hide that under the rug, that the \$37,000 came from an increased tax on the provincial population. You know that. It obviously comes from the people of the province and an increase in the flat tax, and that money goes to Health — a billion dollars. Where do you think it comes from? It comes from the taxpayers. Obviously it's part of the issue here that we're dealing with.

And I say to you, to try to sweep under the rug the fact that we get taxes that pay for Health and polling for the Tory Party — \$37,000 through the flat tax and other tax increases — to try to hide that under the rug, and try to shut the opposition down, shows you how arrogant this government is. That's what it is. An arrogant, massive majority that is trying to keep the Health estimates from being answered.

And I say to you that the opposition have a tough time when the minister stonewalls, and we have a difficult time talking about tax increases. When we do, we're told that you can't talk about tax increases. Well I say that these are interesting times we live in when a massive majority government can tell the opposition what questions to ask.

But I just want to close this area by saying that when we're having record tax increases, and on the other hand where the minister is using that money to do political polling — which is the assumption of many people — that is another

reason we should have an election. And so I just say to you that it's impossible to do estimates, Mr. Chairman, if we can't ask about tax increases.

Well I was waiting for an answer to the question about political polling. But, Mr. Chairman, if there's no answer there, I have a number of other questions that we will be moving to.

The issue that I want to ask you about is the communications service contract that was let to SJM Communication Services, I believe it was. Can you explain what the money that was paid to that group was for, what services were rendered for that money?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well basically their involvement was in carrying out the very successful workshops that we had around the province and helping to organize those, and developing materials and strategies for those workshops, and distribution of materials and things of that nature that have made these workshops so successful.

And as I indicated to the member opposite previously, my office literally had thousands of very positive evaluation forms. I've had people, hospital directors . . . I remember one in particular who had been in the service of hospitals for over 25 years and indicated to me that he had attended many, many types of workshops facilitated by the government. He came up purposely to compliment me and say, this had been the best one he had ever attended, and that was in Yorkton. My deputy has received many accolades also of the efficient way in which people from all sectors of society were brought together in these consultation workshops.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order, order. The member from Shaunavon asked a question. the noise that is coming from there, I'm sure you can't hear the answer. Would you please allow this committee to work.

(1600)

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — As I was saying to you before the noise level on the other side of the House got so high that you couldn't hear, Mr. Chairman, was that these consultation committees have been very, very successful. It brings people from all walks of life together to discuss a very important topic in Saskatchewan, that of long-term care, and this consulting firm did a lot to help bring those together. And as I said, both I and my deputy have received many accolades on the way these have been carried out and administered and the type of dialogue that has taken place, as well as the suggestions and directions that have come from this grass-roots type of consultation.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — The speeches that were being sent out, I can tell you the administrators in my area who were getting them were less than impressed in your calling that consultation. I can tell you that getting a two-month old speech which cost thousands of dollars . . . And I read some of those speeches, and I'll tell you that that speech writer, if you paid him for that drivel that was sent out to those administrators, I'll tell you, we've got problems. Those speeches that you sent out were terrible. I read one of them, and I couldn't believe the politics that was involved in them. I know what I would do with those

speeches that you paid thousands of dollars for, and the politics you were trying to play with them.

And I will say, as well, that the meeting in Swift Current where you called in over 100 people and paid for the meal and then didn't show up for the meeting, and the member for Morse attended, I'll tell you, the administrators who came to me after that meeting and told me what a political meeting it was — what a political meeting it was — paid for by the taxpayers to try to get Tory candidates elected, I'll tell you, people are getting a little tired of paying for your campaign.

Now it's one thing to do your polling, if that's what's happening in the department, and people believe that because you won't give them the results of the polling that was done.

And that meeting in Swift Current where the member from Morse carried on and the minister didn't show up, at great expense to the taxpayers, and I might add, a great waste of time, the administrators that I talked to from my area were telling me. They were saying that this political game you people are playing leading up to the election that you believed was going to be called at that time in April, simply is causing them to believe that an election should be called right now so they can vote you out. Because they agree with the nurses and the chiropractors and the doctors, that we're having a tough time with our medicare system in this province because money is being spent inappropriately; money in Health being spent for polling.

Political polling is what the people assume — political speeches that are then sent out to all the administrators to try to make them believe that that's consultation. Then we have political meetings being held around, for example, at Swift Current and all the administrators are called in to come and listen to new health initiatives. And do you know what it is? It's a political meeting. I wasn't there but that's what the administrators told me. That's what they told me.

They said that it was a political meeting, the likes of that they've never seen since they've been involved in being administrators of hospitals. That's what they told me And then they said the final insult was when one of the ministers showed up, not the Minister of Health, not the Minister of Education, and not the Minister of Consumer Affairs from that area, but the member from Morse, to talk about health care.

Well, I'll tell you they were disappointed because they knew more about health than did the member for Morse. That's what they said. That's what they told me. And they said that it was a great expense. They said it was a waste of their time because their boards had to pay for them to be away . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And the member from Maple Creek can shout from her seat, but if she wants to get up and get involved in this debate she had every opportunity to get up and tell us why she wasn't at the meeting. And I will sit down and if she wants to get in and explain it, I'll let her.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Chairman, it seems very strange for the member to stand and really give not correct

statements in this House. I wasn't able to go to that meeting because I was fogged in in Regina here, and couldn't get there. That was the reason and he knows that very well. He knows that. He was informed of that.

To make light of my colleague . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well if you're going to keep shouting . . . Mr. Chairman, I give the introductory remarks at those meetings. They start early in the morning. I couldn't be there. That is the simple truth.

Let me indicate to you . . . And they make light of my colleague from Morse. I had phone calls from people saying that my colleague from Morse did a very admirable job. He did it on short notice. They say: why wasn't the Minister of Education there? The Minister of Education was sick that day or she would have been there filling in for me and she would have done a credible job also.

But let me indicate to you, my officials who were there indicated to me that that meeting ended on an accolade to this government and this Health department for holding such a meeting. And if he thinks they're not supported, can you tell me why — and I ask this House. And the first one we had in North Battleford we had 250 people. From that point on every one of these consultation meetings has been in the neighbourhood of 500 people.

I could bring in document after document after document of people who indicate to me and to my officials; thank goodness for inviting us; we learned something about the need for long-term care; we were pleased to sit down with other professionals, other interested people — there's mayors, there's reeves, there's home care people, there's nurses, there's doctors; there's a complete cross-section. And I can indicate to you that those people are very, very pleased with that type of consultation. They are saying, it's the first time that we've ever been asked; it's the first time we've ever had a chance to participate; and thank you very much and keep that up.

And if they want to criticize spending money to consult with people of Saskatchewan, people at the grass roots, people who pay the bills, people who have their own people in the long-term care facilities, people who work in home care, you go right ahead. You stand in this Assembly and you criticize that all you want. I will tell you that it is that type of consultation, it is that type of going out to people at the grass roots that they appreciate, and it is going to be exactly that type of action that will re-elect the Devine government this time as it did in 1982.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well I'll tell you, if your performance in this Assembly is what you're basing your re-election plans on, I think that you're going to be sadly mistaken. Because I can tell you that what you just put on the record, bragging about the meeting in Swift Current . . . I am going to send to every administrator in the south-west who attended that, where you brag as arrogantly as you continue to do, over and over again, about the great job you're doing.

Now, Mr. Chairman, can you imagine the irony of this minister getting up and bragging about the great job he's doing, about the great job he's doing. We have nurses demonstrating on the steps of the legislature; we have doctors calling for his resignation; we have administrators telling us that the meetings that he is having around the province are nothing but political election planning meetings. And I'll tell you that when they listen to the minister say at a day meeting in Swift Current, because it's fogged in Regina he can't make it to Swift Current — I'll tell you that that's a government that is isolated and out of touch with reality, because there's a four-lane highway built by a New Democratic government from Regina to Swift Current.

Now that is a tired old government that says you can't get in a car and drive down a four-lane highway built by the New Democrats to Swift Current because you don't get time. You can't do it. You've got to be in an airplane. You got fogged in. What are you saying, that it was too foggy to drive between Regina and Swift Current? A two-hour drive/ it was a whole day meeting. If the plan was supposed to leave at 7 in the morning to be there at 8, you could have been there at 9, driving down the highway.

I say to you that this is a government that is out of touch with reality, out of touch with reality. And I'll tell you the arrogance that is shown here in this committee, where you will get up and brag about the speeches that you send out as being consultations; about the meetings such as I heard about in Swift Current as being consultations. I'll tell you that the people of the province do not believe it. They don't believe it. They say that that is political propaganda, those meetings were a strategy leading up to an April 28th or April 30th election and I'll tell you, even that, it was wasted . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

You were wrong again. The polls weren't right by April 30th. You had to back off. You had to back off because you were afraid to go . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, we're not touchy at all about elections. We're ready to go. We've made it public over and over again that we want to fight an election on health care, Mr. Chairman. You know that. You know that you're concerned about health as well, with 8,000 on the waiting list in Saskatoon — and that's why some people aren't running again. I know that. That's not public knowledge — why many people aren't running again in Saskatoon — but I know why. Because I'll tell you, there are honourable people who are members from Saskatoon who won't have anything to do with 8,000 waiting list in Saskatoon.

Now I don't want to get political here, Mr. Minister. I don't want to get political about this, but I'll tell you: if you continue to run these polls out of your department and don't release the numbers, and tell the people in the south-west that because it's foggy you don't have time to drive down the Trans-Canada to Swift Current; and if you're telling them that your speeches are consultation; and if you continue to brag about the great job you're doing when doctors are calling for your resignation and nurses are demonstrating — I say that that is an arrogant government that has to be removed from office at the first opportunity.

And I want you to tell me: why didn't you go to the



meeting in Swift Current? What was the reason? Because I'm still not clear on that.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — I can tell you in this Assembly, I'm going to be in Swift Current and in Shaunavon and a lot of that area in the next while. And I will be out there, and that member will regret some of the words he's said . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well here we go shouting again. Mr. Chairman, if they would be quiet, I will answer.

I answered the member opposite, of the day, at the consultation meetings, I give the lead-off address. When I came to Regina, I could not get out of Regina. It was fogged in. My colleague from Morse said he would handle the address — did a very, very good job. The people, as I understand, understood the situation and — although he may like to get up and give incorrect statements, as he does time after time — the people that attended that workshop, the people that have attended all consultation workshops have been pleased with them.

They have been initiatives that have come out of the consultation workshops that are benefiting Saskatchewan Health. There was a *New Directions* paper right from those consultations that has resulted in many people having input into an improved and expanded home care program, which will result in a new home care Act for Saskatchewan which will soon be brought into this legislature — coming from that consultation. The whole things of the patient care enrichment program, the enriched staffing program that is going into the hospitals and special care homes, came out of those type of consultation meetings.

Now if he wants to make fun of the consultation, and say that people don't appreciate getting speeches and don't like to know what is going on in the Department of Health, he has every right to say that. That simply is not correct. People time after time have indicated to my department and to me that they appreciate very, very much going to those consultation meetings. People from Meadow Lake to Hudson Bay to Shaunavon — all over this province — have attended those consultation meetings. And I can tell you that they are pleased with them; they're pleased to be given the input, to put some direction into what way this government should be moving.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I found it interesting. The minister says he's going to be down in my constituency a lot. Well, I'll tell you, if the indication in Regina, where these birds are well known, is any indication, I welcome them all down full-time to Shaunavon. Because, I'll tell you, when the people get to know them well, as they do in Regina, they're not terribly well liked. They're not terribly well liked. And I invite every one of them . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order, order. Order, order. Has the member got a question for the minister, related to Health?

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Chairman, obviously people will make comments before their question. I could make a half-house speech now if I like. It's been done in the House before, and I may do that now. And it's perfectly in order.

**An Hon. Member:** — Do that.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well I may do that. And we may be here for another week. And we can obviously do that. But for this massive government majority to try to say that members can't speak in the committee and make statements, I think is getting a little bit . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order. There was no suggestion of not being able to speak, but at least let's get on the subject of the estimates.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well that's another issue — being on the topic. You were saying we had to ask a question right away, and I will be asking a question at the conclusion of my remarks.

(1615)

But I want to point out that if the minister was threatening to come to my constituency, I invite him down. I invite him down to talk about health care. I invite the Premier down to talk about health care, because I . . . And the whole bunch of them. I don't know whether there's 19 or 25 of them. It's hard to tell from one day to the next how many ministers there are.

But I'll tell you, I'll pay for your gas to come down to Shaunavon and spend full time campaigning, because you've been living in Regina full-time for the past four years. And I'll tell you, you're not going to win a seat in Regina. You're not going to win one seat.

And I make you a deal: I'll pay for the gas of all the cabinet to come down to Shaunavon and campaign full-time. Because I'll tell you, when people get to know you birds, they kick you out. That's what they did in Regina North East. That's what they did.

Do you know how many per cent you got there? Twenty per cent. Because of health care. Because of health care, Mr. Chairman. That's why. Because where people saw the waiting lists, they don't like you. They don't care for you. They demonstrate on the legislature steps. The doctors in Regina demand your resignation. And I say, I welcome 19 cabinet ministers and the Premier to come to Shaunavon full-time and talk about health care . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Well we'll see how many you send down. But I welcome all of you. Because every time the Premier or a minister comes to Shaunavon, it seems like our popularity goes up a little bit. Our popularity . . . As soon as they see you people, they just get terribly irritated. They get so irritated, the same as they do in Regina. Like, we have 19 of them in Regina, and look how well you're doing there.

Well what I want is about . . . What I need is 19 of you in Shaunavon. I've decided. I need all of you down there, working hard against me. And I see the Minister of Finance is yelling from the back, and obviously he's working on his nomination . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order, order, order. This is entirely irrelevant, what I am hearing. I've been listening to this

and let's get on the estimates, the Health estimates.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I only respond to it because you allowed the minister to mention coming to Shaunavon, and I'm now picking him up on his invitation.

And I'm extending it to the other birds who are across the way, who are so popular in Regina, especially the Minister of Finance. And he's now competing with me, because he wants them all to go out and help him with his nomination. Not only his staff out of his office, but he now wants the members of the Assembly. I hear him saying those kinds of things.

Well I say that members who are shouting from over to my left — it's hard to believe they're to my left — but I tell you that the people of this province are not going to let this minister off the hook this easily. And we may let him go today simply because he has stonewalled so long.

For two and a half weeks we have got no answers on political polling; nothing on political polling that people assume he is doing in his department; nothing about the large amount of money that is going to a political hack from Manitoba for speeches that are being written — and I say terrible speeches. I think they're some of the poorest speeches that I've ever seen. I know that he had people in the department who were doing the speeches beforehand and I've compared them. And I'll tell you the people in your department were writing much better speeches than the old Tory hack from Manitoba, much better speeches. And I think that you should be careful about who you hire.

And I just want to conclude this section, Mr. Chairman, by re-inviting all the cabinet down to Shaunavon during the campaign. I enjoy their company. They have done well in Regina for the member for Regina North East, but I think they should share them. I think they should share them in Shaunavon. And I know the former minister of Energy has been down there. That's helping me a bit. The Premier's been down a couple of times. That helps a little.

And I just want to say, Mr. Chairman, in all fairness, when the minister says he's coming down that I want to lay out the red carpet. I want to lay out the red carpet and I'll buy them supper when they come — the first night. And the longer they stay the better it is because I want to tell you that you're welcome, Mr. Minister, and I appreciate the offer of you coming down and helping out during the campaign.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you very much. I don't know where he got the campaign in this. I'm going down to Shaunavon talking about the development of the rural medical practice study. I was in Wilkie on Monday doing the same thing, and I'm going to go to Shaunavon. Mind you, I may talk to a few people while I'm there also.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I say again, I want to make one more little comment, and that is about your federal meeting you're having, I believe on April 28 — and that's coming up very quickly. I wonder if you have had time now since we've brought it up about the 154 million that you knew nothing about when we started these estimates, and we

brought to your attention. Did you get a chance to have a look at those over the last two and a half weeks, and can you tell me what your estimate is? Is it 154 million that Michael Wilson is planning to take away from Saskatchewan, or do you have a different number?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Chairman, as I said previously, and I'll repeat it again. I'm going down to talk to the federal minister. We're looking at what the EPF funding for this year will be. Indications are it may be somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$9 million — that portion towards health. I'm going to have a discussion with my counterpart down there. I'm going to urge that he talk to his counterpart, the federal Minister of Finance. I will push forth the suggestion made by Saskatchewan on many occasions that I think it would be in the best interests of health care in Canada if the Health ministers and the Finance ministers could sit down together and look at the whole aspect of responsibility for health and funding of health care. That will be the approach I will take when I go to Ottawa again on the end of this month.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well I think what is characteristic here, Mr. Chairman, of this government is the fact that this government won't stand up for Saskatchewan. We have seen it on the price of wheat; we have seen it on the price of wheat, Mr. Chairman, which directly affects the taxes paid by farmers and goes into the Department of Health. We've seen that. The Premier went to Ottawa to get more money for farmers and lost 81 cents a bushel. That's success. And then he says to Mulroney, keep up the good work, Brian. We've seen that.

We know what this government does when it gets to Ottawa. It's hard to negotiate hard when you're down on your hands and knees. I'll tell you, it's very hard to negotiate toughly with Mulroney when you're down on your hands and knees, as this government is.

And I say that was the problem in Prince Edward Island. You were trying to say the same thing, tying your wagon to the federal government. And you people should learn that the federal government is out to get you, to take money away. They have released to the public that they intend to take \$154 million out of Health, and the minister won't say anything.

This isn't a new revelation. He has had weeks now to make a comment on it, to argue publicly — to argue publicly that the cuts shouldn't come. Not a word from the minister; not one press release; not one word of consultation with the administrators on this kind of cut-backs. The cut-backs are there; he's announced them. Michael Wilson says in his budget he's going to take 154 million from Saskatchewan health care. He said it in his budget.

Have you heard one word from this minister on that, publicly? Have you heard him say one word? And then I say to you, Mr. Chairman, do you wonder why the doctors and nurses are upset with this man? Do you wonder why the doctors, who don't have enough money to operate now, are upset with the minister when he won't say a word when the federal government wants another \$154 million?

It's not only the doctors and nurses and chiropractors and the people on waiting lists who are upset with him. It's not only the people who are on the waiting lists who are upset. I say to you that the general public don't like to get kicked around by Ottawa — don't like to get kicked around by Ottawa.

And this is his story. That what is the problem in Canada is that we have to have, if we're going to survive in western Canada, strong provincial governments that will stand up for us on issues of health care, agriculture, and education. And you're not doing that; not a word from you on a \$154 million cut. I haven't heard you defend the province on minute.

So I say to you, when it comes to standing up for Saskatchewan, the people of the province will well know that when you go to Ottawa, it will be a trip all right; you'll have a trip down there, paid for by the taxpayers. But we will be watching closely for an announcement when you come back that that \$154 million is in place. That's what we will be wanting when you come back, and we'll want a public statement that it isn't going to occur.

And we would like you to stand up and say public: Michael Wilson, you're wrong. What we would like, Mr. Chairman, is a ministerial statement when he gets back saying, Michael Wilson, you were wrong to propose that kind of a cut-back; you were wrong to attack the senior citizens two years ago. Not a word on that issue from this government. Not a word, not a word at all.

But I'll tell you, you should be getting the public behind you. If you would have come into this Assembly and said, look, I've got a problem . . . members of the legislature, I've got a problem, that bloody federal Tory government is trying to take \$154 million — \$154 million. If you would have come in here and said that, we would have been with you. We would have been with you. We would have signed our name on a petition where every member would have joined ranks and went against Ottawa's proposal to cut health care funding. I'll bet the chairman would have signed it. I'd be willing to bet the chairman of this committee would have signed a petition as a member of this legislature to fight that vicious plan by Michael Wilson to take \$154 million out of the province. I know they would. I know the member from Regina North East, my colleague, would have. I know the member from Athabasca would have. The member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg and Cumberland and Pelly and the Quill Lakes and Elphinstone and Regina Centre, they all would have been behind you.

And it's not too late now. If you would stand here today and say, look, I need your support in going to fight Michael Wilson's cut-backs, you would have our support today. We're not so political that we won't get on to an issue to protect Saskatchewan taxpayers. We won't be so political that we would not support you in going down to Ottawa in a strong stand, moving an emergency resolution which you could do in this committee. By leave, we could move a resolution right now, if the minister would, and we would support it, saying we're going to fight those cut-backs.

And, Mr. Chairman, I think that you probably today would allow it, where yesterday you wouldn't. I think you would. I think you'll have changed your mind, and we may test that in a moment. But I think we made a mistake yesterday when we didn't pass that resolution. And I say to you that that's a problem. Because we have such a political government, so political that they want to go to Ottawa quietly, in the dark of night, and make a little agreement with Michael Wilson. But we won't say anything until after the election. That's the deal, and that the health care cuts that he has proposed are going to go ahead.

That's what you're doing. That's what Premier Devine did on the agricultural issue which affected health care, because farmers won't have any money to pay taxes for health care. Eighty-one cents a bushel, Mr. Chairman, you know that. You heard it as well as I did. That what happened is that Premier Devine went to Ottawa, Mulroney was in Florida, the minister in charge of the wheat board was in Saskatoon, and who did he meet with? Well, he met with the big blue machine in Ontario because he had political problems; had political problems, got cold feet when it came time to call the election. Now what do I do, boys, to get out of that little dilemma? How do I get out of this dilemma I've created for myself? I was well down the road to calling an election, and then the health care issue blew up. Now how do I get out of it? That's where he was.

And I'll tell you, I'll tell you, Mr. Chairman, that this government should be looking for support from the nurses and doctors and the opposition in going to Ottawa, unified to fight for Saskatchewan. Why won't you do that? I say to you that we would support the Conservatives on this one. We would. If any member of the Conservative Party would get up and have the courage to say — and we would help them write the resolution — we're going to fight Ottawa's cuts to health, we would support you. I'll give you that commitment that we would. And we may have to put it forward before the day is over if none of the members of the government have the courage to do it. But I say to you, Mr. Minister, you could have our support on that kind of a resolution, and I can't for the life of me figure out why you won't do that.

And I guess my short question after those comments is: would you consider getting with us, moving a resolution to . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . we would let you move it, and if you would want us to second it, we would, or you could get one of your members to second it . . . but to pass a resolution telling Ottawa, clearly, that you could take from this Assembly with you in your hip pocket saying, look, I have the support of every member — every member — that they will fight you if you go ahead with this heinous operation of cutting back health care. Will you move that kind of a motion or a resolution?

(1630)

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Chairman, I think I've explained at least 12 times what I plan to do when I go to Ottawa. I think it's very well documented in *Hansard*. I think every member opposite has heard it time after time. I will go and meet with my federal counterpart to discuss health care initiatives in Canada; a number of things will be

discussed. I will urge him to call a meeting of federal Finance ministers and Health ministers along with provincial Finance and Health ministers to discuss the whole topic of funding in health care. That's the plan of action I'm going to take, and that's what I'll embark upon.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I wonder why a non-partisan resolution of the committee, where members who are running in the next election from all political parties, members who are not running, but would be one of their last efforts to stand up for Saskatchewan — I'm sure the member from Rosthern would want to put his name on that kind of a resolution to fight for Saskatchewan because he's been an honourable member in that way in fighting for his constituents. And I don't for the life of me understand why you wouldn't agree to that kind of a resolution because that kind of a resolution, I suppose . . . I would ask you: do you think that kind of a resolution would help you in your arguments in Ottawa to get the point across that those cut-backs shouldn't take place? Do you think that resolution would help or hinder you in your debate?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Chairman, I think, and I could back over these again — the number of initiatives that we have been able to bring forward on the national scene led by Saskatchewan Health indicate that we are quite capable of articulating the Saskatchewan position and standing up for Saskatchewan. I intend to do that again. I think my colleagues have complete support in my capabilities of talking to Mr. Epp, Mr. Wilson, or who else may be down there. We're going to try our best. That's all that one can expect us to do.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I want to turn to a different subject now, and it deals with a group in Moose Jaw, formerly the mentally handicapped foundation, and I believe it has been funded in the past by your department. Can you give me the status on funding for that organization at the present time?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — We haven't funded the group in the past.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — The minister is saying that you haven't given any money to that group in Moose Jaw in the past?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — My officials indicate that we have not funded that group in the past.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Has the minister had requests from them for monetary assistance?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Yes, they have made requests to both the Department of Health and the Department of Social Services over the last few years. We prefer and are funding and working with the local chapters of the provincial mental health association. And I believe Social Services probably work with some of the handicapped, but you'd have to ask the Minister of Social Services on that. I couldn't say where his moneys go. But we do, with the provincial chapter of the Saskatchewan mental health.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Is the minister considering . . . I

missed whether you said whether you're considering funding this group in the coming year. Is that included in this year's budget?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — No. We have not considered funding them. We will continue funding the Moose Jaw chapter of Saskatchewan mental health.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I wonder, in Regina, have there been any cut-backs to any group that provides services to the mentally handicapped or to people who are . . . Mental health clinic operation — anything being cut back in that area?

I believe I saw a news story today where one of the groups is being cut back. Can you bring us up to date on what group it is in Regina that you're deciding to discontinue funding for, and the reason behind it?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — I think the group that you're referring to are called the Agoraphobics Regina. We gave them a one-time fund in February of 1985, of \$2,500. It was clearly understood at that time that it would be one-time funding, but following the issuing of the budget of this year, they came in for a request for funding.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — The news article that I'm referred to is dated 23rd of April of '86, "Self-help group loses grant." And I just want to quote a couple of articles.

The member from Rosthern is yelling, item 1 agreed. I'm not sure what he's yelling about, but maybe he wants to get into the debate.

But in the article it talks, and I will quote:

Paul Grocott, executive director of the Mental Health Association of Saskatchewan, said the group had the full support of the association and it cannot financially support the self-help group because it already has a deficit budget, he said.

It goes on to say:

Self-help is a viable vehicle for people to get back on their feet.

And the article concludes by saying:

The Regina Mental Health Clinic cannot provide any non-financial help like free meeting places that the self-help group doesn't already have, according to the executive director of the Regina mental health region.

Can the minister explain why . . . Is it that the group isn't doing a good job? Is that why the \$2,500 is not being given to the group?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well the group when they first approached my department asked for a specific project, and that was to organize a library of resource material on agoraphobia and publish a news-letter. And it was made very, very clear that this was a one-time grant, and my department gave a grant of \$2,500 to them. There was no request for any other funding until after the budget had

been established and the budget had been announced; they came around now asking for another amount of funding.

So let me be very clear. Their first request to establish a library and to publish a news-letter — we helped them with that. They were told it would be one-time funding; that's what they got. There was no request for future funding into this year's budgetary year until after the budget had come out; then they approached my department for further funding.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Is the minister saying that if the group were to come to him now and explain their situation, that there may be money for the project?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — My officials are meeting with them to review their proposal. I'm not saying whether there's money or not, but certainly we're going to meet with them.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Minister, would you take the opportunity . . . if we were to try to arrange a meeting, could you see your way clear in your schedule to meet with them directly?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — The meeting has been set now with my officials. So certainly I have some very competent officials. They meet with a number of people throughout Saskatchewan. I get very, very good feedback on the meetings that my officials have with people. So we'll go through that meeting. If the group are not satisfied with the meeting with my officials they have the right to contact me. But certainly, at this point in time when the meeting is set to go ahead in the very near future with my officials, we will follow up on that course.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well, I hate to say it—here we go again—but this is like the nurses and the doctors and the chiropractors, and now this group. The minister won't meet with them. Swift Current — won't meet with them. That's what's happening. And that's why you're so darned unpopular. You won't meet with anyone.

And obviously here is a little group, \$2,500. You just told me you spent \$37,000 on polling, political polling; 54,000 on speeches to send out to administrators who don't want them. Here's a self-help group that is explained by Paul Grocott, the executive director of the mental health association, as being a good group. It needs \$2,500 and you won't meet with them.

Now are you getting the idea of why the nurses are mad at you and the doctors and the chiropractors and the groups around the province — why they're angry? Do you understand why they're getting angry? Because every time somebody wants to meet with you, you say no . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, you just aid . . . Well, we'll leave it at that.

Here's another group. We'll just have to send this to them but don't be surprised when this group is angry with you. You've become self-righteous about anybody who gets angry when you won't meet with them. But obviously, if you're Minister of Health, part of your job is to meet with these groups.

And you don't want to be in the Assembly. You've said you'd rather be out doing something else. You don't want to meet with the doctors. You don't want to meet with the nurses. You don't want to meet with these groups. What do you want to do? Why do you want to be minister?

Mr. Chairman at least has had the honourable thing and said, I'm not running again because I'm tired. That's what he said: I'm tired; I'm not going to run again. That's honourable. I agree with that. If you're tired, don't run. But don't continue on saying to all these groups and the nurses and the doctors and the chiropractors, I'm not going to meet with you, but I'm still going to be minister. That doesn't work because they obviously think that part of your job is to meet with them.

And I would like to just end on this topic by letting the minister go on that one because he says he won't meet with them, so we'll just let them know that.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Chairman, first and foremost, the group never asked to meet with me. They're meeting at 10:30 tomorrow morning with my director of mental health services, Mr. Yarske.

**An Hon. Member:** — Oh sure, sure. Yes, meet with somebody else. That's all you can say.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well if they don't . . . If you want to make fun of meeting with the director of mental health services for the province of Saskatchewan, if that is sloughing someone off, I fail to realize that.

Mr. Chairman, I think it would be interesting . . . And I will provide the opposition opposite with the number of people I have met with over the past four years. I will tell you that I have met with more groups — more groups — than any Health minister that ever was in their government, over the last four years. I'll let that record stand.

And if he thinks that I'm tired of meeting with groups, or that I won't run again, I'll tell you and I'll tell every member in this Assembly and I'll tell everybody in this province: I will run again; my government will win again; because I'm committed to keeping the socialists over there and the Conservative government here. And you will see that happen.

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

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — And I will go to Shaunavon. And I will go to Shaunavon and I will campaign against that member. And I will be in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, as I have been.

I tell you, I will travel this province for one purpose — to make sure that Saskatchewan has the opportunity in the years ahead to develop. And keep those birds and those clucking ducks over there, throwing their socks, clucking, shouting from their seats as they continue, because that's exactly where they deserve to stand, to stay.

And you have my commitment, my colleagues have my commitment, and the people of Saskatchewan have my

commitment that in the . . . whenever that election is called, I will be doing everything I can to keep the socialists right where they belong — in an opposition in this province.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well I don't know what the minister is ranting about. We get up and ask a question about a little group in Regina who has been cut back in their funding — \$2,500. They're a small group, I admit — deal with mental health in the city of Regina. We asked a few questions about it. The minister gets up and rants and raves. Well I've never seen the like of it.

Mr. Chairman, I've never in my life seen a display like we have just seen. You ask a reasonable question of the minister, a minister who's earning \$100,000 a year, his salary and expenses, 100,000 a year — and anyone can look in Public Accounts and see approximately what he made is about 100,000; has access to executive aircraft; all the perks of the office. We ask a simple question about funding for a small group dealing with mental health and he gets up and rants and raves — gets up and rants and raves about how he's going to win the next election. Well I've never seen anything like it.

That kind of a display of arrogance, a display of arrogance where a small little group is coming to the minister for \$2,500 . . . and he has just said he has spent \$37,000 on polling. He just told that to the Assembly. But he rants and raves at a small group who are coming to ask for some money. And he gets mad. He says, I don't have to meet with them; I've already met with lots of people. I don't have to meet with them. And he says, we're going to kick those socialists like Tommy Douglas and Woodrow Lloyd out. We don't like them because they brought in medicare. That's what he says. Did you hear what he said?

(1645)

Can anyone believe this man who would get up on a health care issue and take a run at Tommy Douglas? I say to you that that is a man that's out of touch with reality and the history of the province. That's what happened; that's what happened. Here we get up and ask questions about a mental health issue where a group is being cut back — cut back by \$2,500 and they don't have any money to operate. And the mental health association in Regina says: look, it's a good group, it should be funded. And the minister gets up and takes a run at them.

**An Hon. Member:** — He takes a run at the socialists.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — And at the group. He says, I don't have to meet with them. People in the department will meet with them; I don't have to. I've already met with enough people. He said that to the nurses. I'm not going to Estevan and Weyburn to meet with them. I may go to Regina because I'm in Regina, but I'm sure not going to drive all the way out to Weyburn — that's an hour by road, 20 minutes by plane. I don't have to go out of my way to do that.

And this little group, this small little group, Mr. Chairman,

who have had \$2,500 taken away from them, out of a billion dollar budget — 54,000 of which last year went to writing speeches that the minister sent out to administrators, \$37,000 that went to polling — he is going to take that \$2,500 and I think put it into another area where politics is better. And he says, I don't have to meet with them. Well I want to ask you, Mr. Minister: why don't you want to meet with this group?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Chairman, certainly you know we draw a long bow, but there's a world of difference between Tommy Douglas and the member who stood up and talked today. A vast difference.

But let me . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, here goes the shouting again. Shouting from their seats.

Let me indicate to you, Mr. Chairman, let me indicate to you that the group . . . He says a cut-back. There was no cut-back. The group came to see if they could get some money last year for a library and a news-letter. We gave them \$2,500. They never asked for anything more. Now they come in, after the budget, asking for \$36,000.

I've asked my director of mental health services to meet with this group. They've never asked to meet with me. Certainly they can meet with him and I'm sure that he will have a satisfactory discussion with them. If not, they're welcome to come and see me, as any other group is. But certainly, I think . . . And I have faith in my director of mental health services. I believe that he can work something out with this group. And certainly there is no attempt by anyone in this government to say to this group, be they 20, 50, or 100, that we will not take a look at their concerns. We certainly will. But I can't give a commitment that we're going to give them their funding. It would have been a lot easier had they asked prior to the budget being set. But to try and indicate that there's a cut-back of \$2,500 is simply not correct.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, the minister keeps mentioning Tommy Douglas, and I want to just make it clear that Tommy Douglas spent his life fighting the likes of that minister who would see cut-backs in health. He spent his whole life fighting right-wingers. That's what he did. And you just said that you were going to fight to keep social democrats out of the province. And right-wingers in 1962 who tried to keep medicare out had the same background as these people across the way. Everyone knows that.

And I'll tell you, the minister will know full well that Tommy Douglas spent his entire life fighting Tories and Liberals, spent his whole life doing that. That's what he lived for, because right wing reactionaries had no place in his life. He didn't like them. He told me that. He said he didn't believe in their philosophy, and he spent his whole life fighting the philosophy of those members like the member from Regina Rosemont. Tommy Douglas didn't dislike people, didn't dislike any people. But I'll tell you he despised the right-wingers who would take away from the poor and give it to the Peter Pocklington of the world. He hated that.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — And I'll tell you, for the likes of this minister and the Premier of this province to go around and talk about how Tommy Douglas was his friend, in terms of philosophy, does an insult and a disservice to a former Premier and a great man.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — And I'll tell you, you're not going to get away with it. No you won't, because I'll tell you people are laughing at you. You know what they say when the Premier Devine says, I'm like Tommy Douglas? Do you know what they say, the people in Weyburn? They laugh at him. They laugh at him. They say, you're like Tommy Douglas — tell me another story; tell me another story, Tommy Douglas fought to build the health care system that is now being ripped down by right-wingers in Ottawa and in the province, by ripping apart the fabric of the medicare system by removing \$154 million from the provincial budget for health.

Now I'll tell you Tommy Douglas didn't agree with that, nor would he. And I'll tell you, Mr. Minister, that you have a great credibility gap when it comes to saying to this committee that Tommy Douglas would have agreed with what you're doing here with this little group. I'll tell you, you're making a mockery of the history of this province.

Tommy Douglas had no time for the likes of this group who would take a little group and say, when they come forward, that I don't have time to meet with them, and I don't have any money, and in the next breath say, I have 37,000 for polling as well as 54,000 for ending out my speeches. Tommy Douglas never would have done that, Mr. Chairman. He never would have done that. He would have driven in an old car out to Swift Current if there would have been three health care people, let alone 200. That's what he would have done.

And I'll tell you that it's an insult to the people of the province who built the health care program and voted over and over again for CCFers and New Democrats — and they have voted for them in great numbers, believe it or not, over the history of this province since 1944. And the irony is, here they're saying they haven't changed, on the one hand. We're the same as we were when Tommy Douglas was around. We're the same thing. Here today he stands up and says they're not the same.

Mr. Chairman, you must see the irony of a minister running ads in the newspaper saying we're the same, and then getting up in the House and saying we're different. Well if you think the people are confused with the lines that you people use, you're right. They're very confused. Is Tommy Douglas the same as we are now, or are we different? All these ads that we haven't changed, many people take that as being positive. They say, thank God — thank God they haven't changed their attitude of taking a little away from the rich and giving it to the poor. That's what they're saying out there.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — And to this little group who is coming forward for a bit of assistance, I'll tell you, you're proving the point that Tommy Douglas was right when

you would take and spend that kind of money on your own polling and not give to this group in the area of mental health — in the area of mental health that should be a priority with this government.

And so when it comes to election time, then the spots start to show. Then we find out what it's really about. Political spending in the Department of Health takes priority over the needs of the people who are not able to defend themselves in the area of mental health. That's what this says. And you may say that that is a small amount and it's insignificant and these people don't deserve it — this little self-help group.

But why don't you stand in your place today and say, look, the money is there. The money is there, and I'll cut back on my political polling to pay for it. That's what Tommy Douglas would have done. He wouldn't have had the political polling because he would have done his polling by going to Swift Current a few weeks ago. He would have been out with the people, listening to them. He wouldn't have had to do expensive polling. That's right. That's what he would have done. He would have never taken money out of the budget for mental health and used it for political polling or sending out speeches; wouldn't have done it. It wasn't how he was made.

And I just want to tell you that referring and saying that Tommy Douglas would have agreed with what is happening here, where the federal government is ripping apart medicare, I'll tell you, Tommy Douglas would have fought and stood up for Saskatchewan. And I'll tell you that strong tradition of standing up for Saskatchewan — Tommy Douglas, Woodrow Lloyd, and Allan Blakeney, the former premier — they would be fighting this cut-back, and also would be using the money they saved to fund these kinds of programs. Because I'll tell you, if we lose that \$154 million, can you imagine, Mr. Chairman, how many small groups will not be funded?

Listen, we're talking about 2,500. Can you imagine if we lost 154 how many small groups around the province will not get any funding. There will be literally thousands of them, not only in health, but the Minister of Social Services, I know he's worried about it. He's worried about those cut-backs because it will impact on his budget as well, as it obviously will. It will impact on every department, because if you take 154 million out of health, it will impact on the overall budget. It will impact in every area.

And I want to tell you, Mr. Minister, that I find it unacceptable that you would stand in your place today and attack the history of this province and say that Tommy Douglas would accept what you are doing here today in not funding this group and yet giving massive amounts of money away to Ottawa.

The minister will know that he has said that he would have officials meet with the group. I wonder if the meeting fails to get the money for the group, will you give a commitment here to the Assembly that you will then meet with them to further discuss the issue?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I have the letter from the president of the group, to my executive director

of the mental health services, dated April 21st. I believe April 21st was yesterday, was it not? Two days ago, two days ago.

The meeting is set up for tomorrow morning. I don't know how much more prompt we can be. Certainly, as I've said time and time again, if they don't have satisfaction at that meeting and feel that they want to meet with me, they can come and meet with me. The correspondence has been between the director of my branch and their chairman. That meeting's set for tomorrow morning at 10:30. I think that's prompt — prompt delivery.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — The issue here is, and I'm not sure that the minister is accurate in saying that they haven't asked for a meeting or not, but the question was: if they request a meeting, if the meeting to get money fails, like if the officials say there isn't money available because it's going to Peter Pocklington or to Pioneer Trust or wherever you're sending all that money to — if that meeting breaks down, will you give a commitment that you will meet with them personally after that?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Well for the fourth time, I will meet with them if they're not satisfied. I said I will meet with them and I'll meet with many other groups. But certainly, I mean, to keep repeating, they wrote the letter on the 21st and the meeting's set for 10:30 tomorrow morning. We'll have to see what comes out of the meeting. Maybe there's a track that will be satisfactory. I don't know. They've never asked for a meeting with me. So we'll have to see what comes out of tomorrow's meeting.

**Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I have listened to this display, I think it is for the best part of three weeks. I have heard the minister comment about what a grand job he is doing in communicating. All I can say is if you're spending any time at it, you're spectacularly unsuccessful. It isn't by chance, Mr. Minister, that these estimates have lasted almost three weeks. I would be very surprised if this were not a record, an all-time record. I would be very surprised to hear that.

That isn't by chance. We're not doing it because for some reason or other we think this is a useful way to waste time. We're doing it, Mr. Minister, because we reflect public opinion. I cannot remember a time . . . I was not here in the early '60s when the government of Tommy Douglas and Woodrow Lloyd got themselves into difficulty in Health, got themselves into difficulty in the face of right wing forces within society, like members sitting opposite, the KOD (keep our doctors) committee got themselves into difficulty trying to improve health care. And now that that pioneering effort is successful, members opposite want to take credit for it. All I can say is I am not sure that anyone here is of an age where they might have been actively participating in those events. But if you had have been, you'd have been the same, you'd have been with the KOD, parading out in front, talking about state socialism.

Mr. Minister, we have been here three weeks because the public are insisting upon some kind of answers, some action. The chairman . . . I'll start and work my way

through a short list of the people who have questions of your leadership.

The chairman of the health research fund uses the annual report, which you tabled, to bring into question this government's commitment to health research. That is something that this province once was very proud of. In the days of . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Let's go, Ned.

**Mr. Shillington:** — Well we'll get out in lots of time. The assistant chairman, the assistant assistant deputy house leader can wait for a moment.

Mr. Minister, the chairman of the health research fund chooses the annual report to say that he doesn't think that this government is providing adequate leadership. He assumed — quite correctly, I think — that you don't read anything you get, including the annual report; because I assume, had you read that, you would not have tabled it.

The patients in the hospital, Mr. Minister, anyone who has been in a hospital, is concerned about the lack of staff. They say when you go there you're on your own, Mr. Minister.

The doctors are calling for your resignation. The nurses are demonstrating in front of the hospital.

I cannot understand, Mr. Minister, who you think it is that you're communicating so well with, Mr. Minister, and I don't know where you're . . . I cannot understand how you would pay anyone the large sums you do to communicate your policy when they're doing such a poor job. Mr. Minister . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The minister obviously needs a new speech-writer.

Mr. Minister, I wonder if you can name any significant group who has publicly stated that this government is doing a good job on health care. I wonder if the minister can honestly name any significant group, apart from the Conservative Party of Saskatchewan — and I'm not sure what they're saying about you to you in private — but I wonder if you can name a single significant group which has had anything good to say about this government's handling of health care, because I can't think of it offhand.

The Health-Care Association has been largely silent because they don't want to bite the hand that feeds them, although I'm sure they would dearly like to bite the hand that feeds them. They, after all, are on the receiving end of the inadequate funding in health care. Doctors, nurses, patients, your own employees . . . your own appointees to boards — everyone, Mr. Minister, is unhappy, alarmed, and fearful of your leadership in health care.

So I ask you, Mr. Chairman, can you name a single, significant group who have publicly said anything good about your leadership?

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Chairman, I certainly can; the populace of the province of Saskatchewan.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:03 p.m.