

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

ORAL QUESTIONS

Duties on Saskatchewan Potash Industry

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question, in the absence of the Premier, I guess is either to the Deputy Premier or to the Minister of Economic Trade and Development. So we'll make it to the Minister of Economic Trade and Development.

As the minister knows, it's been a week now since the United States Commerce department has made a preliminary finding with respect to the import of Saskatchewan potash into the United States. And as the minister also knows, he has been aware of this impending decision, one way or the other, for some several months prior to the actual announcement.

Yesterday the minister told the House that he would have a ministerial statement today on this matter. My question to him is this: will you be making a statement on this very important matter outlining in specifics the action that your government proposes to take in response to the United States' moves?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member indicates that it's been a week since the preliminary determination. I think he also should be aware that it's just this week that companies are in fact receiving the details of that preliminary determination from Washington.

Yesterday, both inside the House and outside the House, I never gave any indication that I would be making a ministerial statement. I indicated that you would see further action by the Government of Saskatchewan, and I think that . . .

An Hon. Member: — On this very day.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — . . . this very day you will probably see a statement and some action by the Minister of Energy and Mines.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Economic Trade and Development. I think the hon. minister would understand that the legislature is in session. Even he would understand that. And therefore there's an obligation I would say to you, sir, to make any kinds of statements or announcements with respect to the government action to this House.

My question to you therefore, specifically, is this: will you tell the legislature today what it is that your Premier and your government is planning to do in response to this very serious action against Saskatchewan potash workers and families — today in this legislature?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I can assure you and the members of this Assembly that I recognize that this Assembly is in session. There are a lot of people . . . I might say from talking to people outside the walls of this institution, that is not a widely held view by many people.

Be that as it may, I can assure the hon. member that we, and I, recognize the rules and the tradition of this Assembly and that we will honour those; that the Minister of Energy and Mines, in fact, will make a statement today — small as that might be, large as that might be — make a statement today.

This particular problem we take very seriously. This particular problem, I would hope, I would hope, in the interests of Saskatchewan, in the interests of resources, and the people of our province, that we try to do this in the most collective way and look at the common enemy, which is the protectionist mentality in the United States, and try not to politicize every step of the way of how we must try and attempt to deal with a very difficult problem — a great deal at stake for our province, a great deal at stake for our province. And I think collectively we can respond in a way that is to the benefit of our province and the benefit of our country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — I have a new question, Mr. Speaker, and it's directed to the Deputy Premier in the absence of the Premier. We have just been advised by the Minister of Economic Trade and Development that he won't be making a statement today, but that the Minister of Energy and Mines will be making a statement for today. The minister is not in the House.

Can the Acting Premier tell us where it is that the Minister of Energy and Mines is going to be making the statement? Why isn't she in the legislature to tell this Assembly what this government is going to do?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — And I know that the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, is very disappointed that the Minister of Energy and Mines is not here. I want him also to know that he will not be disappointed for the whole day, because she will be here, and she will be here very soon, and when she does get here . . . and unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, she may in fact have to ask for leave to revert to notices of motion to deal with her particular statement today. And I'm sure that the House will accommodate her in that request immediately after question period, or before orders of the day.

But I hope that the hon. member from Riversdale has had his disappointment somewhat diminished with the arrival of the Minister of Energy and Mines.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, thank you. Indeed my

disappointment has faded away, because I am now pleased to see the Minister of Energy and Mines here. So I will direct a question to the hon. member.

Madam Minister, I wonder if you'd be kind enough to tell the Legislative Assembly what it is that your government and your department plans to do in response to the United States Commerce decision with respect to potash, which announcement, as you know, places at risk approximately 4,000 potash families, workers, and the communities in which they work. What action do you intend to take? Will you please give us the details today – now.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mrs. Smith: — Well, Mr. Speaker, while I'm not at liberty to give the hon. member the details, I will say this, that we have been concerned for some time over the action. We have not been caught flat-footed, as was suggested yesterday. We have been in consultation with the industry and the various players within the potash industry.

I can assure the member the action that will be taken will be taken in the best interests of the workers, the industry, and the province as a whole.

Mr. Romanow: — Well, Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Hon. Minister of Energy and Mines. Just a few moments ago the Minister of Economic Trade, your colleague in cabinet, told the House, informed the House, that somewhere, somehow, sometime – we quite don't know where; it might be in secret in the middle of the night in some dark corner of the legislature – you're going to be making a statement on potash.

And my question to you, Madam Minister, is this: is that so? Will you be making a statement of government policy on this very crucial problem; and if that is the case, why not make it to this legislature now, in question period, and under ministerial statements?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mrs. Smith: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the agenda outlines the opportunity for statements, and I can tell the member that if he waits till question period is over, that there will be notice.

Mr. Koskie: — I want to ask a question to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, or the Minister of Energy, whichever want to answer.

The question, Mr. Minister, it that it's been about a week, or a full week, since the decision or the ruling was made. And what I ask you is: do you have now in your possession the written decision, the reasons behind the decision, the calculations, and all the background material which shows how the levies or tariffs were in fact calculated? Do you have that information in respect to the potash corporation?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — As the hon. member full knows,

that information, I indicated to the hon. member from Riversdale, is being provided to the various companies in the industry this week. If the hon. member is interested in what the specifics and the details would be from those particular companies, if that's his question, they are being provided to the companies this week. I have not yet seen the specific details of what that provision is.

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Minister, are you proposing to take action and to respond to the proposal by the U.S. Department of Commerce without having the knowledge of the exact documentation on which the case was based? Is that what you're saying?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — I understood the question from the hon. member was, do we have the i's dotted and the t's crossed of everything with regard to the Department of Commerce ruling that the companies had. Those rulings go to the companies. It's the company that was part of the court action, of course.

What in fact the preliminary ruling is, is clear to the whole world, if it's not clear to the hon. member from the Quill Lakes. What the Department of Commerce did was levy some fairly significant dumping duties – and I know you were perhaps away this week – some fairly significant dumping duties on a variety of companies and at various levels, anywhere from about 9 per cent up to about 85 per cent. And those dumping duties are, in fact, very severe, and they are real, they are not imaginary. They are real.

And the companies are getting the total specifics of some of the rulings and some of the arguments, as you are aware, I hope. The companies now have an opportunity to go before the Department of Commerce to advance some of their defences to that particular argument as to the amount of damage that, in fact, the allegation is against the Americans.

Mr. Koskie: — Supplemental, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Mr. Minister, do you have any of the information on behalf of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan in your possession? Have you had a chance to look at it, or the Minister of Energy, whichever, and then will you, in fact, be prepared to table that information? Obviously, on a basis . . . you must be partly making your decision on the basis of the decision of the Department of Commerce. Do you have that information, and will you table it?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well, Mr. Speaker, if your question is: does the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan know what the tariff is that's been levied against them? Yes, they do, and so does the rest of the world.

With regards to specific information that Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan might have received from the Department of Commerce, I'm not aware of that. The minister responsible for the potash corporation is more appropriate the person to determine what information will and will not be released by the potash corporation. You have to bear in mind though, and bear this in mind, that this is a competitive world in the potash business, and

potash corporation, while it's owned by the people of Saskatchewan, also competes against the various other companies, and I don't think you'd want to get all information out public that puts them to a disadvantage with regards to the other companies.

Write-off of PCS Debt

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, have a new question to the Minister of Trade. Mr. Minister, I think it is becoming more and more well known that your plans to write off the debt of the potash corporation have had an influence on the decision that was made by the United States Commerce department.

My question to you, Mr. Minister, is this: will you now undertake to stop this political insanity so that the efforts that now have to be made to get this decision in the United States changed and turned around will not be once again jeopardized by the kind of statements which have been coming from your government?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — You asked that question a couple of days ago. I indicated that it was not true. So I've read some media reports where the same question was posed to the Leader of the NDP, the member from Elphinstone, and he indicated that it's probably not true either. I would take his knowledge more than I would take your knowledge if it comes to a question of that particular thing. Number one, it is not true; it is not true, and I would suspect that Adam Zimmerman from Noranda would also say it's not true, being that he didn't write anything off, nor suggested to write anything off, and he got cracked with an 85 per cent tariff. So it's absolutely not true, for the same reasons I told you the other day.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I'm rather pleased the minister gave me that answer. Mr. Minister, your inability to come to grips with this issue has put the futures of thousands of Saskatchewan's families in jeopardy. I ask you, Mr. Minister: why, as the minister responsible, did you not know that the plans to write off the potash corporation's debt were considered by the lawyer in Washington who was fighting to get the tariffs imposed on Canadian potash to be an argument which was going to help him win the case, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well, I think the member's misinformed three days ago, and he's still misinformed today. I read a press statement from the Mayor of Carlsbad, who saw that as a positive statement that PCS was now starting to, or appear to be starting to, operate like a regular business in a regular world, and I think perhaps were taking some confidence in the fact that PCS is in fact going to be functioning like a real company.

The observation made by the hon. member that the idea of whether or not the debt is written down, or dealt with in some fashion, has absolutely no impact. And if you understand the way the Department of Commerce works on this particular issue, it is the constructed cost and the constructed selling price between the dates of September 1986 and February of 1987, and that's what we're talking about. And there's rules there.

I would recommend over the weekend to the hon.

member from Regina North East that perhaps he take some time and review and research just exactly what the Department of Commerce is about in the United States.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — New question to the minister, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, Mr. Ted Kassinger, the chief lawyer from Washington who is arguing the case stated, and it's quoted in the *Leader-Post*, that the plans to write off the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan's debt will ultimately strengthen the U.S. anti-dumping action.

Your Minister of Finance, Mr. Minister, said in March:

The provincial government has scrapped its plans to write off the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan's \$340 million debt for fear the move will be seen as subsidization by the Americans already lobbying for tariffs on Canadian potash imports.

Now how do you square those statements, Mr. Minister, with your irresponsible position in the House that you're taking here this morning?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — I simply say to the hon. member that an argument might be advanced by the Americans that to write off the debt is a countervailable action; that it's not something involved in anti-dumping. That is clear to anyone that has studied at all in this particular field. The actions taken or alleged to be taken have nothing to do with the anti-dumping action, and the member should know that or stay in some other field that he understands a little bit better.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Minister, you referred the member from Regina North East to do some weekend reading. Let me recommend some weekend reading from you from *The Northern Miner*.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: — And I will preface my question by a quotation. This is from the June . . . from a feature article in the June edition of *The Northern Miner*. It says:

Already at the anti-dumping . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. The member rose on a supplementary, and therefore, I'm sorry, I cannot allow the quote.

Mr. Shillington: — New question then.

Mr. Speaker: — I don't believe that you can stand on a supplementary and then suddenly change it to a new question because of a ruling. So I just ask you to put your supplementary. I'm sure you can do it without the quote.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Minister, my question is: are you aware that in the June edition of *The Northern Miner* in a feature article called "Dumping on Potash," that journal takes the position that the write-off of the debt did materially indeed contribute to the difficulties south of

the border? And in light of that, and in light of the fact that these opinions are shared in very different quarters, both in Washington and in Timmins, Ontario, which is where this is published, will you admit that the confusion which this government has shown in, first, having a \$400 million debt and then an \$800 million debt, and then writing it off and then not writing it off, will you admit that this confusion has contributed to your problems — your problems are, in part, Mr. Minister, self-induced?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — No, I will not admit that. The lawyers in Washington advised us — our lawyers — advised us absolutely has no impact, no influence whatsoever. And I would take that advice far, far ahead of some journalist in Timmins, Ontario, who probably knows sweet-all about Saskatchewan potash.

Possible Potash Embargo

Mr. Goodale: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the Minister of Trade about the speculation that he is engaged in about the possibility of an embargo on Saskatchewan potash moving into the United States. That sort of move, of course, would require some kind of federal co-operation, indeed probably very specific federal action in terms of legislation.

I wonder if the minister has the consent and the approval of the Government of Canada with respect to a proposed embargo. I wonder also if the minister has the consent and the approval of all other Canadian premiers. It appears that the premiers have expressed solidarity in defending Canadian trade against United States action. But did they, yesterday in their meeting, specifically and explicitly approve this particular move of a potential embargo? And further, do the companies operating in Saskatchewan approve, and do you have their specific approval and consent?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — I thank the hon. member for his question. Let me say this: at least the hon. member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg takes the attitude of interest in the industry in this province and the people working in this province, and doesn't look for small and cheap political tricks every time he stands to ask a question. So I do give him credit for that.

With regard to the embargo, the embargo was but one of many options that could have been used or pursued by the Government of Saskatchewan. Certainly the allegation of the embargo received the attention, got the attention, of many people in this country and many people in the United States.

Now the Premier — I've talked to him yesterday — indicated that the discussion at New Brunswick with the other 10 premiers . . . I think we saw in the media what the other 10 premiers of the country said is basically to support Saskatchewan, to do what, in fact, we can do to deal with this very difficult problem and this very ugly attitude that seems to be existing in United States today.

Obviously, when it comes to the question of what jurisdictional power a province has, and what

jurisdictional powers the federal government have, we will get into that lawyer talk and those battles as we go on.

Mr. Speaker, our view, at this point in time, is that we prefer to proceed on this particular issue as the jurisdiction of the province that owns the resource — a position taken by many premiers of resource producing provinces that it's the province that owns the resource that has the power to deal with that resource. We take that issue very seriously and intend to pursue that in that regard.

Involvement of Prime Minister in Potash Situation

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Economic Trade and Development. I wonder if the minister would advise the House whether or not the Premier, or he as the Minister of Economic Trade, has contacted the Prime Minister of Canada to alert the Prime Minister about the gravity of the situation to Saskatchewan potash families, and if so, what action the Prime Minister has promised to undertake on behalf of the Saskatchewan government, and all Canadians, in support of our situation out here?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member that the Prime Minister of Canada and the senior cabinet ministers in the Government of Canada and the other 10 premiers have been well advised of this particular decision by the Americans, and appreciate the gravity of the problem that we face as primarily, as Saskatchewan, as the main producer of potash in the world. They have indicated to us their support and co-operation in addressing this very difficult question, both the federal government and the other provinces have, and I think that is to be commended.

I watched the premiers well on *Canada A.M.* this morning — did very well I thought. What he indicated is that we were going to stand on this issue; that the Americans had to be shown that Canadians were not going to be pushed around; that Canadians were going to stand up, and he has 10 premiers standing behind him. And I think that is to be commended, and I think that's a proper approach for a Canadian province and a Canadian Premier to take.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mrs. Smith: — Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to revert to Notice of Motions.

Leave granted.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Hon. Mrs. Smith: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall, on Wednesday, September 2, move first reading of a Bill, entitled:

An Act Respecting the Potash Resources of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, may I suggest to the Hon. Minister of Energy and to the House Leader and the government opposite that as far as the opposition is concerned we will waive the required notices under the rules and permit the hon. minister to table the first reading of the Bill today, so that the public of Saskatchewan knows exactly what is in it, and so that we can study it over the weekend. And we offer that here to expedite the business of the government on this important issue.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the kind offer of the opposition House Leader. But in the normal course of events, there is a 48-hour notice requirement. We will deal with this very important matter in the normal course, and I think that Tuesday will be our first opportunity. And if you want to waive private members day, we will do it at that time. Normally it would happen on Wednesday, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Goodale: — Mr. Speaker, because this is an urgent matter, and because the item before us at this moment requires unanimous consent for it to proceed immediately, I just want to make it clear, from my point of view, that unanimous consent is, indeed, forthcoming and it should be proceeded with at once.

ROYAL ASSENT TO BILLS

At 10:32 a.m. His Honour the Lieutenant Governor entered the Chamber, took his seat upon the throne, and gave Royal Assent to the following Bill:

Bill No. 30 – An Act to amend The Land Titles Act

Bill No. 35 – An Act for granting Her Majesty certain sums of Money for the Public Service for the Fiscal Year ending on March 31, 1988

His Honour retired from the Chamber at 10:34 a.m.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Human Resources, Labour and Employment Ordinary Expenditure – Vote 20

Item 1 (continued)

Ms. Simard: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman, thank you. Mr. Minister, last night, because you are the minister responsible in this province for advancing the interests of women, I brought to your attention the fact that your government is sadly lacking with respect to initiatives in the area of advancing the interests of women. I brought to

your attention the fact that the many cut-backs in education, health, transition homes, and so forth, that were made in the last budget of this PC government have drastically and very severely affected women in this province. And now I want to continue my questioning, specifically with respect to the women's division.

Now in subvote 20 of your department, Mr. Minister, there's a reference to "Grants to third parties concerned with economic and social equity" – 234,200. Would you please provide us with a detailed list of all the organizations and agencies which are to receive grants under that subvote, or which have received grants under that subvote already in this fiscal year? And also could you please tell us what the amounts of those grants are?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — First of all, in answering the first part of your question – the preamble with respect to transition houses – there is a giant misconception that is perpetrated by the NDP and by the member for Regina Lakeview that there are somehow massive cuts in this province, and "cuts" seems to be the buzz-word of the NDP these days.

And they'll tell you about cuts in health, and the Health budget is up \$36 million over last year. They will tell you about cuts in social services, and the Social Services budget is the same as last year. They'll tell you about cuts to transition houses. And in law there is a principle of *minimus*, and that means that when something is so insignificant, the courts do not consider it. And the cuts that she refers to to transition houses in a dollars and cents point of view are not very significant.

In fact, the massive cuts do not exist in Yorkton, they do not exist in Regina, they do not exist in Prince Albert, they do not exist anywhere. There was a reduction in Regina of one and one-half . . . funding for one and one-half staff positions, an assistant administrator in Regina, and a half-time counsellor. I think it may be a sore point that I notice that the assistant administrator in Regina is an NDP activist – writes letters to the *Leader-Post*. Most likely these letters were written for her by the NDP as is their standard practice, and so we have a politically motivated discussion here.

But there are no massive cuts. There is an increase in funding and the number of beds in Yorkton. And so this is a grand misconception that the members opposite would like to convey to the public, which is similar to their constant barrage on myself as an individual, as exemplified by the member from Regina Rosemont, and they would try to have the public believe that I have no heart. And the people who know me, and the people who this government, know what the truth is. And I would suggest that they would give up on this constant rhetoric of massive cuts in health when there's an increase, and this kind of behaviour the public can see through.

The second part of the question was: what is the subvote 20 comprised of? The total sum of \$234,200 – grants to third parties concerned with economic and social equity. The Saskatchewan Indian Women's Association receives \$91,600, approximately the same as last year, slightly greater. The Saskatchewan Native Women's Association receives \$91,600, approximately the same as last year.

There is \$45,000 for women's grants, which is spent for the operations of the advisory council, the provincial advisory council. And there are miscellaneous grants budgeted of \$6,000 for a total of \$234,200 in that category.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, with respect to your comments about New Democratic women and New Democrats attempting to cast unreasonable light on your cut-backs, do you deny, Mr. Minister, that there was a 14.5 per cent cut to the Regina Transition House? Do you deny that, Mr. Minister? Is that what you're saying? And don't you understand that when organizations are cut back that amount, that it makes it very difficult for them to function?

It may not be much money to you, Mr. Minister, who pays \$50,000 a year in income tax. That may mean nothing to you, Mr. Minister . . . or 41,000 or whatever it is, and I'd like to know what sort of income pays 41 to \$50,000 in income tax; I'd suggest something over 100,000, Mr. Minister.

(1045)

No wonder you're so insensitive. No wonder you're so insensitive to these cut-backs to ordinary men and women who don't have that sort of money. No wonder you're so insensitive, Mr. Minister.

The Transition House in Regina was cut back by 14.5 per cent, and I wasn't going to get into a lot of detail over the cut-backs to transition homes, but you brought it up, Mr. Minister. So let me just give you another example of how you're misleading the public with respect to transition homes. The funding for the La Ronge shelter, for example, for '87-88, was 108,900, and yes, it is more than '86-87, which was only 94,500. But what you failed to tell the public of this province, Mr. Minister, which is very typical of the way you manage things, what you failed to tell public of this province is that that funding at the La Ronge shelter was for a six-month period only — for only a six month period. And the level of funding that the La Ronge shelter needs to operate is 147,000, so in effect, there has not been an increase, Mr. Minister, there's been a decrease of 35 per cent below the required operating level. And that's the kind of misleading facts, Mr. Minister, that you and your government perpetrates to the public of Saskatchewan.

Don't tell me that women haven't been affected by those cut-backs because I know, and the members on this side of the House are fully aware at how severely they've been hurt by your government cut-backs.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — Now, Mr. Minister, with respect to pay equity. On July 21, we had an opportunity to debate the issue of pay equity, and for the viewing audience who didn't have the opportunity of the July 21 debate, pay equity means "the recognizing of the relative value of work performed irrespective of the gender of the employees." It means that employees do not . . . employers, rather, do not pay different salaries and benefits to male and female employees who are

performing work of equal value.

The question of pay equity, Mr. Minister, is a moral and economic issue. And why are we talking about pay equity? We're talking about pay equity because women in this province earn approximately 57 per cent of what men earn, and 34 per cent of women are single and depend on their income, and many women who are single have dependants for whom they're responsible, Mr. Minister. That's why pay equity is important. But even though they may be responsible for dependants (and single), and depend on their own income, they're earning approximately 57 per cent of what men earn. But, Mr. Minister, groceries and housing and clothes don't cost 43 per cent less for women, they cost the same.

And in the interests of brevity this morning I will not repeat all the points made on July 21. But I must say that in this tight labour market, Mr. Minister, that exists today in Saskatchewan, it is even more important to put forward pay equity legislation. And The Labour Standards Act, contrary to what you said in your argument on July 21, because obviously you didn't understand what pay equity was all about, The Labour Standards Act, as it now stands, is not pay equity. It's something different. It doesn't meet the standard of pay equity.

We need to move on this, Mr. Minister. We need to move on this, Mr. Minister. We need to move on this because women's jobs have been traditionally low-paying . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . not because they're menial and worthless, *au contraire*; many of these women perform very valuable work for society — but they've been traditionally low-paying because employers in society place too little value on women's work and therefore it's become easy to underpay women's work. And although it won't solve all our problems, Mr. Minister, it's something that we have to get on with.

Now on July 21, you talked about, you thought we had pay equity with respect to the union. Mr. Minister, that was such a narrow point of view. Don't you realize that pay equity is something that goes beyond the union, to out-of-scope employees as well, and it goes into the private sector? The Labour Standards Act doesn't just apply to union employees as it now stands, Mr. Minister, but obviously you weren't familiar with the concept of pay equity. And I think your comments on July 21 showed that you didn't understand.

But, Mr. Minister, you showed a positive attitude. You said, " . . . we clearly believe in equal pay for equal work." Or for work of equal value, is what you should have said, because I believe that's what you wanted to say, Mr. Minister. And I accept those comments. And you held out to the public that you were going to look into it and see whether or not there were any inequalities in the public service.

Now as recently as about one week ago, I understand you hadn't yet looked into it. You hadn't yet contacted somebody in the Public Service Commission. And I'm wondering now, Mr. Minister, because I understand you've received correspondence inviting you to approach them, saying: let's get together and talk about it, in spite of the fact you said you were going to get together and talk about it and hadn't. I'm wondering now if you've

made any contact with SGEU (Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union) to talk about the concept and the possibility of implementing pay equity forthwith.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, over and over again I've watched the sanctimonious member for Regina Lakeview, Ms. Poverty, Ms. Sensitivity, spokesperson of ordinary persons, come here and lead us to believe that only she understands other people's plight.

Let us examine the true facts here. I would submit that my understanding should be as great as hers. Yes, it is correct that my family paid over \$50,000 in taxes last year. But let's examine her family, a two-income family. Her husband is a provincial court judge, is paid by the taxpayers of Saskatchewan at least \$73,000 per year. The member opposite is an MLA, is paid the same as I am as an MLA — I believe it's about \$36,000 a year. That gives her a family income of \$109,000 per year. And because as a cabinet minister I make about \$65,000 a year, and my wife and I have income, that is not derived from taxpayers, in excess of \$65,000 a year — somehow because she receives, in her family, \$109,000 — at least \$109,000, plus benefits, two pension plans — that somehow her experience with poverty is greater than mine, and she is the expert on how the poor people live. And this is the kind of double-talk that we hear from the NDP: We understand the poor; we only have an income of \$109,000 a year.

And then I read . . . The member opposite writes a letter to *The Melville Advance*, in my constituency. And she comes into my constituency and writes a letter talking about poverty and suggesting I don't understand my constituents, that I don't know anything about the real world. And she should go and see the real world. How does anybody with an income of \$109,000 know anything? Maybe she'd recall . . . Her and I, I agree, both grew up fairly poor, not in spirit, but fairly poor. I know her family well; we were even related, and we know each other. But here she stands in this House and says: oh, because my family pays a large amount of taxes we don't understand anything about the real world. Well we earn that money in the real world. But here is the member from Lakeview, with a family income in excess of \$109,000 a year, and she says she is an expert on poverty.

I think what we have to do, Mr. Deputy Chairman, is that we, as members here, have to use our broad experience of the world. We have to go out into our constituencies, as we do on this side of the House, and deal with our neighbours. My neighbours are farmers, my relatives are farmers, my relatives are unionized workers. My father was a member of the Grain Services Union for 19 years. The union that the member from Regina North once was a leader of, my father was a member for 19 years. So we've drawn our experiences, and we understand the plight of all Saskatchewan people.

And so let's not stand here and compare incomes and plead poverty. What we have to, here, plead is that we have wisdom. The members on this side of the House have wisdom, and we try to govern for the benefit of all the citizens in this province, and we try to do it as fairly as possible.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Chairman, the member opposite has consistently showed a total insensitivity to women's issues and the plight of poor people in this province. There is no question in our minds about that — absolutely no question.

So he obviously, if he lives in an environment where he associates with people who are having difficulty making ends meet, he's not listening, Mr. Minister. He's not listening, and this government's not listening.

And he didn't listen to my question, Mr. Minister — he didn't listen to my question. Instead, he felt it was necessary to go on an *ad hominem* personal tirade, to get it off his chest, and that's fine, that's okay. But my question to him, Mr. Minister was: did he write to SGEU (Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union) — and I'll ask him again — and say that he is prepared to look into the problem of pay equity and see whether or not he would amend the legislation to comply with pay equity? Did he do that?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, we contacted the Public Service Commission, and I have on my desk, on the third floor of this building, a letter to SGEU (Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union) on the very topic. I was going to sign it yesterday, but I didn't get a chance to look at the final draft and sign it. I was too busy guarding my tongue from the member from Regina Rosemont, and I didn't have time to sign the letter.

Then in the meantime, at the direction of the member from Lakeview, SGEU has sent me a letter on the very same topic, and I expect that at some time in the not too distant future I will be meeting with the SGEU, or I think it was SFL (Saskatchewan Federation of Labour); I have to check the letter. I'm not sure if it came from Nadine Hunt or Barb Byers; I get quite a lot of correspondence from them, but it was from one of those two individuals. We will be dealing with the topic and, should we finish estimates today in reasonable time, I will go upstairs and sign the letter and we'll continue the process.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, we won't finish estimates today if you continue to go on with the sort of tirades that you've already engaged in this morning.

It's very interesting to see that you haven't contacted SGEU yet, and you say there's a letter sitting on your desk. And that's a very typical excuse that one can give. I just hope that this doesn't go on as long as the Women's Advisory Council — December to June before you do anything. And you didn't really do anything until our office wrote to your office asking who was appointed before you really moved on anything with respect to that even. So, Mr. Minister, that just shows that your government does not put women's issues and women's problems as a priority.

Now I have further . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, that has been well established a number of times in the last few hours since we've been on these estimates.

Mr. Minister, who is responsible for employment equity? I asked you a question last night about the dismantling of

the employment equity branch and the so-called – to use the words of the member from Weyburn – absorption into the Human Resources and Labour department. Tell me who's responsible for employment equity. Employment equity would be the branch, Mr. Minister, that deals with pay equity, to give equal wages for work of equal value to women, or that concept. It would deal with affirmative action to advance women in jobs. Tell me: who's responsible for employment equity in your department?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, I recall answering that question last night. I suppose the member has forgotten it. The answer is Leah Siebold.

Ms. Simard: — Now if the employment equity branch, Mr. Minister, has been transferred to Human Resources and Labour, why aren't the estimated expenditures for this department included in your department's budget?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Chairman, as I indicated last evening, this is a recent happening that the responsibilities transferred to my department was done after the budget was printed. In addition, the person that is responsible there has a position in my department. There is no new expenditure for that individual's salary, so we do not have to budget at this time. There may be some incidental expenses and we'll have to deal with those as we go.

(1100)

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, in the '86-87 budget for the Public Service Commission, affirmative action or employment equity, if you like, had \$582,930. Are you telling me that that money is no longer available or budgeted?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Certainly we would like to have that money in our department, but that money is budgeted in the Public Service Commission. You'll have to ask that question on the estimates of the Public Service Commission.

Ms. Simard: — But the employment equity branch is in your department, Mr. Minister. What good is that money going to do in the Public Service Commission if it's been transferred to your department? Obviously it's not available, another example, Mr. Minister, of your government's unwillingness to put women's issues at the forefront and to give them the priority that they do. A \$600,000 cut to affirmative action, Mr. Minister – that's disgraceful.

Now, Mr. Minister, I want to take you back to the '86-87 women's secretariat estimates showing that grants to organizations and agencies concerned with women's issues, \$45,000, '86-87. Could you please tell me what organizations received grants under that amount and what amount each organization received?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, the only expenditure in that area was for the provincial advisory council. They spent approximately \$23,000 last year; they had \$45,000 budgeted. We've again budgeted \$45,000, and I would hope that they would put the

\$45,000 to good use. We're quite happy if they do spend the entire 45,000.

Ms. Simard: — Sorry, Mr. Chairman, I didn't hear. How much did the provincial advisory council spend? I didn't hear the figure, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Exactly \$24,636.

Ms. Simard: — The other thing that I'm wondering about, Mr. Minister, is in the '85-86 public accounts, it shows that under other expenses, this is at page 573 of the '85-86 *Public Accounts*, other expenses for women's secretariat, 40,263.14. Could you please tell me what was spent under that; what the 40,263.14 was?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, as far as we can ascertain, this is in 1985. Some of my people that are now with me today were not in the department at the time, and we're trying to reconstruct this. As far as we can recall, most of that \$40,000 was for the salary of a Janet Wile, seconded from Saskatchewan Government Insurance office, and that was to pay her salary while she was assisting in our department, in the women's department. Now this individual is no longer within the province, and this expenditure is not necessary at this time.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, how much was the salary please?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, her salary was \$3,274 per month.

Ms. Simard: — The figure there, Mr. Minister, is 40,263.14. Could you tell me whether your information that you have here today shows that there was polling done under that amount; polling done with Tanka or Decima polling?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, as far as we know, all of that money – the 3,274 – was paid to the individual, who was a public servant in Saskatchewan and is now a public servant in Manitoba. And we know nothing of any polling.

Ms. Simard: — Now, Mr. Minister, in light of your comments about the employment equity branch being phased into your department, the \$600,000 being lost with respect to it, I want to refer you, in light of those comments, to your own internal policy document from the women's secretariat, which I'm sure you're very familiar with. And on page two of that document it says – and this is a document that was put out by the women's secretariat, talking about a Saskatchewan plan of action to enhance opportunities for women. Very good document, Mr. Minister; I suggest that you should follow it a little more closely. The document says:

The first principle is increasing economic opportunities for women. And this will provide significant benefit to women, to government, to families, and to the economy.

And it addresses the fact that 64.8 per cent in the Saskatchewan labour force in 1983 were employed in

the service and trade industries. And women employed full time earned, it says here, 66 per cent of the income earned by men. Now I'd asked you about pay equity, Mr. Minister. Are you going to amend The Labour Standards Act tomorrow, within this session, to ensure that pay equity is implemented in this province? Your paper here is suggesting that you should do that.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, The Labour Standards Act that we now have was written and passed by the NDP, has not been amended by this government. If there's anything wrong with it, it was the NDP who implemented the Act. We are studying the amendments to that particular Act, and we'll try to include as much fairness as is possible.

There will always be a debate over what is fair and what isn't fair. We certainly have, as a number one priority, economic equality of women in this country. And a lot has been done. Women are now legally equal in Canada in all respects. But I agree that they do not have full economic equality at this stage, and we will continue to work towards full economic equality for women. But we will not pass laws that women will be paid a certain sum and men will be paid another certain sum. And our laws will be equal for men and women.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, times are changing. When the present Labour Standards Act was amended with respect to its equal pay for similar work, it was very progressive legislation. But you seem to be living in the past, or perhaps you'd like to turn the clock backwards; I'm not sure, Mr. Minister.

Times are changing and we're advancing — we're advancing constantly. And Saskatchewan is lagging behind. Pay equity has been an acceptable principle for several years now, and it's time for this government to get off its butt and implement the concept of pay equity. It's time to proceed in that fashion.

Don't give me this silly thing that we hear constantly from the members on the other side of the House that, oh well, back before 1982 this is the way things were. This is five years later, Mr. Minister. Are we going to have to wait another five years before you do anything on this? The women of this province are not prepared to wait, Mr. Minister. They want justice now.

Now I'm going to refer you to another statement in your internal policy paper which says that you should consider the problems inherent in the fact that 70 per cent of single parent women live below the poverty line, and 71 per cent of minimum wage-earners are women. Your women's secretariat has pointed that to your attention. And what do you say about it, Mr. Minister? We will monitor minimum wage. You don't really care, Mr. Minister, that 71 per cent of the minimum wage-earners are women. You don't care that 70 per cent of single parent women live below the poverty line.

Now I want to know from you, Mr. Minister, how you are going to implement and act on the recommendation of your own women's secretariat.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, we are already implementing and acting on curing some of these problems. First of all, with respect to single parents — 90 per cent of which are women; 10 per cent of which are men — this government is pursuing actively, in every way possible, maintenance from spouses who do not support their children. This is something that this government has initiated and is following up on very carefully, and we expect to have more and more progress in this regard.

I can tell you this, that as a man, I will not tolerate men who do not support their children. I can tell you this, that as a person, no one would tolerate men or women who do not support their children if they are able to do it. This government will not tolerate that. We are not tolerating this kind of conduct, and we are doing everything possible to assist single parents, predominantly women, in collecting money from responsible spouses who are, I might say, acting in an irresponsible manner.

Secondly, there are at present 2,500 people on the Social Services payroll that were clients of ours who are in training, receiving education, so that they will be able to obtain jobs, be self-sufficient, and earn higher wages in order to assist the living standard of their families. Of those 2,500, the first priority is single mothers, mothers who have been deserted by their spouse — the first priority.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, this kind of program did not exist until we initiated welfare reform in this government. It did not exist under the NDP. There are 2,500 people at any given time getting additional training and additional education so that they can obtain jobs at higher wages. And this is geared primarily for single mothers.

So it seems to me that the members opposite have a short memory and were short on ideas when they were government, did not implement the practical things that are needed to assist women in this province, but got up on their soap box and spied away about rights and equality. We are practical people, and we're dealing with these matters in a practical way.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, I can't help but comment on your comments about maintenance in that you're trying to get maintenance for these women. And you know, I'm not knocking the maintenance enforcement division. I think that's a good division, although there, once again, I believe the government is not moving on it as quickly as they should or putting as much into it as they should, but are holding back.

(1115)

But the whole attitude that: well, if we can get these women maintenance, they'll be okay ... By all means pursue maintenance, but many of these women cannot get maintenance from their husbands because their husbands can't be located, or because they're not earning sufficient money to provide them with maintenance. So this whole attitude, that if we can get these women maintenance they'll be okay, and that solves the problem, just shows an ignorance about what the real problem is out there, Mr. Minister. I'm sad to say that, but it does.

When you started slashing programs to technical institutes, your government paid no attention to the fact that many of these programs, the majority of these programs, were programs that were filled by women. You paid absolutely no attention to that, and yet I hear from you today about education enhancing women's opportunities. But you weren't thinking about it when you cut back on the technical institutes in this province.

And so I'm hearing double-talk all the time from the members on the government side – double-talk about things that are very serious and concern women in this province. Now, Mr. Minister, your internal policy paper also says that the third principle emphasizes the need for basic physical and financial security, in addition to legal equality for women. And it goes on to talk about:

that the government will continue to foster a society that respects human dignity and recognizes the right to security for all persons.

Well, Mr. Minister, when I look at the problem of wife-beating or wife-battering in this province, and the fact that – I know you'll say that there have been no cuts, but you know in your heart of hearts, Mr. Minister, that's not true. There have been substantial cuts to certain transition homes in this province – some in your riding, for example, or your constituency may not have been cut, but there are other transition homes that have been cut. There's something like 4,134 women in this province who were turned away from transition homes in the last two years, and yet your own internal policy paper speaks to that issue and states that it's something that has to be dealt with and action has to be taken on it.

Now I want to know from you, Mr. Minister, what your plans are to solve the problem of these women and children who are fleeing from life-threatening situations? I want to know what you're going to do now, and I don't want to hear any rhetoric about how good the situation is, because the facts are against you, sir.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Deputy Chairman, the member opposite would try to suggest that we on this side of the House know nothing about violence against women, or we know nothing about abuse of women. I can tell you this, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that I personally, as a prosecutor working to enforce the laws of this province, have sent wife-beaters to jail. I have personally assisted women in moving out of their house with the RCMP present. I have personally got up at 3 o'clock in the morning and gone to the house of women who have had problems with their husband being violent, and tried to help with the situation.

So we have some understanding that there is a problem there. We are doing what is possible. I have also, personally, prosecuted men for beating their wife, and then watched the wife move back into the violent situation, and prosecuted the man again. And we have to try to figure out ways of trying to solve these problems. Unfortunately, I . . . as a government, we on this side of the House – no government can legislate kindness; no government can legislate sobriety; alcohol is often involved in these cases. No government can legislate common sense.

We have to work through the law to prosecute people. We have to work towards the correction of these offenders. We have to work towards detection, but above all, we have to keep in mind that these are families, and we have to work to try to keep these families together, if possible, and make an improvement in the lives of the husband and the wife and the children. And if these families cannot be kept together, then we have to assist the wife in living independently from her husband who, in some cases, is beyond correction.

And that is why we have 2,500 people on the Saskatchewan skills development program and on a Saskatchewan employment development program to assist these people. And I don't think this is an area where people should get into political rhetoric. We are doing everything possible to cure a situation. Most likely . . . Wife-battering is not on the increase, but is now being detected and coming out into the open. And we are doing many, many things to try to correct that.

The member opposite will know that in family disputes, that the Attorney General's department will, only on the rarest of occasions, withdraw a complaint where a wife has made a complaint about wife-battering. And I recall that in the past these complaints would be made, and then the wife would withdraw the complaint, and nothing would ever be done about it. And the Attorney General's department, under our government, has had a policy, where a wife makes a complaint, they proceed with the prosecution, and so the husband cannot coerce the wife into giving up or dropping the charges.

We have made improvements in many, many areas, but unfortunately we can't legislate kindness or common sense.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, what your government is doing to help these women is to cut back on legal aid and impose user fees for those women who wish to use legal aid to get out of violent situations. That's what your government has done for these women.

What your government has also done for these women is turned away 4,134 women in two years from transition homes. Now, Mr. Minister, wouldn't you agree that perhaps the first step would be to open up your doors to those 4,134 women who leave transition homes, women and children who leave transition homes because there isn't adequate space for them. Isn't that the first thing to do, or at least one of the things that should be given top priority by your government?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, transition houses are important, but they are not the solution to all problems, and we have to look at a broad spectrum of solutions in this area. And the next thing that we have to look at is where the transition houses should be, and there's a concentration in Regina, Saskatoon, and a few other centres. There's none in my constituency. There are none in the Estevan area, none in the Swift Current area. And we have to look at serving the entire province, so we will examine the areas where the greatest need is.

We have little information of the actual internal workings.

These are non-governmental organizations, and it's not like having your department, so we have difficulty obtaining information on the details of the workings of the transition houses. And we know that they serve a good purpose, but as to the amount of money required to operate one transition house as opposed to another transition house, it's rather difficult for us to judge. And so we try our best.

In addition what we have is . . . we're concerned with duplication of services, and we're looking at the possibilities of how services to women can be consolidated. We have sexual assault lines; we have women's transition houses; we have crisis centres; and we have native groups providing services; and we have non-native groups providing services.

And from the point of view of the department, we have to examine whether some of these services could be consolidated and therefore provide a better service in that you would have people with a broader area of skills, and you wouldn't have a situation where for a certain type of problem you're directed here; for another problem you're directed there. We would like to have some degree of constituency, so we're examining this, and intend to make continuous improvements in this area.

Ms. Simard: — Well, Mr. Minister, I'm pleased to hear that you're examining it. I would think that opening the doors to women who are fleeing violent situations should be a top priority with this government. I don't believe it's too much money to spend when you have billions of dollars, billions of dollars to give away in tax holidays and incentives to large corporations from out of province. A few dollars here in Saskatchewan to protect our women is not too much to ask of this government, Mr. Minister.

And with respect to legal aid, as you know, women and children leaving violent situations often depend upon legal aid for protection. And a woman who's experiencing trauma and stress associated with having to deal with and leave an abusive relationship, will also experience additional financial and emotional burden. You know that, Mr. Minister, and yet your government has approved the imposition of legal aid user fees. And these women are going to . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order, please. Order. Order. I would like to remind the hon. member that we are dealing with Human Resources, Labour and Employment, and you're bringing up the legal aid issue, which is part of Social Services. So we'll have the opportunity to discuss that then.

Ms. Simard: — The women's secretariat, Mr. Chairman, is responsible for anything relating to the status of women in this province. So with all due respect, I beg to differ with you. It's right here in their mandate; they're responsible for anything pertaining to women. And if you like, Mr. Chairman, I will read you the section, because perhaps you didn't have a copy of this legislation. It says that:

The minister has the responsibility for matters relating to the status of women, and may co-ordinate policies and programs (and legal aid is

a program), and activities of the Government of Saskatchewan relating to the status of women, and the minister may provide any assistance that the minister considers appropriate to improve the status of women in Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Chairman, when women are fleeing violent situations and have to pay user fees to get legal aid, I would suggest that that's an issue that pertains to women and should be looked into by the minister responsible for improving the status of women. I think it quite logically follows, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: — You may proceed.

Ms. Simard: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Now my question to the minister, Mr. Minister, is that an overwhelming majority of family law cases opened by the legal aid are filed by women. And often these women are in desperate situations and require immediate legal action to obtain restraining orders, custody of children, and/or maintenance orders. And so I want to know how the minister — because he is responsible for improving the lot of women in this province — how the minister will guarantee that women will receive quick, legal action from legal aid even if they can't afford the user fees and even if they're not on social welfare.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, the answer is very simple.

First of all, Mr. Chairman, you are correct in your ruling that legal aid is paid for and voted in this Assembly under Social Services. Your ruling was correct, and the member opposite should have more respect for the Chair than to challenge the Chair in that manner.

In any event, since we are on the topic, and somehow it has snuck into these estimates, I have nothing to hide and will answer the question. The answer to the question is very simple: women who cannot afford to pay a user fee at legal aid do not have to pay a user fee at legal aid. That is the criteria: can you afford to pay any kind of a fee.

Secondly, the great majority of the work done at legal aid right now is criminal work. And if the criminal work-load is not as high, then there will be more time for the legal aid clinics to do work in family law. And I don't know if it's going to be lower, but certainly we wouldn't expect the work-load to be higher.

So there is ample time for legal aid to deal with family law problems, and I would hope that they could give these problems a priority. In the past, they have done a reasonably good job in this area; I expect they will be able to continue to do the job. But the member's question answers itself, you know: those who cannot afford to pay any kind of a user fee will not be asked to pay a user fee, and so that's the end of the matter.

Ms. Simard: — Obviously the minister doesn't understand what happens in these situations, Mr. Chairman.

Women may be able to afford it several months down the road when they get themselves together, but initially they

may not have any money; their husbands may be supporting them. So obviously the minister didn't understand.

(1130)

And I just wish to comment on the statement he made about your ruling, Mr. Chairman. I do believe your ruling was right, which is that he's responsible for those issues in the sense that he's responsible for women. And if he chooses to deny that, then I suggest that he's not fulfilling his mandate under The Women's Secretariat Act, and he precludes himself from acting as minister for women's issues in this province any further if he refuses to accept responsibility for that area, Mr. Chairman.

And if he's suggesting that in my getting up and explaining to you what the mandate of his grounds are, in the manner that I did, in a genuine and forthright manner, if he's suggesting to you that there was any impropriety in that, then it is typical of his attitude that people should not be allowed to voice their opinion, and notwithstanding the fact that they may have sound and reasonable grounds for doing so. But that's typical, Mr. Chairman, of this minister.

Now I wish to get on to the internal policy paper which says on page 3, the internal policy paper of the minister's department which says:

That the policy of the department should be to redesign and enhance education and training support programs and to expand economic advantages for women.

Which may not be on page 3, the first part being on page 3.

Now, Mr. Minister, public service cuts and their effects on women. The statistics I have will show you that in the Department of Highways – now I'm only talking about in-scope positions, Mr. Minister, because we have been unable to get the information with respect to out-of-scope positions; it hasn't been available. So I'm now directing myself to in-scope positions.

Highways, the percentage of positions occupied by women that were eliminated was 29.2 per cent; in Justice, 77.8 per cent; in Parks Recreation, Tourism, 44.9 per cent; in Tourism, visitor reception centres, I have here, 83.3 per cent; technical institute instructors, 39.6 per cent; dental plan, 97.8 per cent; prescription drug plan, 84.6 per cent; SAIL (Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living), 18.2 per cent; Rural Development, 0 per cent.

But do you know what that totals up to, Mr. Minister – positions occupied by women that were eliminated by this government? Do you know what that totals up to, Mr. Minister – 75.2 per cent of the in-scope positions eliminated were positions that were occupied by women.

And I think that that is atrocious, Mr. Minister, and it once again tells me that this government doesn't consider the advancement of women's interests a priority. They're prepared to cut back positions that affect those who can

least afford to have them cut back. Considering the fact when we look at minimum wage and all other statistics, no question about it – 75.2 per cent, Mr. Minister.

And there were something like 277 unfilled positions were eliminated. And because these positions were unfilled, Mr. Minister, it's been very difficult to determine exactly how these cuts would affect women. But we have taken a look at the type of job and whether or not it's gender specific, and we've come to the conclusion, and we believe it's a conservative estimate, that something like 165 of those unfilled positions would have been filled by women – would have been filled by women, Mr. Minister.

Now you may not have these statistics at hand, you may not have them at hand, Mr. Minister. And if you don't have these statistics at hand, this is what the women's division or the women's secretariat, the newly reorganized body, should be doing is looking into the effect of your cut-backs in government on women, and then, Mr. Minister, they should have the mandate to make that information public – to make it public.

And originally in these estimates I criticized your government for not giving the women's secretariat the mandate it should have, a mandate to advance the interests of women and, if need be, lobby government to do that. Now I'm asking you, Mr. Minister: will you look into the effect these cut-backs have had on women, and will you make that information public?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, it's rather difficult to operate a government under the double standards that the NDP suggest we operate. On the one hand, they suggest that we hire on an equality basis – this government does not hire on the basis of whether a person is a male or a female – and on the other hand, we have a mandate to assist women. Now we try to assist women, and we try to be an equal opportunity employer, and it's rather difficult. It's a fine balance to try to do this.

So the member opposite, the member from Lakeview, quotes statistics that could only be available to, or from, the SGEU, because the government doesn't keep track of hiring on the basis of men and women outside of my department. It tries to monitor to see how we're doing. But there is no direction, that there is a desk there with a chair, and we're going to fill that chair to have somebody stare out the window because we have a certain quota of something or other. And we hire people that we need.

We try to keep in our minds that we want to treat women fairly and equally. But to be an equal opportunity employer, and then to suggest that any kind of a lay-off would be done other than by union seniority, is ridiculous.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, you haven't answered my question. Are you going to look into the effect of your cut-backs on the women of this province?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, usually I don't read long speeches in this Assembly. As a matter of fact, I don't read speeches. I have a little bit of information that I wish to read here, one-half of a page here, which

answers a lot of questions in this area.

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission reviewed the government employment equity plan on June 9, 1987, and has granted interim approval for the plan. In doing so the commission set forth a number of terms and conditions. These are: (1) that an update on the committee's structures and monitoring system is to be submitted to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission by August 31, 1987; (2) that the following information be submitted to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission by October 31, 1987 – (a) an update of the work-force analysis as of August 31, 1987, (b) goals to March 31, 1988, (c) goals for the fiscal year 1988-89; (3) that a public hearing will be held into this interim affirmative action program on October 9, 1987; and (4) that a comprehensive affirmative action plan developed by a joint committee of representatives of management and the Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union be submitted to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission by June 30, 1988.

Indicating that we are proceeding with something the NDP never accomplished, and I believe the member from Lakeview was the vice-chairperson of the Human Rights Commission, wasn't able to accomplish anything to this extent, and that these issues will be negotiated with the SGEU and will be resolved during the negotiations.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, I'm finally pleased. I'm finally . . . I'm glad that finally after five and one-half years you've managed to put together an affirmative action program in the public service. I'm pleased to see that because in 1982 we were so close that it would have happened almost immediately. But when you were voted out, it was put on hold for five and one-half years.

But, Mr. Minister, that's okay. I just hope that notwithstanding the fact that you have eliminated \$600,000 of funding to insure that that affirmative action program operates properly, I just hope that it still goes ahead and does what the women of this province want it to do. But I seriously question the possibility of that because, as I said to you in my opening remarks, this government pays lip-service to advancing the interests of women, but when the bucks have to be put where their rhetoric is, it isn't forthcoming.

And you told us today that the employment equity branch disappeared, the \$600,000 wasn't carried over into your department, although it was in your department, and now you're telling us we have an affirmative action program. And I wonder whether the support will be there to see that program through. I wonder, Mr. Minister. I hope it is, and I hope that you, as minister responsible for women, will make sure that it is.

But with respect to that affirmative action program, it doesn't exactly answer my question with respect to the cut-backs, because although you allude to the fact that there will be a review of the status of employment in government, affirmative action is usually geared at, particularly in the public service, at getting women into

management levels and higher up the hierarchy. And so your affirmative action program may not deal with those women who are working at the lower end of the scale, Mr. Minister. So your reply doesn't really answer my question.

But I wish to move on to another area at this time, and that is cuts to technical institutes. And I want to refer to your policy on page 3 in your own internal policy document, that it's your policy to redesign and enhance education and training support programs for women.

And then when I look at the percentage of female students, or the programs . . . female students at Wascana Institute affected by cuts to, or the transferring of programs, they are as follows, Mr. Minister: dental therapy, for example, 98 per cent of those are women – the percentage of students in the program that are women – 98 per cent; barbering and hair styling, 88 per cent were women affected by your cuts; aesthetician, 90 per cent are women affected by your cuts; occupational choices, 45 per cent are women affected by your cuts; administrative studies and business, which is transferred, as opposed to a cut, 50 per cent are women affected by your cuts.

But 98 per cent, 80 per cent, 90 per cent – with statistics like that, Mr. Minister, how do you explain that, Mr. Minister, in light of your own policy to redesign and enhance education and training support programs when these women have been affected by your cuts and by your transfers of these programs?

And we've heard from some of these women, publicly, when all these cuts were taking place, about their very personal situation. And there's no question, you can't get around the fact that women have been severely affected by the cuts in those programs. How do you explain that, Mr. Minister, in light of your own internal policy paper?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, I explain it as common sense. If you are running technical institutes, and people are encouraged to take courses, and only one out of four will be able to find a job when they graduate, then it's common sense that you say this course is no longer relevant to society today, and that these courses should be changed to courses that are relevant. And so, you know, the question you get in an educational system is between having people get an education in something that interests them, and having people get an education in something that will provide them employment.

(1145)

And so when I went to university, I didn't study not one class in political science because I did not consider those classes practical towards any form of employment. And certainly you have to have some balance and the broadening of awareness, but you cannot educate people for positions that are no longer required by a changing society. So the answer to that is common sense.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, the answer to that may be common sense to you. And that's an easy thing to put off these individuals who were deeply hurt by these cuts to say it's common sense to disregard their rights and their . . .

Some of these individuals were part way through a program. But that didn't matter; it didn't matter that they were in the middle of final exams when your government made the announcement in its heartless fashion. And now you say it's simply common sense, and that's the way you deal with it. Well, Mr. Minister, it doesn't wash with the public, I can assure you.

Now I would like you to advise me, Mr. Minister, whether publicly funded institutions in this province have been requested . . . whether your government has requested publicly funded institutions to put in place voluntary programs for affirmative action. And if so, what are those institutions of which you've made that request?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, that is more appropriately a question to the Minister of Education. And I believe he answered that, to some extent, indicating that the institutions were voluntarily going in that direction; and his report, towards the year 2000, deals with that topic.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, that is not a more appropriate question to the Minister of Education. I'm talking about affirmative action to publicly funded institutions. That is in your area. You should know what institutions, if any, have been asked to implement voluntary affirmative action. That's not an Education question, Mr. Minister, I'm sorry to say it's not.

You say it right here in your own internal policy paper: "request publicly funded institutions to implement voluntary programs." Haven't you read this, Mr. Minister? Haven't you read this document? Instead you say, it's the Minister of Education's responsibility. Another example, Mr. Minister, another example of your government's lack of priority. You pay lip-service to things such as this, but you tie the hands of your own employees; you tie the hands of the women's secretariat. You haven't even read the document, obviously.

Now another policy put out in this principles and policy paper is to — and I'll read it to you, Mr. Minister — "encourage voluntary programs by large companies which have government contracts." Now would you please name for me which large corporations you have encouraged to implement affirmative action programs with respect to women?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, we encourage all corporations, all institutions, to consider affirmative action and deal with the laws of Saskatchewan. And I publicly stand here and ask all of them to do so.

Ms. Simard: — Okay. What corporations have you specifically contacted, Mr. Minister, and how did you encourage them? Did you just pat them on the back and say, you know, maybe we should have an affirmative action program; or did you say to the corporations, if you don't implement an affirmative action program, or if you want this particular contract, you must look at an affirmative action program? That's what you should be doing, Mr. Minister. And when have you done that?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, we've . . . two good examples would be: NewGrade, the largest project in

Saskatchewan, where we have met with NewGrade, considering the upgrader. We have 120 native people working there; eight women are working there in non-traditional roles. We have done the same with Weyerhaeuser. Weyerhaeuser has 14 per cent native people working on their construction project right now. These are two substantial corporations, corporations that are not near to the hearts of the NDP, but corporations that are being good corporate citizens and treating Saskatchewan people fairly.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, how many women are employed at Weyerhaeuser? Do you have an affirmative action program that pertains to women, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, we wouldn't force people to do construction work if they didn't apply. And at Weyerhaeuser and all construction sites, the number of women working there would depend on the number of women who apply; and if women are not applying for those jobs, it's hardly possible for us to have a corporation hire a large number of women if women are not applying for those jobs.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, obviously, obviously you haven't been insisting on contract compliance, affirmative action programs for women. The only programs you can cite to me are programs that deal with jobs that women may not be interested in applying for. You're not insisting on it, obviously, and that's the answer. And you should just come clean and give us the correct answer, which is that you're not following your own recommendations.

Now, Mr. Minister, I want to know whether you will be bringing forward in this session legislation that will require affirmative action programs in the private sector with respect to large corporations that deal with government; will you come forward with legislation to that effect?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, we will review the legislation and take that into consideration when we are drafting legislation.

Ms. Simard: — I hope that's not a no, because you'll be hearing about it from me again, Mr. Minister . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm afraid it might be a no, but that's okay, we'll be back here.

Now, Mr. Minister, I would like to know your paper, policy paper, talks about increasing the opportunity for women to participate in private and public pension plans. And, of course, you will automatically refer to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan because you constantly pat yourself on the back. Now we have made points with respect to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan that it excludes those women who are on low income and cannot afford to make the \$300 a year payment that excludes them, and that those women will be the women who need it the most 25 years from now.

Now I ask you, Mr. Minister: in light of that criticism, what do you intend to do to make sure that those women are able to, and can, participate in the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, so that 25 years from now they will have

their own pension, and they'll feel good about it because they won't necessarily have to go on welfare in order to obtain payments? Because there's some argument, well we don't want to pay welfare in advance. But it seems to me, that if you can provide some incentive for them and some way include them in that plan, that it would be to everybody's benefit in Saskatchewan. And I would like to know what ideas you have in that regard, Mr. Minister, and what you will be doing to protect those women?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Deputy Chairman, I think we're making some progress here. The member for Regina Lakeview is finally considering something other than the narrow point of view and considering that there are various possibilities that have to be weighed. And she is quite correct; we are not going to pay welfare in advance; she is quite correct there are incentives to make contributions to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. It is the best form of saving a man or woman could do in this province because it is matched by the government and protected from income tax until withdrawn. So even if one would not be in an income tax bracket, the savings that a person would make would be doubled instantly — the best investment any citizen could make in their future.

I am pleased that the member opposite is considering the various options and understands the considerations that went into the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. And I'm pleased that she acknowledges that it is a giant step forward, something that no other province has done, and we did it as a government to show the way for other provinces and for the federal government.

Ms. Simard: — I don't acknowledge, Mr. Minister, that it's a giant step forward. And my arguments are on record and in *Hansard*. I say that I'm glad the government is considering pensions for home-makers, but you are excluding some home-makers who can't afford it, and those who need it the most, and the plan is surely lacking because of it, Mr. Minister, surely lacking.

Now your paper also says . . . and so I don't believe it's a giant step forward. It's also, to make a point, since we're on the issue, it's also interfering with federal-provincial negotiations to set up a federally-funded plan which is where we should be moving, Mr. Minister, instead of jumping the gun and coming forward with pre-election promises that haven't been thought through and that don't meet the real needs of this province.

Now, Mr. Minister, your own paper here says that it's your policy to review labour legislation and revise where necessary to reflect present labour market composition and conditions. I would like to know, Mr. Minister . . . I'd like to know if we could have the results of your review and analysis; and I'd like to know what actions you've taken as a result of your supposed review and analysis.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, the review will be completed in a few months, and the results will be available at that time. The member opposite asks for things that are not possible at this time. And we will consider this, and the answer will be made available when the final decisions have been made.

Ms. Simard: — And I hope there will be a lot of things in it,

Mr. Minister, to solve many of the problems that we've discussed today. We will be awaiting this eagerly.

Mr. Minister, another policy of yours is continued, planned, day care development with a view to increasing the number of day care spaces available, developing a wider range of options, and increasing subsidies to low-income workers. Now my question to you, Mr. Minister, is: in what direction is this development going? What are the wider options? And could you please reply to that, first off?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, at this time we are awaiting the final federal position to see how this will correlate with our plans in Saskatchewan. We expect that will be out very soon. There was an indication it would be out by the end of June, but that was not the case. We expect it will be out very soon, and then we will be able to assess the day care situation and the future directions we can take, taking into account the federal position on day care and federal funding that might be available.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, is it true that grants to day care have been frozen? Is that true?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, day care is a vote under Social Services, totally within the jurisdiction of Social Services. As far as I know, the answer is no, and we are considering opening some new day-care centres within the province, but I don't have my officials here to get details on things.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, would you please provide us with that information when you have it?

(1200)

Mr. Chairman: — Order, please. The child-care issue is under Social Services, vote 36, number 16, so at that time the minister will be able to deal with that.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Chairman, I'll accept your ruling on that. I simply want to make the point that this is also a matter that pertains to women going out into the labour market and advancing the interests of women and, therefore, I believe the minister should be informed about that, even if it is in Social Services. It pertains to women, and therefore he should inform himself.

Now you have said in your policy paper, as well, Mr. Minister, that the government will strive to increase opportunities for women to choose the manner in which they participate in public life. And you've specifically said, to encourage municipalities, co-operatives, sport and recreation and cultural associations to increase their representation of women on boards and commissions, in those areas. Now could you please advise me, Mr. Minister, what have you done — specifically what you have done, not general statements — specifically what you have done to encourage municipalities to increase the representation of women in local government?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Deputy Chairman, specifically we have set an example by increasing the number of women on boards and commissions from 7.5

per cent – 7.7, I think, if I recall correctly – 7.7 per cent when the NDP were kicked out of office, to 29 per cent today. As I indicated yesterday to the member opposite, we are screening all the government boards and commissions with a view towards increasing the number of women even further. Specifically, we are setting an example for all of Saskatchewan and that is probably the best way to . . .

An Hon. Member: — For all of Canada.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — My learned colleagues say, for all of Canada. Yes, and that is setting an example, is the best way of showing the province and the country how it's to be done and what should be done.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, you may be giving yourself self-congratulatory praises. I say to you that you're not moving quickly enough on this issue, not nearly quickly enough. You move from affirmative action from 9 per cent to 17, or whatever, and you think that's great. That's not good enough, Mr. Minister, and the women of this province don't think it's good enough. It's not good enough. And I don't want to wait another five or six years to see another 8 or 9 per cent of women into managerial positions. There has to be action on this, and it has to be taken now, and you have to pursue this matter more aggressively.

Obviously, Mr. Minister, the answer is that you haven't specifically gone to municipalities or recreational boards and told them about the direction that you would like to see them moving. Obviously you haven't done that, Mr. Minister, or you would have told us today.

Now I want to know whether or not, Mr. Minister, you're reviewing family laws with respect to child custody, abduction, access, and maintenance, and what your intentions are with respect to the unified family court model, for example. And what is your government doing in that regard?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — First of all, Mr. Deputy Chairman, today is my 16th wedding anniversary. It's a very, very happy day for my wife and I. And that reminds me of my wife's opinion on some women's issues and what some women say. And my wife advises me that the women who shout the loudest do not necessarily represent her views. So I say to the member from Lakeview, she does not represent all women in Saskatchewan, nor do all of them agree with her views. And so my wife . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order, please. Order. The ancillary conversations are very interesting, but they do make it difficult for the two members who are discussing the issue at hand. So could we please co-operate.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, I apologize for my colleagues who were reminding the member from Lakeview that her family income is over \$109,000. They shouldn't do that from their seats.

The situation is thus, that with respect to family law, we are reviewing the family laws of Saskatchewan with the view to assisting families. And I agree, in particular, the laws need to assist single parents the most because those

are the most difficult families to operate in. And we are reviewing all of those laws. We're reviewing the child care Act; we are reviewing many, many laws, and there will be amendments.

I think, if you look at the statutes of Saskatchewan, this government has set a record for amending laws in the last five and a half years. We have kept up a tremendous pace at updating laws, and all of the laws with respect to family law are being examined and will be improved from time to time.

Ms. Simard: — When are these improvements going to be forthcoming, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, some of them in this session, depending on how long it lasts. The members opposite indicate it may go till March, in which case some of them will be in this session, some of them in the following session.

Ms. Simard: — Could the minister tell us what improvements he's referring to; what specific improvements he's talking about?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Deputy Chairman, I know that the member from Lakeview is eager to criticize, and she will have ample opportunity to be negative when these improvements are introduced.

Ms. Simard: — Obviously, Mr. Chairman, the minister isn't going to be forthcoming about what changes he is considering. I'm wondering then, Mr. Minister, whether he's prepared to discuss these anticipated changes with the women's organizations in this province, or will he continue to do it behind closed cabinet doors as he did the reorganization of the women's division, informing them about it after the fact.

I'm wondering if the minister is prepared to come forward and tell the people of this province, instead of using this petty, insignificant rhetoric of his and . . . Conversation here that has taken place this morning in the last few minutes has been ridiculous. But I wonder if the minister is prepared to rise above that; I wonder if he's prepared to rise above that and say that he will meet with women's organizations around this province to discuss what changes should be implemented and what he is thinking about, so that women's organizations have an opportunity to make some input into it.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — The answer is yes, Mr. Chairman. I will meet with women's groups throughout the province. I'm not likely to meet with very many NDP women's groups, but I'm prepared to meet with non-partisan women's groups and discuss these issues and consider their advice and recommendations.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, the internal policy paper of the women's secretariat goes on to make a number of other suggestions. I'm not going to go into them this morning in detail. I would advise the minister to take a close look at that. I would advise the minister to pursue the objectives that are set out in that policy paper, genuinely, sincerely, immediately, and not to just pay lip-service to the fact that he's interested in advancing the

interests of women in this province.

I want to move on to another area that causes me concern, and that's the cut-backs to the Human Rights Commission. And that causes me concern, Mr. Minister, because one-third of the cases that go before the Human Rights Commission are cases dealing with sex discrimination, and therefore within your mandate.

And in 1983, or shortly after 1983, there was a report that come forward by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission that suggested the commission Act should be amended to bring it more in line with the charter. And I would like the minister to advise whether or not he is pushing the Minister of Justice to come forward with these amendments to the Human Rights Commission that will bring the code more in line with the charter of rights.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, my jurisdiction lies over many things, but not over the Human Rights Commission, and it's certainly something that we consider from the point of view of women's issues, and we confer in cabinet on those issues. And the member opposite will have ample opportunity to ask those questions of the Minister of Justice when those estimates come up.

Ms. Simard: — I was asking the minister whether he was lobbying the Minister of Justice to make those changes. That's a simple question, and all it requires is a yes and no answer. And because he hasn't given us a yes and no answer, I have to assume it's no. And I'm suggesting to the minister that that's part of his mandate, and I'm urging him to lobby the Minister of Justice to bring forward those changes.

Now what we've heard here last night and this morning, Mr. Chairman, is that the women's division has been reduced from 18 to 9, and the minister was not able to advise us that there are any other positions in the public service that are specifically designated to dealing with the interests of women. He wasn't able to tell us that, so I have to assume, Mr. Chairman, that there aren't any.

We found out that he's let the advisory council slip. The term of appointments of members was in December of '86, and there have been a handful of women appointed some time in June of this year, and I point out — but there are still more appointments to be forthcoming. But this government doesn't consider women's issues a priority, so they have neglected to appoint the members to that advisory council. We heard that last night, Mr. Chairman.

The appointments, I believe, he said were made some time in June with respect to these women, and it's interesting to note that it was in June that we wrote to the minister asking him about this problem. And so I have to ask myself whether or not the minister is only reacting to what we bring up, or whether he's taking real individual initiative in this area. We learned last night that the minister knew nothing about the disbanding of the employment equity branch, or he didn't wish to acknowledge it. Either way I think it is seriously lacking and shows that he wishes to ignore his responsibilities.

He wouldn't give us any details of the reports from the

Women's Advisory Council. It seems to me he should have one file with all the reports of the Women's Advisory Council in it, easy access to all the reports. He couldn't bring forward those reports, and I'm asking myself whether there are any reports and recommendations, or if there are, whether the minister has chosen not to follow the recommendations of his own advisory council. We were unable to get this information, Mr. Chairman. Another example of how this government does not make women's issues a priority.

And this government is not performing its responsibilities and duties under its own legislation. Another example, and we understand that there's some \$20,000 or something that went to the Women's Advisory Council. We have no idea how this money was spent. We asked the minister about 17 conferences that the Women's Advisory Council attended in one year, how many people went to each of those conferences? And he once again avoided the question by saying he wouldn't give us any names. We never asked him for names. We just asked him how many and how much was spent, but he wasn't forthcoming with the information.

I'm beginning to wonder whether he has a handle on that. And I'm beginning to wonder whether he has been encouraging the advisory council to perform the responsibilities that it was established to perform, to come forward with research and recommendations that urge the government to further advance the interests of women. We get nothing, no information, no reports, nothing of the conferences, no reports coming from the conferences, no recommendations, no answer as to how the government's moving on these things, and, Mr. Minister, that's seriously lacking. I'm very concerned that perhaps there isn't any information to be coming forward.

We talked about the cut-backs in government yesterday, and how the vast majority of these cut-backs, Mr. Minister, affect women. Cut-backs in Health, for example, cut-backs in Health severely affect women and their children, because women and children access health more than any other sector in society. So the minister understands that, Mr. Chairman.

We talk about the women who work in the health care system. Most of the people working in the health care system are women, and they're burning out. So cut-backs in Health, Mr. Chairman, are affecting women that way. They're also affecting women in the sense that when there is not professional services there because of cut-backs in Health, women revert to the traditional role of being caretaker and looking after the sick and elderly. And I'm not suggesting that they shouldn't, Mr. Chairman, but those people should be receiving professional care.

(1215)

We talked about cut-backs to legal aid which hurt women who are fleeing violent situations, cut-backs to legal aid that now require them to pay user fees. We talked about, in the opening remarks, about discrimination at Pine Grove, the lack of facilities and training centres for women.

We talked about cut-backs to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission into the Saskatchewan Human Rights Association and the fact that one-third of those complaints coming before the commission are directly related to sex discrimination and, therefore, those cut-backs severely affecting women in this province.

We talked about pay equity, Mr. Chairman. We talked about pay equity and the minister's inability, or refusal, to bring forward serious legislation with respect to pay equity. His lack of sincerity when he spoke in the legislature on July 21, and told this House that he would be contacting the main government union to talk about pay equity, and so far no letter has been forthcoming.

We talk about the failure of this government's need . . . the failure of this government to meet the needs in child care. We've talked repeatedly in this House, further back than December of '86, but December of '86 was the first time I mentioned it, about the inadequacies to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. We talked about the reorganization of the women's secretariat that took place, reorganizing cutting 25 per cent of the budget, reorganizing splitting it up into three, bringing it back into one, and then amalgamating it in this unwieldy Department of Human Resources and Labour, making it very, very difficult for the top-notch personnel that's working in that area to properly perform their duties.

We talked about the failure to implement a real affirmative action program. As far as we can tell from the information that's been forthcoming today, the affirmative action area, employment equity has been cut some \$600,000 . . . or 582,000, whatever the specific figure is.

And the list goes on, Mr. Chairman, the list goes on. And when we look at cut-backs to mental health organizations, transition homes, the mentally disabled, native organizations, and so on — agencies which advance the interest of women, and agencies which advance the interests of those who are discriminated again in our society — the picture is very dismal, Mr. Chairman, it's very dismal. This government cannot point to a 17 per cent thing in affirmative action and stand up, and hold their heads, and say we're protecting the rights of women, because they're not. They're falling short, and they're lacking in their strength and determination to pursue this matter, and properly and adequately protect the interests of women in this province. They are not doing the job, Mr. Chairman, and women just don't count to these people.

And as minister of women's services, Mr. Minister, you should be going about this province and advancing the interests of women. You should be pushing for affirmative action. You should be lobbying the Minister of Justice to come forward with human rights legislation. You should be dealing with the child care issue from a woman's perspective as well. You should be pushing for these things.

But, Mr. Minister, repeatedly in these estimates, what we heard was: well, that's not my responsibility or, that comes under another area or, I don't know anything about that or, I don't want to comment on it — and that's

what we repeatedly heard in these estimates, Mr. Minister. And these are the things you should be doing instead of cracking dumb jokes about parts of women's anatomy. These are the things you should be doing, Mr. Minister.

And now that I've raised it, I just want to comment on that dumb joke of yours, and the fact that you sloughed it off. The fact that you sloughed it off, that the women of this province who were concerned about it were solely concerned for political reasons. I suggest, Mr. Minister, that that's another insult to the women of this province, that's a second insult, that you would say that those women who were concerned about your derogatory remarks were solely doing it for political purposes.

And I believe your Premier goes along with you because you never made an apology. You just made some tongue in cheek comments. You made no real apology to the women of this province. And you will say to me, well some women don't mind. Some women don't mind, that's what you'll say. But that's no response, Mr. Minister. Some women may not mind, but many do. Many do, Mr. Minister, and to undermine those women who don't mind, by saying they're merely being political, is absolutely disgraceful.

And I tell you, Mr. Minister, instead of cracking your dumb jokes — and it's not a question of sense of humour because there's no way you have a market on a sense of humour, Mr. Minister, and there's nobody in this province who would think that you do. But instead of cracking your dumb jokes, you should be pressing for these things that really affect women, and that women are really interested in. And that's what I want to see you do in the next year.

And if you don't believe in it, Mr. Minister, or if you don't want to do this, if you don't really believe in these issues, Mr. Minister, then get out and let somebody else who does take over your job.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, the women of the province want research — research about the problems that exist in Saskatchewan so they know what action to take. They want representation, they want competent, strong, and genuine representation, Mr. Minister, genuine, sincere, and competent representation and they deserve nothing less, Mr. Minister — nothing less. And if you can't fit that bill, Mr. Minister, if you can't fit that bill, if you don't believe in it, then you should get out and let somebody else take over. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, the member from Lakeview is truly a sad case. A person with no sense of humour whatsoever, a totally politically motivated person with the narrowest of approach to everything . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . The member from Rosemont's wish to cut out my tongue. I don't really know what the member from Lakeview would want to do to me.

But I can say this: that in this province, the people of Saskatchewan know the difference between common sense, a good government, and between radical

statements made by the member opposite. The people in this province know that a government has a responsibility of governing for all people. The people of Saskatchewan are entitled to a fair and honest government. We must govern for the benefit of everyone, even the benefit of the member from Lakeview, much as it is difficult for me to do it. But we govern for her benefit and the benefit of her children and the benefit of her husband and her family, and we do it as fairly and honestly as possible.

And truly the people of Saskatchewan have a choice. They now can see an example of what kind of government they rejected, what kind of a government they could get in the future, and what kind of a government they now have. And the people of Saskatchewan have made the correct choice. And the people of Saskatchewan will continue to receive good government.

Ms. Simard: — I agree, Mr. Chairman, we must govern with a fair and honest government serving the interests of all. And the minister certainly hasn't done that in the eyes of many women in this province, and in the eyes of many women's organizations. He hasn't governed with respect to these issues in a manner that serves the interests of all women.

And so I wish to make that comment as a final comment, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, I, too, have a final comment. Amen.

Mr. Goodale: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairman. I have a number of questions I would like to address to the minister this morning — this afternoon, I guess it is now — in relation to his responsibilities in these estimates.

And first of all, before we leave the topics of the various women's issues that have been discussed for some hours in these estimates most recently, I'd like to return with the minister to the subject of the Women's Advisory Council for him and for his department, and the process that is now under way to appoint people to that council.

I understand the minister to have said that the previous council was in office, based upon appointments that expired on the 31st of December 1986, and that since that date, in the first half of this year, a few — not nearly all but a few — new appointments were made to the council, I believe the minister said, between April and June of 1987.

I wonder if the minister can tell me, in relation to those four or five persons who have been appointed most recently to the Women's Advisory Council, what was the basis upon which those appointments were made? Were those specific individuals recommended to the minister by various women's groups and organizations in Saskatchewan; or did those names originate within the department or with the minister himself? What was the basis upon which those few appointments were made to date?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — In answer to my . . . I say my colleague from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, I gave the names yesterday. I could give them again if you wish: Donna

Roadway, Saskatoon, radio announcer; Marilyn Stradecki, Balcarres, home-maker and farmer; Paulette Vanderlinde, Regina, school principal; Mary Muir, Kindersley, director of the Danny Fisher Centre for Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

Some of the individuals appointed so far have been, for lack of a better word "carry-over," but people who are continuing from the former appointments. Some have been recommended. We receive recommendations from women's groups, professional groups, from various people in the department who have had contact with some people. So as a result of that cabinet makes orders in council picking people, and we will continue to fill the council with a broad cross-section of society and try to locate people throughout the province. And that's generally how it has always been done and that's how we intend to continue doing it.

Mr. Goodale: — Mr. Minister, could you indicate — beyond the four or five people that you have mentioned just again in the committee — can you indicate how many additional appointments you would intend to make to bring the council up to its full complement? And can you give me some indication when you would be in a position, specifically, to respond to the recommendations that have been made to you already by the Saskatoon Council of Women and the Provincial Council of Women? When do you think you might be in a position to react to their specific recommendations about persons to be appointed to the advisory council?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — I could tell you that all of the recommendations will be considered in a pool of people that we will pick from; that we want to do it as soon as possible. We would expect to have another eight people, more or less, in addition to the four that are now there.

And I do acknowledge that the advisory council has been running short on members for the last few months — I do acknowledge that. I take responsibility, on behalf of the government, indicating that boards and commissions are being reviewed, and this is part of the general review process. I also indicated that with session and a difficult budget that it was hard to complete all of the boards and commissions and replacements from a cabinet point of view, and that we hope to have this council up and running a lot better in the next year. Not within a year; I'm saying for the next year.

Mr. Goodale: — Could the minister say if he has the intention to respond to the recommendations that he has received and to make the appointments, for example, Mr. Minister, within the next month. Would it be reasonable to suggest that you could have completed your examination of this matter and have all of the appointments concluded by, say, the end of the month of September?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — I'm advised by my staff that the recommendations are coming in very slowly because of summer holidays. I don't think we can complete the council, full strength, within a month. I'm hopeful to do it within two months, but within a month I don't think we can complete it.

(1230)

Mr. Goodale: — Mr. Minister, you have had some recommendations, perhaps not all that you wish to receive, but some recommendations specifically forthcoming from the Provincial Council of Women and the Saskatoon Council of Women. Could I ask you, since those recommendations came into your office and to your officials, have you had any contact with either the Provincial Council of Women or the Saskatoon Council of Women to indicate to them exactly the status of the recommendations that they have made to you, and when those two particular groups could expect a response to the recommendations that they have made?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — We're still, Mr. Chairman, in a gathering of names process here, and I suppose we could give them an interim report. We would rather gather in all the names, then advise them as to how we're proceeding and advise them as to who has been selected. We will try to deal with the matter as soon as possible.

Mr. Goodale: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, I would urge the minister to be in touch with the Saskatoon Council of Women, in particular. If you're not in a position to make any definitive answer to them in terms of the recommendations they have made, I am sure that they would appreciate an interim report on where things stand and how you intend to proceed with it. I would recommend very strongly, Mr. Minister, that you be in touch with that particular group, because they are concerned about the status of it, and where it stands, and when they can expect the matter to be finally concluded.

If I could move on, Mr. Minister, to another subject that has been dealt with in part in the estimates of your department. I would like to ask you some questions about the labour force in Saskatchewan and the numbers of people employed in our province today.

I believe in previous answers in the committee you drew a comparison between the situation today and the situation in 1982. And if I heard your arithmetic correctly, I believe you indicated that the labour force in Saskatchewan in 1982 consisted of some 420,000 people, and that in 1987 that figure had grown to 475,000 people, for an increase in the actual working labour force of Saskatchewan in the order of 55,000 people. That's interesting, Mr. Minister, in terms of a historical analysis.

But I wonder if I could invite you to cast your mind forward to the next five years, as opposed to the last five years, and to give us the best information that you and your department have in terms of the likely changes in the Saskatchewan labour force, say between now and the year 1991 or 1992. In specific terms, I wonder if you could tell us what your official forecast would be about the rate of growth, or the rate of change, in the Saskatchewan labour force projected between now and 1992. And in total numbers, Mr. Minister, what is your official projection about the size of the Saskatchewan labour force five years into the future? Where do you think it will be at that point in time in terms of your department's planning?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, I say to the

member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg that I'm not a fortune-teller. It's rather difficult to forecast that far into the future. If I could forecast that far in the future I would be more inclined to go out of politics and go into the business of making money on forecasting.

But as you are aware, the labour force will depend on commodity prices. It will depend on the success of western diversification and the federal government initiatives in that regard. It may depend on who wins the next federal election. So there's so many variables I cannot really give you a direct projection on what the labour force will be five years from now. The most I can say to you that it will be considerably higher than if the NDP were government, and probably slightly higher than if the Liberals were government.

Mr. Goodale: — Well, Mr. Minister, I would think that from the point of view of your responsibilities in respect to employment, that forecasting changes in the labour force is a rather critical matter. And it's something that I'm sure you and your officials must turn their attention to in trying to anticipate the kinds of changes that will take place, and the rate of those changes.

And I'm wondering if your department has prepared any specific forecasts looking, if not five years into the future, then perhaps three years or two years or one year, any official forecast respecting the labour force size. Are you aware, Mr. Minister, of any official Saskatchewan government forecasts respecting labour force size in the next, say, two- to five-year period? Is there any such forecast in existence?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, I understand, not in my department, but in other government departments, people do guess at these things, and you may hear an announcement from time to time, but I don't have the information, nor do I wish to guess at what the labour force will be like five years from now.

I can give you some general characteristics, that the labour force five years from now will have a greater percentage of women than today. It will be an older labour force; there will be fewer young people in the labour force at that time; the youth unemployment will be down somewhat from what it is now; unemployment, in general, will be slightly lower if everything goes according to predictions; and there will be more native people in the labour force at that time. And this is based on the current trends.

Mr. Goodale: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, to the minister. I wonder if the minister is aware of a document produced on this subject by the Policy Secretariat of the Executive Council. Is that sort of material exclusively the purview of the Premier, or would that information, in the normal course of things, come into your hands for consideration, bearing in mind that you are indeed the minister responsible for employment policy? Are you aware of a forecast with respect to the labour force, produced on this subject by the Policy Secretariat of the Executive Council?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — I don't, Mr. Deputy Chairman, recall personally seeing that forecast from Executive

Council. It would be an internal private working document, and I've never seen it, although I would have access to it. If the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg has this internal document, he may use it to whatever purposes he wishes, but I don't really want to talk about that document.

Mr. Goodale: — Mr. Minister, I'm concerned about that document and the forecast that it contains because it is obviously prepared by senior officials of the Government of Saskatchewan — officials in the secretariat of the Executive Council. They are, presumably, the closest advisers to the Premier. They are dealing with the issue of employment and the size of the labour force, and it's my understanding that they are forecasting that 85,000 people will leave Saskatchewan in the next five-year period, and that that is basically the only reason why we might see an improvement in the actual unemployment rate in this province, because the numbers of people in the labour force will go down due to outward migration.

And I would ask the minister to acquaint himself, with that document and with that forecast if it does indeed project that Saskatchewan is going to be losing something in the order of 85,000 people over the course of the next four or five years.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Deputy Chairman, I don't really have the document that the member refers to before me. I would submit, if there is such a report, it would be too pessimistic; I would be more optimistic. But the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg should really take that matter up with the Premier because he's referring to documents that originate out of the Premier's department.

Mr. Goodale: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, do I take it then from the minister's answer that the most senior advisers to the Premier, when talking about employment matters, do not share that information, or their view of the information, with the minister's department? I'm concerned that the minister responsible for employment policy does not seem to have certain information relating to his direct responsibilities which would be available to others within the government. I would think that that kind of information, first and foremost, wherever it may be prepared within the Government of Saskatchewan, would come immediately to the attention of the minister responsible for employment development.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, my officials tell me that they've looked at the document referred to, and the key question is what commodity prices will be five years from now. If we are successful, and we expect we will be successful in starting a new heavy oil upgrader in the Lloydminster area of Saskatchewan, then that will have a significant change on those statistics. So the question really is: what will be the price of oil; what will be the price of wheat; what will be the price of potash; and who will be buying our potash five years from now. And really that is the question. We take an optimistic view, especially towards oil, potash, and grain, and we expect that the situation will be considerably better than the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg fears.

Mr. Goodale: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, I'd like to move

on to another subject area with the minister, having to do with employment and employment policy. I take it, Mr. Minister, from what you said in your estimates last evening, that in the absence of the employment development fund, what used to be called the employment development fund, that the government is using, as its central pillar in its employment strategy, the so-called home program that was implemented in September of last year.

Just as a matter of clarification so I can begin my questioning on this subject, knowing where the minister starts out, did I hear him correctly in his answers last evening that the home program is, in fact, a central pillar of the government's employment strategy in the absence of what used to be called the employment development fund?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, the member is partly correct. The home program is a key pillar, not the only pillar, in the employment creation in this province. It replaced the winter works program in a very large and substantial way. Winter works, as my recollection, was something that was designed by Liberals about 20 years ago, and it was all right at the time, but we feel that something like the home program is much superior to a winter works project, and has had a greater impact upon the economy in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Goodale: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, before I have some specific questions about the impact of the home program, I'd like to ask the minister one or two things about the previous employment development fund. Mr. Minister, I'm curious about the way that fund suddenly came into existence at one point in time, and then suddenly disappeared a short time later.

Could you tell me exactly what was the actual legal or financial framework for what was previously called the employment development fund. Was it simply a promise or a commitment upon the part of the government that was verbalized at one point in time by the government? And is it true that there is actually nowhere established as a matter of law, or as a distinct financial entity, something called the employment development fund?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, in a nutshell it was umbrella budgeting that took place quite some time before the member was elected to this Assembly.

(1245)

Mr. Goodale: — I take it, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that in fact it was something that remained in the realm of a general political commitment, or a general undertaking or promise, and that it did not at any point have the official sanction of a law to create it, or a specific financial framework to create it; that it did not exist as either a legal or a financial entity, but was, at best, a broad policy statement by the government.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, I can't really comment on whether it was legal or illegal. I can say though that it did a lot of good for the people of Saskatchewan. And the technicalities of whether it was legal and whether it was within the finance Act or what it

was, I don't really know, and my department is not concerned about that. That is something for the Minister of Finance or lawyers to sort out. We feel that it was \$600 million of commitment to jobs in Saskatchewan, to building jobs in Saskatchewan; it was money well spent.

I pointed out yesterday that if you drive past Santa Maria nursing home, you will see the sign, 48 new beds, and a cost of, I think it was \$2.1 million or something of that nature — maybe it's higher. And these are the kinds of things that the money was spent on. Whether it was technically legal, I couldn't venture to say yes, it was; or no, it wasn't. But it was money well spent, and it was the right thing to do at the time. And we continue now with those kinds of developments, but the umbrella funding is no longer there, and the funding is back in the departments.

Mr. Goodale: — Well, Mr. Minister, bearing in mind that there probably wasn't a precise legal authority for that fund for so long as it existed, and bearing in mind that it does not seem to have a very precise or identifiable financial framework, bearing in mind that experience with that particular program, I would like to turn to what the minister has referred to as a key program in the government's employment strategy now, and that is the home program.

If that is a key pillar or a central pillar in your employment strategy, I wonder if you could tell me the specific legal authority for the home program. Where does that exist in the law of Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, first of all I wouldn't want anybody to get the impression that the employment development fund was illegal in some way. I'm just not prepared to get in to the legal technicalities of that fund. But I do recall I was present when this Assembly voted that money. And since it was democratically voted by the elected representatives, I would presume that it was legal to do it. And the technicalities may still exist, but this Assembly voted the money, \$600 million at the time.

With respect to the home program, it is not a program administered by my department. And while it has created 17,000 jobs, I cannot tell you about the legality of the budgeting on the home program. But I can tell you that it is a very widely accepted program. It is a responsible program, a matching grant program. It is considerably cheaper than the NDP's 7-7-7 proposal. And I wouldn't know how it would compare with Liberal proposals because clearly not many people paid attention to Liberal proposals in the last election, so they're not that relevant. But I could tell you that 17,000 jobs in Saskatchewan at this time, attributed to this program, is very significant.

Mr. Goodale: — Mr. Minister, I want to pursue that arithmetic with you. I'm sorry that you're not in a position to deal with the legal basis for the home program, because I suggest to you there is considerable doubt about the manner in which that program was implemented, and there may well be some legitimate legal questions to be raised as to how it was done.

But in terms of its impact, which is more appropriately

within your jurisdiction, you have used again the figure of 17,000 jobs created as a result of this program. I think on another occasion the Premier has suggested the number might be as high as 19,000. The Minister of Urban Affairs, on the other hand, has conceded that the program has probably created no new jobs. He talks about it in terms of being an employment maintenance program and not a new job creation program.

And so I'm curious, Mr. Minister, about the arithmetic. There seems to be a good deal of confusion about it. You say the actual number is 17,000. Do you say that in terms of new jobs created in the province of Saskatchewan, or are you merely talking about the job maintenance argument that the Minister of Urban Affairs refers to? And specifically in terms of that figure of 17,000: how was it arrived at, and what evidence can you cite in this Assembly to show that there is any substance at all to that number?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, we will get into the estimates of the Minister of Urban Affairs, but the Minister of Urban Affairs passes on a message to the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg that he denies the quote that has been attributed to him, so they can deal with that matter amongst themselves when they get into his estimates. I simply want to advise and give notice that there is dispute over the quote.

With respect to why these new jobs, or what kind of jobs are they; yes, they would be new jobs. But in statistics, the question you have to answer is, how many actual net new jobs are there in Saskatchewan? And you would have to take into account the loss of about 5,000 jobs in the oil industry and the loss of jobs in agriculture, which this government has tried very hard to maintain.

But despite trying hard to maintain those jobs in oil and in agriculture, there has been a loss of jobs there which is offset by the increase in jobs under the home program. So these are new jobs. But if someone who was working in oil before and is now working in renovation, that would be a new job. But it certainly may be the same person doing the two jobs.

Mr. Goodale: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, I take it from the minister's answer that he may well be talking about different jobs, but not in fact a net increment to the total number of jobs available within the province of Saskatchewan. And there's a fundamental difference between those two points of view. And it would appear, even from the minister's answer, that there may well be considerable doubt as to the actual economic impact of that program.

The minister seems to content himself with saying they are new jobs in the sense that they are different jobs, but not new jobs in terms of actually adding to the net number of job positions available in this province. And I would like to ask the minister how he would respond to those within Saskatchewan and outside of the province who have been highly critical of this program. I would refer him specifically to an economics professor at St. Thomas More College at the University of Saskatchewan, Mr. Bob Lucas, who has indicated that his analysis of the situation shows that the program has really had no net impact upon

employment. I wonder how the minister would respond to that argument coming from a distinguished university professor at the University of Saskatchewan.

Secondly, if the minister doesn't really like Professor Lucas's analysis of the situation, I wonder how he would answer Mr. Jim Chase, the president of the Saskatchewan Construction Association, who says that a far different program from the home program would have been more beneficial, especially in terms of job creation within the province of Saskatchewan. Again, I would be interested to know how the minister responds to Mr. Chase.

And thirdly, if the minister really doesn't like the argument from Professor Lucas, and if he really doesn't like the argument from Mr. Chase, I wonder how he would answer Mr. Michael Walker, the director of the Fraser Institute. He describes the program as an expensive election goody that will simply add hundreds of millions of dollars to the deficit in Saskatchewan.

I'd be interested to know how the minister would answer those three critics who agree with me that the home program is not a good program for the province of Saskatchewan; that it is ineffective; it has a distorting effect on the economy; it is unfair; it is costly; and it may well be illegal in terms of its manner of introduction.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Deputy Chairman, I've never heard of Professor Lucas, so I couldn't really comment on his stature here. I've heard of Jim Chase, and then Jim Chase's statement would be somewhat self-serving because I believe that he would rather have the money spent on office buildings and large edifices rather than on people's homes. And of course he's entitled to that view, but he represents the Saskatchewan Construction Association, which is substantially large construction companies.

As for Michael Walker, I believe that his criticism of the plan is that it's too liberal.

Mr. Shillington: — I'm not sure if the government House Leader wants to continue with this.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 12:58 p.m.