

EVENING SITTING

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

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

Mr. Chairman: — Would the minister introduce his officials.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my left, your right, is the deputy minister of Human Resources, Labour and Employment, Gerry Meier; and on my right is the assistant deputy minister, Judy Moore. And we have other officials with us in the Assembly and I may be able to consult with them if necessary, but I'll only introduce these two for the time being.

Item 1

Mr. Hagel: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I join with the minister in welcoming the officials to the assembly for the review of the department's track record and plans and expenditures in this most important of government departments.

I note that it has changed slightly since we last reviewed this department last year, and that the Indian and Native Affairs Secretariat is now listed as a separate department. However, I look forward over the hours and days to come, as we undertake a meaningful review of this government's plans and dealings with issues related to labour, to the women's directorate, the senior's directorate, and also to youth and youth employment. Those are all areas, Mr. Chairman, which obviously all of us in this Assembly would consider to be extremely important, particularly in the climate and the environment that faces Saskatchewan people today.

As past practice did dictate, Mr. Chairman, I look forward to a free and frank exchange. I anticipate that in response to clear questions, there will be clear answers, and that by co-operating, we will be able to serve the public interest with that kind of decorum in the Legislative Assembly Chambers, Mr. Chairman. So it is with that kind of spirit and expectation that we'd like to begin the deliberations related to the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment.

I'd like to begin, Mr. Chairman, with some routine questions. I suspect that the minister will have anticipated these as they are all routine and are asked each year and are part of the accountability of the Government of Saskatchewan to the people of Saskatchewan. and let me begin, first of all, Mr. Chairman, with the minister's office. I would ask, Mr. Minister, if you would please advise me of the names, the positions or titles, and the salaries of each of your ministerial assistants at two separate dates — the dates I ask as at December 31, 1987, and then at the end of the fiscal year as at March 31, 1988.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — As far as I know, the answers to your two questions are the same. I have a list here that I could send over for you.

Mr. Hagel: — Just to read into the record then, Mr. Chairman, I think it is appropriate to do this because there will be some who will be interested in the record from year to year. I ask for your confirmation here, Mr. Minister, a John Schmeiser, ministerial assistant 2, monthly salary of \$2,637, and your indication that that was the salary both at December 31, '87 and at March 31, '88; Debbie McNabb, ministerial assistant 3, \$3,397 per month at both dates; and Brenda Syhlonyk, ministerial assistant D, \$2,334 as of both of those dates.

Mr. Minister, the salary for Brenda Syhlonyk, Syhlonyk — and please advise me if I am pronouncing that incorrectly — last year was listed at \$2,244 per month, this year is \$2,334; and Mr. Schmeiser was last year listed at \$2,524 per month, this year at \$2,637. Could you please advise me of the rationale for the change in those salaries?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well we're dealing first with Mr. Schmeiser. He started off at our office with no experience in that field and received a small promotion to a ministerial assistant 2. With respect to Brenda Syhlonyk, she has had many raises over the years. She started out in the office of the minister of labour under one of your colleagues and then served under, or served with my predecessor and also with myself, and from time to time she received increases. She was very young when she started and she is still quite young and has improved considerably over the years and is entitled to performance increases the same as other young people as they get older and more experienced.

Mr. Hagel: — I simply note, Mr. Minister, that . . . and I will assume that it was an error that occurred innocently when you said that for the dates of December 31, '87 and March 31, '88, that all people were at the same salary rate. I note that, as a matter of fact, with Miss Syhlonyk, that's not the case and that she received an increment increase, you say, of 4 per cent effective January 1, '88. Just nothing that slight error in the explanation, we'll proceed, Mr. Minister.

I would just want to clarify with you as well, then, your rationale for the increase of the salary of Mr. Schmeiser was because of a reclassification. Was that the rationale for that?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, I suppose technically I might have been a day out. The figures you have before you are for January 1 and you were referring to December 31, and I think that is close enough to have some meeting of the minds here. As far as I'm concerned, they're all still in the same positions. On March 31, 1988 they were all still in the same positions.

I advised you that Mr. Schmeiser, as indicated, was promoted to an MA2 (ministerial assistant 2) — different responsibilities and duties. And you have the explanation before you in black and yellow.

Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Minister, I simply make the point. And we're really dealing with a relatively minor item here, that when a straightforward question is asked, as I said before, it is my commitment to you, sir, that in

reviewing the expenditures of your department, that I will do my best to ask straightforward questions and would assume that straightforward answers would be forthcoming. And perhaps if we can avoid getting one's nose out of joint and proceeding with the questions, we can do that in the best interests of the public. And so I simply request of you, sir, that you do your best to provide straightforward answers to straightforward questions.

Mr. Minister, I'd like to give you four questions in total. And you may prefer to provide these in writing rather than reading them into the record; that's quite satisfactory to me.

The four questions . . . to save time, I'll just read them together, Mr. Minister. First of all, does any of these three individuals have a government car or car allowance? Secondly, in terms of out-of-province travel in the past year, in the fiscal year '87-88, could you please tell me what out-of-province travel you undertook and was undertaken by your staff. And I would ask that in each of those cases that you identify the date of the travel, the destination, the number of persons on the trips, the purpose, and the total cost. That's standard question. I would anticipate you have the information handy.

Thirdly, Mr. Minister, and please tell me if I'm going too quickly for you here, would you please advise me of the total in-province ministerial air travel that you undertook as minister responsible for this department in 1987-88 with the same details: in other words, date, destination, number of person, purpose, and total cost.

And finally, number four, Mr. Minister, I would ask that you would provide information as to the cost that the department incurred in 1987-88 for (a) polling; for (b) advertising; and (c) for aircraft charter or lease. And again, I would ask in each case that you would identify the date of the expenditure, the purpose, the firm involved, and the total cost.

(1915)

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — I've got some of the information . . . You asked about 10 questions all a once; we'll try to get you the answers as fast as possible.

The first question: do any of my ministerial assistants or secretaries — and the one you referred to, Brenda Syhlonyk, was a chief secretary; they're all lumped together, you know — do any of them have a government car. The answer is no.

With respect to travel, I think you were interested in my travel, is that not correct?

An Hon. Member: — And your staff.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — And the staff, all right. We'll see what they can find for those three that we mentioned.

With respect to my travel, out-of-province travel: Ottawa, March 25 to 27, '87, first ministers' conference on aboriginal constitutional affairs, \$524.30; Halifax, Nova Scotia, June 8 to 12, '87, federal-provincial ministers' conference for the status of women, \$2,068.73 — I recall

that I took in two meetings at that time and they were at two different locations, so there was a little extra flying; Ottawa, October 4 and 5, '87, status of women meeting, \$945.80; St. John's, Newfoundland, November 2 to 5, '87, labour-market ministers' meeting, \$1,600.60; for a total of \$5,198.83 for out-of-province travel.

With respect to in-province travel, the following trips: Melville, Prince Alberta, return to Melville; Prince Albert to Melville; Regina, Saskatoon, Regina; Regina to Saskatoon, return to Regina; Regina to Saskatoon; Regina to Saskatoon and return to Regina; Regina to Saskatoon and return to Regina; Regina to Nipawin; Melville, Saskatoon and return to Melville. For a total . . . just a second, that's administrative services. There's also women's secretariat from Melville to Prince Albert and return to Melville; and a seniors' directorate from Regina to Nipawin, for a total of \$6402.62.

Looking at out-of-province travel here . . . we'll try to sort it out for the three people in question. For Mr. Schell, his total is \$4,245 — trips to Halifax, Nova Scotia, Ottawa, and St. John's. He was with me on those particular trips as my adviser and assistant. With respect to Mr. Schmeiser, I only show one trip here to an occupational health and safety conference in Winnipeg, for \$527.03. And Ms. Syhlonyk did not travel out of province.

If you have any other questions, we'll gather up some more information. I'll give you more information as we go.

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Minister, I am encouraged by your willingness to provide information and pleased to see that. Are you intending to send that information across in writing or simply let it set at what you've read into the record?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — When I sent you the information, you read it into the record, so I read it into the record for you. It will appear in *Hansard*, and it's not my intention to do both. So I'll either send you the information and you can have it, or else I will read it for you and it will be in *Hansard*.

With respect to advertising, the total for my department for last year was \$20,513.08, and administrative services was \$893.86. Labour relations branch, for the senior labour relations officer newspaper advertisement, \$3,757.50. It seems it takes quite a lot of money to find the appropriate people with the expertise. In employment opportunities branch, advertising for the opportunities '87 newspaper advertisements, \$10,995.50. Communication branch spent \$647 advertising, 198.64 for the minister's tour notices, and newspaper advertisements of 449.02. And the seniors' heritage program, \$3,598.04. The women's directorate spent \$620.52 on newspaper advertisement. The total I've given you is 20,513.08.

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Minister, I would appreciate if you would send all of that across to save time. It's not necessary that this be read into the record, but I do note that what you fail to mention is the dates for your in-province travel. And also I assume that when you

didn't say someone was accompanying you, other than the minister or the assistants that you mentioned, that you were as a matter of fact travelling alone, and it was only yourself who was travelling at company expense ... or at government expense, I'm sorry.

Mr. Minister, you made some reference as well to having made some extra stops when you were talking about your interprovincial travel, and if you'd like to clarify what you meant by those, and I would ask again that you would advise me as to whether there were polling expenditures undertaken by your department. If you did say that, I'm sorry; I missed it.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well we don't have any polling expenditures here, and there's none that we know of, but we'll go back and check to be sure. As far as I know, as I stand here now, there was no polling expenditures in this department.

With respect to the extra stops: yes, I had two meetings, more or less, going on at the same time and they interchanged. So because I am a minister with many duties, I was able to cover two meetings on one trip to Halifax, but I had to go to Cape Breton to cover the women's meeting while the social services ministers were meeting on labour matters and social services in other places.

So I went to Halifax, flew to Sydney, rented a vehicle, and drove back to make connections in Halifax for the balance of the meeting. So I went to a meeting in Halifax; I went to Cape Breton for a meeting, came back, and caught the tail end of the meeting in Halifax. So that is the bouncing around on that trip by air and by land, and not by sea on that trip.

Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Minister, I appreciate your clarification in those matters. You still neglected to mention the dates of those trips, and the easiest way ... If you'll just commit to me to send that information across, we'll have it in total and we can proceed.

Are you saying you'd prefer to read it into the record?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well I already read the dates of the trips into the record. That one was specifically June 8 to 12, 1987. And when I read it into the record, I gave you the date and the amounts of the costs of those, and so since I read it in the record, there's no need to send it over. You'll have it tomorrow.

Mr. Hagel: — Well then if you'd send over, Mr. Minister, the dates for your travel within the province which you didn't mention.

This is turning into a bit more of a tooth-pulling exercise that I anticipated, Mr. Minister, and perhaps if we can charge along in the interest of the protection of the public purse.

Mr. Minister, I note that it is the intention of your department to pay some \$1,477,500 to the property management corporation in this fiscal year '88-89. And again I have a number of questions related to the department, what the bang for the buck that the

department is getting from the property management corporation. If I may provide you with those questions, and again a written response is really quite sufficient, Mr. Minister.

Regarding then property management corporation, I would ask that you would provide an itemized list of facilities provided to your department by the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation — facilities such as offices, compounds, parking lots, etc.

Secondly, Mr. Minister, I would ask that you would identify the number of square feet, or in the case of parking lots, the number of stalls in each of those facilities that you cover in the first question.

Thirdly, I ask that in those instances where the facility is not leased, would you indicate the amount which the department is paying the property management corporation for its use, this year, and how much was paid in fiscal year '87-88.

Fourthly, I would ask, in the case of all the facilities that I've described, would you please indicate the use that's presently being put to those facilities.

And finally, Mr. Minister, I would ask that you would provide an itemized list of the services being provided by the property management corporation, and the amount being charged to the department for those services, in this fiscal year, as well as how much was paid for those services in fiscal year '87-88. And as an example, I use things such as mail service, government automobiles, furnishings, and so on.

Mr. Minister, if you would please make a commitment to provide that information — as I say, to do it in writing is really quite sufficient — then we can proceed to other items that your department deals with.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — In answer to your question, the information ... I have added on to it the additional information that is beyond what it would show on the paper. So I'm going to give this to you orally again because you want it in the record.

And Saskatchewan Place, the third, fourth, and fifth floor, and sixth floor, the square metres, respectively, are 197.95; 1,345.41; 129.70; and 1,241.24. That's used for the head office of the department here in Regina. The Toronto Dominion Bank Building, the sixth and third floor, used for the women's secretariat, Opportunities '88 and the affirmative action program, respectively 367.2 metres and 521.79 metres; the Palliser square in Regina for seniors, 569.5 metres. That's the headquarters of the seniors' branch. London Life Building, Regina, 107.7 metres — and we've moved out of that space so we no longer are in there. The Circle Eight Building in Saskatoon for occupational health and safety, and labour standards, 320.4 square metres. And then the following buildings: the W.G. Davies Building in Moose Jaw, 18.1 square metres; Kramer Place, North Battleford, 14.10 square metres; McIntosh Mall, 12th floor, Prince Albert, 66 metres; E.I. Wood Building, Swift Current — and you may recognize some of these buildings — 18.1 metres; the Kuziak building — who I know personally and recall him

being a member in that area — 14.1 metres; and the Downtown Plaza in Estevan, 13.1 square metres; for a total of 4,944.39 square metres, less the vacated space at the London Life Building of 107.7 square metres at a total charge to us of \$1,477,500 for total services including leased space services provided by property management corporation. The last ones that I listed, the smaller ones, were the regional offices of the department.

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Minister, will you provide the additional information that I requested that you did not respond to now. Will you provide that in writing for me.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Sorry. What was the other information that you wanted?

(1930)

Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Minister, I had requested that in the case of parking lots, the number of stalls; and also in terms of services provided by the property management corporation, the amounts being charged in the fiscal year '87-88 as well as '88-89 — and I had requested those two things. Again, if you'll provide those in writing, that will be satisfactory.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I've given the information on the total costs and where the buildings are located, what they are used for. And I don't count parking spots, and I don't pay rent individually on parking spots. There has to be some limit on the amount of information we keep track of at our department, and I've given the member a clear picture of how much space we have, where it is, and the total cost of the property management corporation rental charts, and that's as far as I can go. you know, we can't spend thousands of dollars keeping track of all the fine little details for the member opposite, so that's as far as we'll go on that.

Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Minister, I don't know that it's your place to determine what's the fine little details for the member opposite that you ever have not a responsibility to provide. There are people in this province who are of the opinion that this government is mismanaging a good part of the office rental space in this province, to the tune of some \$34,000 a day. And you just finished, on record her, putting forth the case that it would seem, at first glance, indicated responsible use of your travel in the interest of the people of Saskatchewan.

All I'm asking you to do here is to simply account in the same way that any responsible corporation would account for its expenditures. That's all I've asked you to do. And I would simply ask, Mr. Minister . . . I've not, I've not intended to make a big issue out of this. If you're hesitating to provide information this evening, I have said several times that I am quite satisfied with having this in writing so that we of the opposition can ensure that your department is spending money expeditiously in the interests of the people of Saskatchewan.

These items I've asked for are not niggly little items that are not discernible, and I simply ask for that information, and again I will accept it in writing.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Chairman, now the

member opposite wants me to go out and count parking spaces.

I have listed the buildings that there are. The public knows where they are; the addresses are given. If the public or the member opposite wants to count the parking spaces, he can go count them himself. I'm not going to go out and count parking spaces. I don't park in these spaces. The employees and the public parks in these spaces. I'm not going to count them. I just simply refuse to count parking spaces, Mr. Chairman.

With respect to the \$34,000 per day on wasted space, the information that I have, sitting in cabinet, without giving you the detail of cabinet secrets — although you wouldn't believe anything if you heard it — is that your figure is a calculation, that is, a guess that is based on prime retail space that is based on false information, and therefore, you are out sevenfold. You've exaggerated it by seven. And I ask, why stop at 34,000? Why don't you just raise that to 240,000 or any kind of figure you want to. Just go ahead. You go ahead and put out any information you want, because it's all you're doing, is guessing.

I'm telling you that the overall government figure, from what I can gather in cabinet and my colleagues, is one-seventh of that, but you've gone and put out that figure, and I'm not going to go out and bring you figures to prove to you that you're exaggerating, because you will exaggerate anyway. And the very bottom line is: I'm not going to count parking spaces in this province.

Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Minister, counting parking spaces may be a more productive exercise than some of the things you've done, quite frankly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — And if you want to suggest that this government is wasting \$240,000 a day on empty office space, I guess that's your prerogative.

Now I'm not asking you here, as the minister responsible for the property management corporation, to account for the functioning of that corporation. If you want to get into that, we can get into that, but that's not what I'm assuming we're here for tonight.

We're here tonight to deal with the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment. You are minister responsible for that department. Your department has a contractual relationship with the property management corporation for provision of facilities and services — an increase of some 14 per cent over last year.

I have simply asked you tonight, as minister responsible for the expenditures of the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment, to advise the people of Saskatchewan how those expenditures are being charged to your department. That's simply all I've asked you. Now if you want to make a major issue out of this, I guess we can make a major issue out of this, and we can debate your \$240,000 a day of wasted office space, if that's what you want to do.

I'm simply asking you to do the simple exercise of providing an accountability for the costs incurred by your department, paid to the property management corporation. Quite frankly, I'm fed up with the failure of minister after minister on that side of the Assembly side-stepping all of the questions that have to do with payment charged to your department by simply saying, well that's the property management corporation's prerogative; and, put those questions to the minister responsible for property management corporation — who in turn then will refuse to provide the information for each department.

I am simply asking you for information, factual information, which your department has a responsibility to be held accountable for, related to expenditures that were incurred by your department and paid to the property management corporation. I'm not asking you to go out and count parking stalls, although if you want to do it, go ahead and do it. That won't upset me in the least. But that's not what I'm asking here tonight, and I would assume, sir, that you will treat questions seriously and you will respond to them seriously, and in that way we can get on with a decent review of your department.

I simply repeat my question, sir. Will you provide the information to the questions that I asked, that you haven't provided here tonight. I repeat again that I would consider it quite acceptable to receive that response from you in writing.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — The minister responsible for the property management corporation will answer for the property management corporation. I've told you how many square metres we lease from them and how much we pay to them, and that is all that I'm going to tell you because that's all that is relevant here.

Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Minister, isn't this interesting, that you determine that the only thing that is relevant related to the expenditures that your department incurs, some \$1.5 million paid on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan through your department to the property management corporation, that your only obligation is to be accountable to the people of Saskatchewan to say: here are the buildings; here's how they're used; this is how big they are; and altogether we pay \$1,477,500.

I suggest to you, sir, that your responsibility is greater than that. And I simply repeat my question again. Will you provide the information that you have not done yet. Will you provide the information as to the services provided to your department by the property management corporation such as meal service, government automobiles, furnishings, and so on. There will be the categories that are standard. Will you simply give me those figures. Again, I will accept those in writing.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, the member opposite tries to find something negative or sinister in anything and everything that he looks at. And it's typical of the NDP to do that.

What we have here, just so that nobody is confused: the property management corporation is not a publicly traded stock corporation, but is a corporation that is

owned by the Government of Saskatchewan. And if they were to make any profits that in the views of the members opposite would be outrageous, those outrageous profits would be turned over to the Department of Finance. so what you're dealing with here is not a question of whether my rent is fair, but how you calculate it. I have submitted what the rent is and how much space we receive. The space is primarily open to the public, except for the private offices, that you can go in and see what we are getting for that money. There's nothing sinister about it. We are paying a government Crown corporation rent, and they are in turn purchasing services. And so don't let anyone suggest that this is some corporation of our friends. This is a corporation that belongs to the Government of Saskatchewan. So what you have here, Mr. Chairman, is again an attempt to exaggerate facts into some sort of evil fiction. And that's not the case.

Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Minister, I'm finding this exchange extremely insightful. This year, as compared to last year, your department is paying the property management corporation some 185,000 additional dollars — some 14 per cent approximately — presumably for exactly the same services that you received last year. You've refused to identify whether there's any difference; you've refused to identify what you are paying for specific purposes. And all the time you're expecting the people of Saskatchewan to accept the increases in their sales tax despite your promises to eliminate it; to accept the increases in the flat tax despite your promises to reduce income tax, and on and on without being willing to be accountable to the people of Saskatchewan. I'm not asking the impossible. I'm asking simple, straightforward question, that you simply identify what you spent last year on services and what you spent this year on service to the property management corporation. That's not a complicated exercise.

Mr. Minister, I will look forward to your response in writing to provide me with this additional information. And, Mr. Chairman, I will take my seat and allow the member from Regina Lakeview to address some issues of political importance and social importance to the minister in charge.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, it's not complicated. What happens is that I get money from the Department of Finance, who gets it from the taxpayer, and then my department pays the rent to the property management corporation, and it pays its expenses. And if it has any money left over, it gives it back to the Department of Finance. So the money goes around in a circle. And what does it matter to me if they raised the rent? It's going back to the same landlord; it's going back to the same place. I get the money from Finance; it goes back to Finance. They've raised the rent since last year. Maybe it was too low last year. Maybe it's a little too high this year. But the money is all . . . wherever, whether it's high or low, the money is all going back to the same place, the Department of Finance. It's all going back to the Department of Finance. The Department of Finance is the people. I get it from the people, I pay it back to the people, and that's where the money goes. So there's nothing mysterious about it.

Ms. Simard: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister,

as the minister responsible for the status of women, you've been entrusted with a tremendous responsibility. You are expected to advance policies and programs that will improve the status of women in Saskatchewan. To understand the importance of your position, one only needs to look at the statistics on the status of women. The overwhelming conclusion of the information on women is that the experience of women is the experience of poverty. The recent report of the National Council of Welfare stated that one out of six children being raised by their mothers alone lives in poverty. And this is not surprising, Mr. Minister, considering that women's average income in Saskatchewan is only 57 per cent of that of men and that 70 per cent of minimum wage earners are women and the minimum wage has increased by only 25 cents since 1982.

The percentage of women in the labour force has been increasing every year, as you know, Mr. Minister. The percentage of Saskatchewan women aged 25 to 34 years, for example, has increased from 45.5 per cent in 1975 to 71.8 per cent in 1986. And the reason why women are entering the labour force, Mr. Minister, is because women must work out of economic necessity. Women must work in order to contribute to the family income or to provide, in many cases, the sole source of income for their family. Women want to provide well for their families, but they have difficulty in doing so when they earn low wages.

As you know, many women are ghettoized into low-paying jobs that are low paying primarily because it is considered women's work. Pay equity — equal pay for work of equal value — attempts to redress the historical undervaluation of women's work. And I suggest that this government should follow the lead of Manitoba and Ontario and implement pay equity in the public sector.

Working women, Mr. Minister, also desperately need high quality, accessible, affordable day care, but I understand that your government has frozen subsidies to day care, which greatly limits the money available for high-quality day care.

Mr. Minister, I understand that there are negotiations with the federal government with respect to day care, and I would like you to tell us tonight what your government's policy is with respect to improving the day-care situation in Saskatchewan. And would you please advise us as to the status of negotiations with the federal government on the matter of day care.

(1945)

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, the negotiations with the federal government are going quite well. They have a commitment to double the number of day-care spaces in Canada in the next seven years. In addition, they have seen fit to give parents a choice in day care, and they are increasing the per child income tax deduction from \$2,000 to \$4,000 per child — a maximum of 8,000 per family. I recall that maximum being . . . that's right on, isn't it? It's 8,000 maximum.

And these negotiations are going well. There will be more spaces. I'm in the process now of announcing — I think

the press release has gone out — that there'll be new spaces. I think the exact sum is 40 . . . possibly 30. I'll try to be accurate, but 30 or 40 new spaces announced in Saskatoon Lakeview, in the new Lutheran housing project, which contains low-income families, senior citizens — a cross-section of society. The new project will also have single parents living there, and the day care will be operated by the housing authority.

In the near future you will hear additional announcements of many more rural day-care spaces. And so . . .

An Hon. Member: — When?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — And the member opposite asks when. I said in the future, and that I mean in the near future. And I will make an announcement. The members need not be concerned. I will make an announcement of the locations and the number of spaces. And I will give the members opposite ample opportunity to be negative on the topic, because the negative democratic party insists on their right to be negative and they will get their opportunity.

But we are continuing to increase day care availability, and I have indicated earlier it's my intention to introduce a day care Act into this Assembly this spring — something that we do not now have. So, Mr. Chairman, we are making progress in that regard. See, the difference between our party and the members opposite is that we think positive; you might say we're the positive conservatives rather than the negative democrats. And we believe in action, they believe in rhetoric.

So when they shouted long and loud about day care, they had many fewer spaces than we now have. When they had the opportunity to do something, they talked. And now they're in opposition and they continue to talk. We are taking action; and you'll see a lot of action in this area.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Chairman, the positive conservatives did quite negatively in Saskatoon Eastview and Regina Elphinstone, I might say.

I should just mention at this point that tonight some colleagues and I went out and had Chinese food for supper, and in my fortune cookie, this is the fortune that I got, Mr. Chairman, "Hope for the best, but prepare for the worst." and I must say that I thought that was rather appropriate for this evening.

Mr. Minister, would you please tell us what your government's policy is with respect to pay equity.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well the law in Saskatchewan is quite clear. We go beyond equal pay for the same work; we go to equal pay for similar work. What the member opposite is suggesting, that a government set everybody's pay cheque in Saskatchewan by government decree. And we're not prepared to do it at this time. The members opposite refer to Manitoba and Ontario, and I do not see any improvements for women there that exceed the improvement in Saskatchewan.

So, I mean, what she's talking about is a red herring in

other government bureaucracy, and what we are enforcing in Saskatchewan is equal pay for similar work, regardless if it's men or women — equal pay for similar work.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, Mr. Chairman, I have at length in this Assembly outlined for the minister the problems with equal pay for similar work. Basically, they are that it's very easy for an employer to make the work somewhat dissimilar and avoid paying equal pay by alleging it's not similar work.

Also, the equal pay for similar work provisions are not mandatory, are not proactive. The obligation is not on the employer to implement those provision. Instead, the employee has to bring a claim or an action against the employer before it's enforceable, and in that sense, it's quite inadequate.

And the minister says that we wish to impose . . . write the pay cheque or whatever for every person in this province. Well that's absolutely ridiculous, and he knows it. And it's not doing fair to the principle of equal pay for equal work, which he also knows.

Women's organizations across this country, including many of the women's organizations in Saskatchewan, are asking for equal pay for work of equal value. And by making that comment, he is suggesting that these women's organizations, including these national women's organization, are being ridiculous. And I think that's exactly what he intended to say, Mr. Chairman. Obviously, his government does not intend to implement equal pay, and once again it will drag its feet on social policy across this country, as opposed to being a leader and in the forefront.

In addition to the poverty, Mr. Chairman, that so many women face, women have had to bear the brunt of government cut-backs in so many areas in Saskatchewan — 75 per cent of the jobs eliminated in the public service were held by women.

And, Mr. Minister, your government gave over 200 women dental therapists the pink slip when you dismantled the school-based children's dental plan. Some of these women were dental therapists because they were heading families themselves and were the sole wage earners for the family. And others were supplementing the family income, like the farm woman in the Shaunavon area who, I understand, has now launched a lawsuit against this government. The insensitivity of these cuts and the insensitive cuts to the social assistant levels, and in particular the elimination of transportation expenses, had made it even more difficult, Mr. Minister, for these women and for their families to break the cycle of poverty. And what we see here is a very anti-woman, anti-family approach and policy by your government by firing so many women through government cut-backs and by cutting back on social assistance to women.

Your government last year also cut funding to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission, which lessened the ability of women to seek protection for sexual discrimination and harassment in the work place,

inasmuch as the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission doesn't have enough funds at its disposal to deal with all these problems. We find this policy very anti-women.

Funding to the Regina Transition House has been cut this year by another \$10,000 — back to pre-1983 levels, I understand, Mr. Minister. In Saskatoon during the '87-88 fiscal year, 204 women came to Interval House seeking shelter for themselves and their children; yet during that same period, Mr. Minister, I am advised that 432 families could not seek refuge in that shelter. Many of them may have been put up in hotels or motels, but as I made the point earlier — or last year rather — these locations are not particularly safe for women. The shelter is far more advisable and far safer than a motel or a hotel.

So we have a situation in Saskatchewan where more than twice as many families are being turned away from the Interval House than are actually being given shelter there. And, Mr. Minister, women in Saskatchewan find this unacceptable. These women and children are fleeing desperate, violent, life-threatening situation, and statistics show, Mr. Minister, that an average woman is beaten 28 times before asking for help — 28 times is the average before she asks for help. So when she finally seeks help, Mr. Minister, she will go to the transition home and probably not find shelter there because of underfunding by your government.

So, Mr. Minister, I would like to ask you for a breakdown. I understand that there is going to be more money available for situations of violence. And I would like a breakdown from you, Mr. Minister, of the — and you don't have to give this go me tonight; you can give it to me by letter — of the transition homes across Saskatchewan and exactly what funding each of those transition homes is receiving in 1988.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Thank you, I've heard that speech before. I think you gave it last year, and that's the only speech you ever give, really. It's your consistent speech. And we will provide you with that information.

But I think because you are so negative, you should hear something positive for a change. And I want to explain to you a few things. In 1981 the Women in government in our employment were 47 per cent of work-force, and 7.7 per cent of them were in management. And I think you were responsible — a matter of fact, I'll hold you responsible — for what the government did in 1981. You were very much a part of the government at that time in the position you had.

Now in March of 1988, women in government are 48.6 per cent — that's gone up 1.6 per cent. But compare women in management who have gone from 7.7 per cent to 23 per cent as women in management right now, and you compare our record.

Now we've heard your speech before; we've heard your rhetoric. We know what you're going to say. You don't have to give us that story; we know what you're going to say. It was recorded last year and the year before that, and so we already know you are very predictable.

But I want you to listen to some of the answers, I want you to know that there are now 27,000 more women employed in Saskatchewan than there were in 1982. I want you to know that the unemployment rate for women is 7.8 per cent; it's the third lowest in Canada. We are tied with Manitoba, so they're actually second lowest — Manitoba is 6.9 and we're 7.8. And it's fluctuating; we're gaining on them right now.

So we have a high participation rate in the work-force. We have government a high percentage, and it should be higher; we're working in that direction. I'm not saying we're perfect, but I'm saying that if we are not perfect at 23 per cent women in management in government now, where was your government at 7.7 per cent? is that something that you're proud of? I don't think so, but you don't want to talk about the realities. You want to give your same standard speech. You want to make the same exaggerations. You want to talk about the Regina Transition House being reduced \$10,000. I've given that explanation on television and to the media.

Clearly, you don't seem to understand that they are receiving the same per month as they were last year. You don't seem to understand that when there was a chance last year, they were paid an additional sum last year for three months to give them notice of the change. You can't seem to add and subtract, but that's not surprising; that's not surprising judging by the things that you've said in this Assembly.

So what we here is, for example, in Regina since we've become government, a 67 per cent increase in the funding for women and family shelters in the city of Regina — a 67 per cent increase since we've become government. And you say it's not enough. And yes, we will try to do more, but you won't say how much is enough. And you think that the problem can be solved simply by pouring more money on the problem. Please don't blame the government for the state of our society.

When I try to influence the morals of this province, I am criticized. When I try to influence members opposite on the morals of this province, I am criticized.

Don't blame the government for the number of people that are mistreating their wives or children. We detest that idea. We try to stop it. We try to do something about it. Don't blame the government for men who desert their families. We are certainly not in favour of that, and I give you a commitment that I will do everything possible. And we are doing more to have fathers be more responsible for their children and their wives.

But somehow you think that this is a government program. We are doing what we can to influence the morals of this province, to do away with these problems. What you want to do is pour money onto the solution, but not look at the real cause. And the real cause is that we in this province have each other. We have to help our neighbours, our friends; we have each other get through life. We have to help each other solve problems so you don't get into those situations. We cannot close a blind eye to the problems of our neighbours, and then when there is a beating or violence, then say, oh the government's at fault. We all in this province together

and we all have to do our part to improve our society. And yes, we will put more money, and we are putting more money into family shelters this year. We are always putting more money into counselling.

(2000)

But don't hold the government responsible for everything that happens in this province. We do not . . . It's not the policy of this government to dictate to the lives of the people and follow them around like a big government telling them exactly how to live. And when they get into trouble, we try to help them. When they get into trouble, we try to help them, but we're not going to have a society here where the government is going to make absolutely every rule and enforce it. People have to live their own lives; we will help as much as possible.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, will you provide us with the information with respect to transition homes, a breakdown of what each transition home is receiving across Saskatchewan.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, she wasn't listening again. I said we would send over the information as soon as it's together. that's the first thing I said when I got up last time. I say it for the second time: yes, we will provide you with the sums that each one is receiving.

Ms. Simard: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Now let me just say, the amount of women may have increased in the public service, but as I pointed out to you earlier, it's also increased substantially in the work-force across Saskatchewan. And the fact that there may be more women working in the public service, is that the reason, Mr. Minister, that you were able to fire so many women in the public service? Because you had more women there — is that why you fired more women?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, we didn't fire any women. We have workers. The member opposite should know this. We have workers. We don't look at their gender; we have workers. Now she wants us to start deciding whether they are men or whether they are women. And that should matter, she suggesting. It's does not. We have workers, persons. We have person-years. The member opposite likes to refer to people as persons. We have persons. If we have to lay off persons, we lay off person. But we do not look whether they are men or whether they are women.

But again she wasn't listening, Mr. Chairman. I was not talking about having more women in the public service. Yes, we do have 1.6 per cent more as a percentage. what I was talking about was 23 per cent in management as opposed to 7.7 per cent in management, and the member opposite either chose not to hear that, did not listen carefully, or simply is trying to ignore that fact, that more than threefold is our record of women in management. She's talking about women not having the same income as men. They have to then do the same jobs as men and that's what we're trying to do in management, is to get women into management, into the better-paying jobs.

Mr. Chairman, we are doing a lot to try to give women full equality in economics. Women have total legal equality

in this province. We are trying to assist women to become economically equal and for that purpose we have sponsored seminars in business. Of the new businesses being started, more than 50 per cent are being started by women. We will continue this type of policy. We try to influence young women to take education that will give them economic equality. We encourage them to go into the professions that pay the same as men. Teaching pays the same. Law pays the same, male or female.

Now, not everyone in law makes the same amount of money. You're judged by what society thinks you're worth when they pay their fee, but men and women are paid the same — there's no bar there. And it goes on and on that way in the professions.

In business, nobody is guaranteed a certain wage. And we can see that it's difficult to make a living in business. Women can make what they can make in accordance with how they run their business. Sometimes it's even a matter of luck. But it's the same for men as it is for women.

In farming, there are not very many women in farming, but there are no special rules against women who farm.

An Hon. Member: — There are lots of women in farming.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — The member opposite said there are lots of women in farming. Yes there are, but as a percentage . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes. As a percentage they are not a large factor. And I can tell that the member opposite is from Saskatoon, downtown Saskatoon. She would know exactly how many women are farming in the rural parts of Saskatchewan. But there are no special rules for men or women in farming. So when you go through all of the things there are no special rules but you have to encourage women to get an education that will give them economic equality. And income is directly related to education, and if you do statistics based on education of men and education of women outside of the blue-collar jobs, you will find that there is a very narrow gap.

Now when you get to the blue-collar jobs, you will find that the factor is not education, but depending on what your union has negotiated for you. And men have considerably higher incomes in the blue-collar level because of the negotiations that have taken place and the jobs they fulfil.

So we have to encourage . . . And this is happening. CNR (Canadian National Railways) in Melville recently hired six women to train as brake person. They will be paid exactly the same as men, and they will be paid, once they are fully trained and employed, in the range of 40,000 a year plus. They are doing the same jobs as men. Those are the kind of things that women have to do. People are paid on the basis of the position they fill, and if women fill those position, they will be paid the same. We encourage them to get an education to be able to fill those positions.

Now members opposite quote statistics and statistics. I can find you statistics for almost anything. What I'm saying is the people of Saskatchewan know the situation; they know the reality of the world; they know that this

government is trying everything possible to give women economic equality.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, you said that the law pays men and women equally. That statement in itself tells everyone on this side of the House and many people outside of the House just how little you know about pay equity and equal pay for work of equal value.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — The fact of the matter is, is that many of the jobs held by women are traditionally low-paying jobs because their work has been undervalued. That's the very principle upon which pay equity is based. And I know I've repeated that to you before; either you don't understand it for some strange reason or you choose not to understand it, and I think it's probably the latter, Mr. Minister.

You talk about women in management. Well let me tell you that although we like to see women advance in management, there's also a very serious problem with women in lower-paying jobs that has to be addressed, and that's why we talk about pay equity. The fact of the matter is that women in lower-paying jobs are having difficulty making ends meet. And as I indicated to you before, by far the majority of people earning minimum wage are women — by far the majority. And many of those are single-parent mother, Mr. Minister. And you have to be concerned about that. For you to pass it off with your moralistic, self-righteous, chastising type comments does a disservice to the women of this province and to all the members in this House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, with respect to another . . . You know, you talked about the affirmative action aspect. Let me just tell you that I have some statistics here, and I'm going to ask you if they're correct — and that is that actually the number of women in non-traditional, non-management positions dropped to 7.3 per cent from 16.2 per cent in a 17-month period ending on August 31, 1987.

The statistics look particularly at the temporary, part-time, entry level and non-union positions within the public service — a group that apparently covers 34 per cent of all civil servants. If you are unable to verify that tonight, I would ask you to send me the particular numbers on that so I can determine whether or not these figures are indeed correct.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, just when I say that the member opposite will find a statistic for anything, she comes up with another statistic.

Your raw statistics could be accurate. I'm not saying they're not, and I'm not saying they are. What I am saying is: it depends how you define non-traditional positions.

Even if your statistics are anywhere near accurate, even take into account the definition of non-traditional positions, these are unionized positions we're dealing with, and there are union contract rules for who fills out

positions. So we cannot, under the union rules, bump out men and put women in those positions. And I think you would be the first one to complain if we didn't follow the negotiated contract.

So we have to live within the union rules as they are negotiated. We are trying to get those rules changed and we will see how we do with the negotiations. And you might want to talk to your friends and get them to co-operate a bit more so that we can change those rules and have more women in those positions.

But men are not saying, thank you very much, here's my keys; I won't drive this truck any more because you are trying to hire a woman for my job. Men don't exactly want to lose their job for the sake of your statistics, see, because men are also people and they would like to have some job security.

So these are the kind of union situations that we have to negotiate and improve through attrition. And so the men in the traditional jobs that the women want, these non-traditional jobs, are not laying down their shovels or turning in their keys, or saying, here you can have this crane, and those kind of things.

It'll take a little time to straighten out the union rules; it'll take a little time through attrition to get more women in . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I just explained to you that at CN, which is federal . . . And I know you don't like the federal government either, but the federal government through CN is hiring six women out of 12 people; 50 per cent of the new hirings for brake persons were women in Melville in the last two months. And what the men in Melville are not, though, saying: okay, you can have this train, I quit this job because I don't want this job any more; you have to be able to hire more women so I'm quitting.

So you don't expect us to kick men out of their jobs driving trains or driving trucks so that women can do those jobs. When the jobs comes open, we will try to get women get an equal opportunity for those jobs.

You suggest as to what's an good example in this legislature. I suggest to you, hon. critic, that you are not speaking for all women in Saskatchewan when you stand up and give us some of your radical ideas.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, nobody here has talked about kicking men out of their jobs, and that's not what we're suggesting and you know it. That's a red herring on your part, and it's another way that you want to undermine these policies that have been developed by women in Saskatchewan and women's organizations. It's just another way of you attacking women in this province. Nobody on this side of the House, nobody on this side of the House has suggested kicking men out of jobs.

We feel that your government is not doing as much as it should to improve the lot of women in the province. And me as opposition critic for women, you as the minister responsible for women, have an obligation to direct our attention and our minds to those issues surrounding women. Not to try and pit women against men, which is what you tried to do with your last comments — in much

the same way that this government has tried at every single step of the way to divide people and to pit farmer against workers; to make comments about United Church people to try to get others to hate the United Church people; to make comments against people because of their sexual orientation or because of a number of other things; to try to get people to hate other members of society.

Well let me tell you, Mr. Minister, that that strategy is not going to work. Your strategy of dividing and disseminating hate throughout Saskatchewan is not going to work. You're not going to divide men and women; you're not going to divide farmers and worker; you're not going to divide people on the basis of religion; you're not going to divide people on the basis of race; because the people of Saskatchewan have another vision of Saskatchewan, Mr. Minister.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: — And New Democrats have another vision of Saskatchewan. We believe in a united Saskatchewan — people united, working together to solve problems. Obviously not your vision, Mr. Minister, because you are one of the worst individuals for disseminating hate and disseminating attitudes of division amongst people. Well, it's totally unacceptable, Mr. Minister — totally unacceptable.

(2015)

I want to move into the women's secretariat in particular, because your government's reorganization of the women's secretariat took place over a period of years, which we have discussed at some length before. And it's created a certain amount of confusion on your part, I believe.

There were originally 18 positions in 1982, and I believe now there are only nine positions in the women's secretariat, something like one-half of what there were before. And I also find it very ironic, Mr. Minister, that after all this juggling around, the women's directorate is now a part of the department, when the main reason, the original main reason your government created the women's secretariat was so that it would be an independent body co-ordinating efforts between departments. And now we see it as lost in the maze of things in your department.

Now I understand there are nine positions listed for the women's directorate in the government telephone directory. However, only six positions are actually listed, and they are: director, senior policy analyst, project officer, research officer, officer manager, and support person. But you actually have nine persons in the estimates book, I believe. So could you please advise, what are the three remaining positions and whether or not those positions are currently vacant.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Chairman, it's very interesting that the member opposite talks about divisions among people and accuses our government of trying to divide people.

I refer the member opposite back to the very philosophy of her party based on the teachings of Marx, which advocates class struggle — continuous revolution and class struggle. Now I think maybe they've given up continuous revolution in Canada, but they certainly are a party that is based on class struggle, and then they of course have no conscience to come here and accuse me of trying to divide people. I don't try to divide people.

The reason I quit the NDP was because they represented about four or five narrow, special interest groups, and I wanted to be part of a party that would govern for and represent all parts of society. I gave up on class struggle when I quit that party. The negative democrats — they don't like to be called NDP any more; they want to be called the ND, the negative democrats — have to be against somebody all the time, against everything. Did they ever tell you what they were for? And when you consider what they are for, ask yourself, what would life be like in Saskatchewan if they introduced what they are for?

I mean, it goes non and on beyond belief. They are like this with special interest groups like the National Farmers Union which yesterday was advocating that we buy nuclear submarines from the Soviet Union. Well why bother buying them? Why don't we just hire them to patrol our waters so that they can tell us when they are spying on us? That would be a simple solution. That is the negative democratic party, a party of simple solutions. But when you're government, you have to govern. You have to do what's practical and reasonable.

And so here is a person who comes from a party based on class struggle and has the audacity to accuse us of trying to divide people. We do not say we represent this group and that group and that group and that group. We represent all of Saskatchewan. And sometimes you have to balance the interests of various parties in this province. And I don't mean political parties; I mean various groups' interests have to be balanced. But at least this government claims to represent everyone in Saskatchewan and try to govern for the common good.

So, Mr. Chairman, then after she's got this class struggle concept all mixed up, suggesting that we are in favour of class struggle when Marx was the one who invented it, then she said, there are three vacant positions in the department in the women's secretariat. That's not a revelation, Mr. Chairman. I know there are three vacant positions, and you will see an advertisement to fill those positions. Now not all of them are necessarily advertised in the paper, as I indicated earlier to the member from Moose Jaw North. It costs up to \$3,700, sometimes even \$5,000, to advertise for these top positions. But all three of those are being filled. And when they are filled, then there will be a full complement of staff. But there's no revelation that there are three vacancies. Yes, there are, and yes, we are filling them.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Chairman, let's hear the truth about this matter. That member says that they represent all of Saskatchewan. Do you want to know who they represent? They represent big business; they represent big resource companies; they represent multinational banks. That's what that party represents, Mr. Minister, and their budget

clearly shows that that's who they represent. Those are the Tories' friends, Mr. Minister, not the people of Saskatchewan. And that message came through loud and clear in the two by-elections.

The People of Saskatchewan do not believe that they represent their interests. It's a very small minority of people that the PC party represents — a very small minority of people in this province, and a number of people from out of the province in the form of big business and big resource companies and banks. That's their following, Mr. Chairman.

With respect to the women's directorate, Mr. Chairman, I understand that you're searching for a new director at this point in time and that Janet McGregor is leaving or has left the position. And I would like to know what the terms of her separation are; and I would also like to know whether in fact you are looking for a new director or executive director of the women's secretariat.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, Janet McGregor obtained a position in British Columbia and gave us notice and left effective April 28, 1988. As the member indicated, we are advertising to fill the position and the ad is in the Regina paper and I believe the Saskatoon paper and maybe all across western Canada. I could check it; I have a copy of the ad in my pocket here. Yes, we are advertising for a replacement.

Ms. Simard: — That makes two directors in two years, I believe, Mr. Minister. Two directors you've lost in two years.

I wonder, Mr. Minister, how much power this women's directorate has to develop and recommend policies and programs to improve the status of women in this province. While your government has been juggling positions back and forth between departments, you've lost a clear focus on the issues and problems facing women today.

You've gone down from 18 positions to nine, I understand, and three are vacant. And you've lost two directors in the course of two years. I understand also, Mr. Minister, that today you only have one researcher in the women's directorate — just one researcher, Mr. Minister. And I would like to know how the women's directorate can formulate policy and programs with only one researcher. It would appear to me that in the past there have been several research positions in that division, and now there's only one, and that policy and program recommendations cannot be made without adequate staff and resources.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, there's a classic difference here again between the thinking of the NDP and the thinking of this government. The NDP's thinking is that you make changes by research. Our thinking is that you make changes by implementing policy, so we put more emphasis on implementing policy than we do on the research.

But in addition to the research officer she refers to, the department as a whole has a research branch, and we are filling an additional position right now. So there will be

more research capability, but I wouldn't put total emphasis on research. We're more into solving the problem, and that's what we are trying to do, rather than a lot of academic thought on topics that is filed on the shelf.

And so what we are doing, Mr. Chairman, is trying to implement improvements for women. We are trying to assist in the organization of business seminars. We are trying to encourage young women in career choices, and we are putting the emphasis on the implementation. And we all know that it will take some time to make these changes and to bring about total economic equality.

I believe the members opposite . . . Even the members opposite agree that it cannot be done instantly. After all, they had 11 years as government to try to do this, and we have made more progress than they have since they had their opportunity.

So we emphasize implementation and as much research as necessary. But we don't emphasize a women's research directorate.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Chairman, the minister said that he's into solving the problem. Well I would like to say that I believe he's part of the problem.

Mr. Minister, in the 1986-87 annual report it mentioned that workshops and presentations were provided to a variety of groups throughout Saskatchewan. Could you provide us — if not tonight, in correspondence — with specific information on the groups that participated in these workshops and their presentations.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Yes, we will. We'll send it over to you as soon as it's gathered up.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, the same annual report mentioned that career counselling was provided by the women's secretariat. I understand, however, that this career counselling no longer exists, or perhaps no longer exists. So I would like to know from you whether there presently is anyone on staff within the women's directorate who is responsible for career counselling or conducting educational workshops and presentations of that nature.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, I though we were doing more of this, and I agree we should be doing more. I had indicated to the branch that I wanted to see more career counselling and more activity in the schools, and there was some internal resistance. but I think we're overcoming the internal resistance there to going out on the road and spreading the word. And you will see more performance in that regard with respect to career counselling in the schools.

Ms. Simard: — I think it's important to note, Mr. Chairman, that at the end of February, the mayor's task force on women's issues tabled its final report to the Regina City council. And this report, which had the input of many women's groups, made 122 recommendations on topics such as family violence, non-profit day care, public housing, health care, affirmative action, pornography, and public transportation. And the task force recognized a wide range of issues which affect

women and suggested many courses of action to assist women. Many of the recommendations from the task force instruct city council to lobby the provincial government to take action on many of these very important issues.

Mr. Minister, I would like to know whether you are going to give the directorate the mandate to take a close look at the mayor's task force and bring forward recommendations and ways in which the government can approach many of these problems and suggestions and bring them into effect.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, my department is looking at that report and I also want the Saskatchewan Women's Advisory Council to have a look at that. We will listen to the recommendations and see what can be done to implement things.

It's always useful for city councils to offer their opinions, but we have to govern from a point of view of what's good for the entire province. So we will examine that, and we will take the good things out of that and implement them.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, we talked a bit about affirmative action earlier in the evening. Now I understand that the government has been to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission to obtain approval for an affirmative action program and several conditions were attached to that program. Would you please tell us what those conditions are and what, if anything, you've done to meet the conditions.

(2030)

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, the information is mostly public information already. I'll read them out one to six:

That the names of people appointed to the joint Saskatchewan Government Employees Union/Government of Saskatchewan affirmative action committee be submitted to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission by January 31, 1988. This condition has been complied with.

(2) That a progress report on the development of the comprehensive plan be submitted by April 30, 1988 to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission. (I believe that's been done.)

(3) That a comprehensive affirmative action plan developed by the joint affirmative action committee be submitted to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission by June 30, 1988. (And they will attempt to do that.)

(4) That in accordance with Regulation 42 of The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code a report be submitted to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission by April 30, 1988 on the actions taken during the preceding year to implement the interim plan, on progress made, on difficulties encountered and on changes to the plan that may be considered.

The following is done. As I indicated, the names of the persons appointed to the joint SGEU-Saskatchewan government committee has been submitted. The progress report has been sent in. The comprehensive plans will be submitted by June 30, '88 unless a request is made and approved by the Human Rights Commission for an extension

The other elements of the plan are:

That a report be submitted to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission by June 30, 1988 on funding that is provided for affirmative action including the amount allocated for technical aids, support services, education and training, accessibility, etc. (I might say that by funding we mean money out of the treasury.)

(6) That a report on the accessibility review of government owned/rented buildings be submitted to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission by June 30, 1988.

The report on the equity, employment equity costs, will be submitted by June 30. The report on accessibility will be submitted by June 30. We're in the process of negotiating with SGEU and CUPE (Canadian Union of Public Employees), and I'm sure the member opposite will encourage the leaders of those unions who are friends of hers to co-operate and we'll be able to get that negotiated through.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, would you please advise whether or not you're allocating more staff to the employment equity branch to administer the affirmative action program, and if so, how many staff members.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, we're doing this government-wide. Each department has a committee to implement the plan and a budget to do that within their department. My department co-ordinates and oversees the overall government plan, so I don't need a large bureaucracy when each department, which is actually going to implement the plan, is taking part in the overall plan.

So we find it is going rather smoothly, Mr. Chairman, and that we're getting good co-operation from the departments. And after the negotiations with SGEU and CUPE, we expect we can proceed with the implementation of the plan.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, would you please advise what government funding is allotted for the implementation of the affirmative action program in your department and across government, if you have the latter statistic.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, that budget is being prepared. And I will accept the member opposite's suggestion on what sum should be spent and I'll also accept her suggestion on how that money should be raised, but we are preparing the plan.

Ms. Simard: — I take it that you don't have an idea as to

exactly how much you're going to be spending at this time, Mr. Minister. Is that correct?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, we will spend what's necessary to implement the plan. We will not waste any money and we will not be stingy. We will spend exactly the right amount.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Chairman, the Saskatchewan Women's Advisory Council is a group of private citizens, appointed by the minister responsible for the status of women, to advise the government on policy and programs related to the status of women. Last year in estimates, Mr. Minister, you admitted that you'd allowed the atrophy of the advisory council, that the term appointments of the members of the council has been left to expire on December 31, 1986.

In 1987 you attempted to breathe a little bit of life into the council by appointing four women to it, but it was not until January 27 of this year that you appointed the additional 12 women to give the advisory council its full compliment of 16 members. The council had been inactive, I understand, for a full year because of your oversight to appoint members to the council.

I would like to know, Mr. Minister, how the women were appointed to the Saskatchewan Women's Advisory Council. The women's directorate newsletter in February of 1988 states that:

Council members come from varying fields of expertise and geographical regions reflecting the wide range of views and diversity of Saskatchewan.

However, last year in estimates you presented us with a list of only 18 women's organizations which were contacted to put forward names for the council. And I am sure you would agree that there are many more women's organizations which could have been contracted, Mr. Minister.

Now I would like to know what consultation you had with women's organizations and how you chose various women to fill these positions. So I would like you to list what women's organizations responded to you and the process that you used in choosing the representatives to the council.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — The members appointed, Mr. Chairman, were appointed by minister's order, and it was almost a similar process to forming a cabinet. We chose them on the basis of area, ability, and background.

I can tell you, Mr. Chairman, that the following are the members, and that they have taken to their task with vigour and are doing an excellent job and have already given me some excellent advice, and I expect to see even further excellent advice given to myself from this council. They are as follows: Pam Allen of Regina, realtor; Pam Barber of Regina, home-maker; Irma Corcoran, Kincaid, farmer/rancher; Frances Cresswell, Tisdale, home-maker/farmer; Y. Don Elliot, Christopher Lake, small business person; Anne Hyniuk, La Ronge, home-maker; Mickey Krock, Saskatoon, retired; Leah

MacDonald, Regina, school teacher; Mary Muir, chairperson, Kindersley, director of the Danny Fisher Centre for Drug and Alcohol Abuse; Lynda Newson, Saskatoon, teacher, small-business person; Donna Rodway, Saskatoon, radio announcer; Marilyn Stradecki, Balcarres, home-maker/farmer; Paulette Vanderlinde, Regina, school principal; Jacqueline Wahlmeier, Estevan, secretary; Alice Wuttunee, North Battleford, home-maker; Donna Zimmer, Cudworth, a manager, part owner of Zimmer Motors.

I've tried to include in that list a broad cross-section of Saskatchewan women, including a treaty Indian. I've tried to locate a Metis woman as well, so that we have a broad cross-section. And I think you will agree that we have realtors, home-makers, farmers, ranchers, small-business people, teachers radio announcers — a broad cross-section of society — and that's why they are giving me the excellent advice and guidance that I seek from this council.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, with respect to one appointment that had been announced, and I notice it's included in the woman's directorate newsletter of February, a Janet Bradshaw from White Fox, I understand she did not accept her appointment to the council because she was too busy to attend council meetings. The reason why I was concerned about the process, Mr. Minister, is that Mrs. Bradshaw stated she had no idea who had put her name forward and that she wasn't involved in any women's organizations. So once again, Mr. Minister, I will ask you: what organizations presented names to you, and what organizations were contacted?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, with respect to the women that decided to terminate her position on the council, it was my understanding that she changed her mind. Certainly no one was appointed that was not interested in being there.

With respect to the groups that I contacted with respect to her suggestions, the provincial council of women of Saskatchewan, the Saskatoon Women's Network, the Regina Women's Network, the Saskatchewan Federation of Women, the Saskatchewan Women's Institute, Saskatchewan Business and Professional Women's Club, Saskatchewan Women's Agricultural Network, the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association, Saskatchewan Nursing Assistants' Association, Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, Saskatchewan Action Committee on the Status of Women, Saskatchewan Provincial Catholic Women's League, the United Church Women's Saskatchewan Conference, Immigrant Women of Saskatchewan, the Aboriginal Women's Council of Saskatchewan, the Canadian Federation of University Women, the Canadian Consumers Association, and the Law Society of Saskatchewan; and I asked for their suggestions.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, would you please advise what priorities . . . I'm not sure that you're aware of these, and if not, would you please determine what priorities the council has established for the upcoming year, and what kind of projects it will be undertaking.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Chairman, right now day care is their prime consideration. And I need their guidance with respect to accessibility and rural day care and all of the other issues in that area. They are also considering education and women's directions and the education choices they make. And they are also considering the problems of achieving economic equality for women.

So those are some of the things that they were considering right now; and primarily now they are looking at day care and giving us advice on that area.

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Minister, how much of the budget did the advisory council spend in '87-88?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, \$10,714.37.

Ms. Simard: — And how much, Mr. Minister, has been allocated for '88-89?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — 75,000.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. I have a question to the minister. Mr. Minister, can you advise us how many day-care spaces your department created last year, and how many of those day-care spaces were actually . . . came on stream?

(2045)

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, last year we had budgeted for additional spaces, but we remained with the small number of spaces as the prior year because of the negotiations with the federal government. We didn't know what to expect from the federal government. We didn't know what to expect from the federal government. Now that we know what the federal initiative is, you will see us doing some catch-up work in the coming year with respect to the allocation of spaces.

And I have advised you that I have already allocated — maybe you weren't in the Assembly at the time — I've already allocated just this week a new day-care centre in the Lakeview area of Saskatoon and the Lutheran . . . I don't have the official title but it's the Lutheran housing project for people of all ages including single-income families and single families. and those new spaces are going in at Saskatoon right now.

In addition, you will hear in the very near future an announcement of many new rural day-care spaces. And you will also see a priority of announcing spaces in the city of Saskatoon, which you represent, because Saskatoon is underrepresented in proportion to Regina, where Regina has approximately 1,800 spaces and Saskatoon has approximately 1,300 spaces.

And this was something that our government inherited from the days when you were government. And I'm going to try to correct that inequity, but we'll also try to provide new spaces in Regina as time goes on. So we will work on accessibility and availability and affordability, all at once.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Minister, you did not answer the question. I wanted to know how many new spaces you announced last year. I believe you had made some

announcements in terms of new spaces, additional spaces, in this province. I would like to know the number of spaces you announce, and the number of spaces you are creating this year. And I am talking about subsidized spaces.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I answered that question.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Minister, you did not answer the question. Was it 200 spaces that you announced last year? Is it 200 spaces that you're announcing again this year? Can you tell me how many spaces you announced last year. I'm not talking about how many you created, I'm talking about how many spaces were announced by your government for the year 1987-88, and how many spaces will be created this year for the year 1988-89?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, I answered that question. It'll be in *Hansard* tomorrow. I said that I did not open any new spaces last year. I did not announce any new spaces last year. I said the reason is that we were dealing with the federal government on their new program, that we will have a catch-up year this year to introduce spaces because we now know what the federal program is.

So now, Mr. Chairman, I have answered the question twice and pointed out twice that I've already answered the question. I would hope that the member opposite could read it in *Hansard* tomorrow.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Minister, are you telling me that you did not announce last year — and I'm talking about in the year 1987-88 — the creation of any new spaces? Is that what you're saying?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, when I announce that there is a day-care space, as we have in Saskatoon at the Lutheran housing project, then they get a licence for the space. I did not announce the licensing of those spaces last year.

I've explained in question period earlier that we were holding back to see what the federal government would be doing. I've explained to the member opposite that we budgeted for an extra 200 spaces last year, that those spaces are still there in the budget. They haven't disappeared. I've allocated some of them already. In a very short period of time, I will have all of those spaces allocated and then I will start on spaces that are additional in this year's budget.

So what's the score now? Three times answered, two times referred to *Hansard* to check the answer.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Minister, just answer the questions. You don't need to get catty. I'm not into having any kind of confrontation with you. I'm just asking you to simply answer the questions.

So what we now have determined is that last year there was money allocated for the creation of 200 new spaces. And those 200 new spaces were not created, Mr. Minister, even though you announced the allocation of funds for those spaces. And this year you've reannounced

your old announcement form last year.

Now, as you say, there is a problem in Saskatoon in comparison to Regina with the number of spaces that are licensed by your department and subsidies that are available. I've written to you on several occasions about a situation that's developed in my constituency. I would like to know, Mr. Minister, whether you are aware of that situation. The situation pertains to the lack of day-care spaces around Buena Vista School. We have been in touch with the day-care division; we've been in touch with yourself and your office about the need for subsidized spaces. And I'm talking about subsidized spaces for a family day-care home. I'm wondering whether you can tell us tonight whether or not the constituency that I represent can expect or anticipate any additional licensed spaces for the single parents and working parents that are living in my area.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Chairman, yes, the member opposite has approached me about this perceived problem, and I don't doubt that there is some demand there. And I'm going to try my best to help with that. But I want to advise the member opposite that there has to be some degree of fairness to this system of allocation of spaces.

So, therefore, in my office — the media have seen this; they've taken a picture of it — there is a map which has got every family day-care home and every day-care centre in Saskatchewan with a pin on the map. And I find that in the member opposite's constituency — which she could probably help me as to the name of her constituency. I've a mental block on some of those areas. Since I lost my friends in those seats, it's hard to remember who owns them.

An Hon. Member: — Nutana.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Nutana, thank you. In Nutana the number of pins there is quite more dense. There are a lot more pins in Nutana than in other parts of the province. And I look at the situation where in the constituency of Redberry there are no day-care spaces whatsoever; in the constituency of Turtleford there are non whatsoever; in other constituencies there are only one family day-care home. I have to now look at the rural day-care situation where women have to work because of rural economic situation, which I am sure the members opposite will blame on our government, you know, and they forget about the 22 per cent interest rates when they were government. But they will blame the lack of money in the rural area on our government.

But they will not be able to blame the lack of day care on our government, because I will be announcing many more spaces in rural Saskatchewan. And yes, I will consider the situation in Nutana, and we will try and do what we can, but you have to be fair and look at the province as a whole.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well thank you, Mr. Minister. We all recall the lay-off or the firing of the 411 dental workers, most of whom were women, many of whom lived in rural Saskatchewan, and many of those women have not received any kind of alternate employment since your

government privatized the dental plan. So we know all too well what's happening in rural Saskatchewan, particularly with your latest economic fad, privatization. and we know what that privatization fad has meant to women living in rural Saskatchewan, particularly women who worked for the dental plan.

Now, Mr. Minister, you said you had a number of pins in my constituency designating or denoting the number of licensed family day-care facilities. And I'd be interested in knowing if you can tell me how many pins are on your map in your office.

Just to clarify for the member, I'm talking about Saskatoon Nutana. He was the person who referred to having little pins on the map showing how many licensed family day-care homes there are. I'd be interested in knowing how many there are in Nutana.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — I'll send you the information on Nutana. I don't have the exact number of spaces in your seat at the tip of my tongue, but I have a pretty clear picture in my mind of the city of Saskatoon, and your area, because I specifically looked at that situation because of the problems you've been referring to, where you suggest that your need is greater than other people's needs. And I have to balance this. This is the responsibility of government, is balancing the needs of people and keeping some degree of fairness.

So I'll ask my officials to make a note and I will send you the exact figures for your constituency and we'll try to get you that information. And I'll do what I can to assist with some further spaces in your constituency.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Minister, thank you very much. I don't know if you recall the conversation I had with you and you . . . If I recall the conversation correctly, you advised me that there weren't that many family day-care homes in my constituency, and I'm aware of that.

You were somewhat concerned about all of the family day-care homes in the most eastern part of Saskatoon, and I would simply like to point out to you that around the Buena Vista School there are a number of working parents and single parents, and there is no licensed family day-care home in that area for children of working parents.

I think it would be appropriate . . . And I know that the Buena Vista Home and School Association has written you about this matter, and I have contacted your office about this matter. I would encourage you to use your good office to ensure that the families around the Buena Vista School have access to licensed, subsidized spaces, because it certainly will enhance their opportunities to provide for their family, to work in the community to provide for their families. And many of them cannot afford unlicensed day-care spaces; they require the subsidy, Mr. Minister.

I also want to say to the minister that I am pleased that your department is finally looking at the whole issue of rural day care. I wouldn't want you to misunderstand me in any way; I think that our province needs to do a great deal in rural Saskatchewan in order that families living in

rural Saskatchewan have access to day care, but I would also like to encourage you to consider the fact that there are many, many working parents in urban Saskatchewan that require day care as well.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well I recall the discussion you and I have had. Since you and I have had that discussion, the only opportunity I've had to put new spaces are the ones into the Lutheran housing project in Lakeview where there was an area that didn't really have much for services and a lot of young families with children. And when I go to family day-care homes, which I'm doing now, I'll give that consideration and try to take care of your part of the city.

I want you to know that when it comes to subsidized spaces as they now exist, that approximately 80 per cent are utilized by single parents, primarily women. So I feel that the money is going where it's needed the most and we'll try to keep that in mind as we allocate the new spaces.

Ms. Smart: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just on the topic of day care and the need for single-parent women particularly to have good child care, I want to raise with the minister my concern again about the fact that single-parent women are defined as employable when their babies are four months old and cut back on their social assistance payments and required to go out to find work. There are no licensed day-care spaces for four-month-old babies — not nearly enough. The city of Saskatoon has many women in this situation.

I want to know why you, when you are so self-righteous about the way in which you want to support families and be moral, can justify defining a woman whose baby is four months old as employable and forcing her to go back into the work place.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, actually that was a Social Service question, and I don't have the officials here to give you the exact statistics in that area, but I concede you have a point there that four months, probably if . . . If you're suggesting that that woman would be better off at home looking after the child than being forced out into the labour force, I would consider your suggestion very seriously, and I will.

And yes, I agree with you that if we're going to discourage abortion, we have to spend money to take care of children. And I will do a lot and everything possible in that regard, that if this government discourages abortion, we will put money into the care of children, and especially young children of that age.

And when we get to Social Services, if you'll ask that question again, I'll have my officials here and I might have some more answers for you, but I'll take that seriously.

Mr. Hagel: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I'd like to move to a new or a different element of the responsibility of the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment, and to spend some time in heart-to-heart discussion this evening, Mr. Minister, related to the Workers' Compensation Board

which is under the legislative responsibility of this department in yourself, Mr. Minister.

If I can begin by putting the Workers' Compensation Board into a context of reality in Saskatchewan society today, Mr. Minister. Members of the Assembly will be aware that since about 1911 there has been workers' compensation within the province of Saskatchewan, and legislatively, the first board was established in 1930.

There have been revisions to the Act, to The Workers' Compensation Act, over the years, and I think that it's important before we begin this discussion and this heart-to-heart exchange of concerns related to the Workers' Compensation Board, Mr. Minister, that we note that workers' compensation was introduced to provide security to, at one and the same time, both employees and employers. It will be, in a sense, different from many issues in the labour field in which it is perceived that what is to the advantage of the employer will be to the disadvantage of the employee, and vice versa.

(2100)

Workers' compensation, Mr. Minister, as we all know, was introduced to do away with a hardship for both employees and employers, and that by introducing The Workers' Compensation Act employees then gave up the right to see retribution in the courts when injured on the job.

We also know as well, of course, that part of the basic principles of that Act was to accept that workers' injuries would be compensated without fault. So in essence we have a no-fault insurance program that is completely funded by employers.

Mr. Minister, as I said, there have been a number of revisions to that Act, and one of the most significant changes came about in the Act that was passed in 1979 and implemented on January 1 of 1980. And included in that, Mr. Minister, as we all know, began the practice of deeming. And I want to spread some attention on that particular topic.

Prior to 1979, as we all know, there was a different form of compensation for injuries that were suffered by workers on the job. Prior to that time there was what was commonly referred to as the meat chart, where injuries were compensated for, not on the basis of effect on income, but were compensated for on the basis of a specific injury being defined as compensation for a certain percentage of wage loss.

So, for example, the loss of a finger — and I'm just pulling numbers out of the air; I don't know specifically what they were — may have resulted in a compensation coverage of 5 per cent of income. And as we can all realize now as we look back, it was an unfair system. Certainly for a piano player to lose a finger was much more serious than, Mr. Minister, you or I as members of the legislative Assembly to lose our finger and carry out our duties.

And what was brought in in 1979 was a new form of

compensation which was intended to address the real issue, the original philosophy of workers' compensation, and that being the loss of employment potential income.

Since 1979, and the practice beginning in January of 1980, a number of jurisdictions across the country — fact, Mr. Minister, if I'm not mistaken every jurisdiction across the country — has taken a look at the Saskatchewan practice and has either adopted that new form of compensation settlement or is in the process right now of seriously looking at it.

As we consider the application of the Workers' Compensation Act, there's probably no single issue of concern to both employees and employers than the practice of deeming. And I want to say, Mr. Minister, in the context of the intent of the Act that I rise on my feet this evening, and I assume you do the same, recognizing that a good, solid, fair workers' compensation Act which is administered in a good, solid, fair manner is in the best interests of both employees and employers. Part of the frustration that many employees have been experiencing, who have been the victims of deeming, or as some have somewhat facetiously referred to as "damning" — or as some maybe not so facetiously have referred to it as damning — part of the problem with that is that there is a growing movement within Saskatchewan today for people who are of the opinion that it may be appropriate to do away with the Workers' Compensation Board and go back to that archaic practice of seeking retribution in the court.

Now that would be a sad day indeed if we should ever reach that point. Clearly, seeking retribution in the court would be extremely difficult for employees who are injured on the job and would have to assume costs of seeking retribution in the court. And clearly for any employer. In Saskatchewan terms the vast majority of employers are small business, family business. And for any single employer, family business employer to be dealt the blow in court of being found to be responsible for an injury which cost an employee that potential for earnings for the rest of their life would be absolutely devastating. The impact of that could be absolutely devastating to an employer in Saskatchewan.

So clearly it is in the interest of both employers and employees that we have a good solid system, not only in legislation but in practice, as a matter of fact — one in which people have confidence, in which they feel that justice has been served, and has provided the security that employees seek as well as the security that employers seek.

Now in that context, Mr. Minister, you will be aware, of course, that a review as stipulated by the Act was undertaken and that in 1986 — in September of 1986 — the report of The Workers' Compensation Act review committee was presented.

Quite significantly, the very first recommendation of that report was dealing with the practice of deeming. And the report recommended that there should be only four circumstances in which deeming is considered legitimate.

Now to put the report in its context, Mr. Minister, you will know as well as I that the committee which undertook the report was made up of equal representation of employers and employees. It was a committee of nine chaired by Judge Muir, who I believe has chaired the last four reviews. The recommendations that were put forth were put forth unanimously. In other words those employer representatives and the employee representative who undertook the review of The Workers' Compensation Act were unanimous; the were totally in agreement with the recommendations that were put forth. They saw it as recommendations in the best interest, at one and the same time, of employers and employees.

And what did they recommend about deeming, Mr. Minister? They recommended that there should only be four circumstances in which it's legitimate. And deeming as we all know is the practice whereby an injured employee or an injured worker is judged to be capable of some earnings. The amount of compensation received from the board is therefore reduced by the amount that that injured worker is deemed to be capable of having earnings.

And the review committee appointed by the minister of the time — that wasn't yourself, but appointed by the minister of the time — said then therefore there should only be four circumstances in which this practice of deeming should be used. And what were they? They said they were these four: one, in situations in which a worker has refused an actual job offer within his/her physical limitations. In other words, a worker is capable of employment, has been offered a job, refused it, therefore should be deemed capable of that income, and the Workers' Compensation Board is not responsible for that portion of the benefits from the injury. The second circumstance is one in which the worker has completed an appropriate rehabilitative training program, and they go on to define — and we'll get into that later — what they consider an appropriate rehabilitative training program. The third situation is one in which a worker has refused to take appropriate rehabilitation training, just refused to undertake that. And then the fourth situation, one being where the worker has voluntarily retired from the work force.

So in other words, Mr. Minister, the committee was recommending that deeming should be used only in those circumstances — turn down a job, has participated in rehabilitative training, has refused rehabilitative training, and/or has retired from the labour force.

Now I recognize as well, Mr. Minister, that you do consider this to be a serious problem facing workers, injured workers today, and in order to do that, I need only go back to *Hansard* of last year, Mr. Minister, and you said, and I quote:

And I do agree with the member opposite that this "deeming" has become a problem, not a problem created by our government, and possibly not intended by his government in 1979. And as much as I can influence the board without changing the legislation (I underline without changing the

legislation), I am now directing the board . . . to find a solution to the deeming. I don't know if it can be exactly as recommended by the board that studied the Act, but I do admit that deeming is a problem, and in some cases is unfair, and is probably the major problem before the board right now. And I would be hopeful that the board can work out a solution to this before the end of this calendar year.

Those are your words, Mr. Minister. You go on a paragraph later to say:

I do agree that deeming has to be looked at, and it will be looked at, and I have given you a commitment that by the end of this calendar year we hope to have the board with a new policy on deeming.

On page 2181, of the same estimates, Mr. Minister, and these are your words again:

Mr. Deputy Chairman, when you change a provision like deeming that was implemented many years ago, there has to be a calculation as to the cost that would be involved in who will pay for it. Now we just about have that calculation completed, and once that calculation is completed, we anticipate making changes.

I didn't say we'd wait until the end of the year. I said we would do it before the end of the year, and that would be the latest that it would be done. Possibly the policies can be changed very soon, but we're waiting for the detailed calculation so we know exactly who will gain and who will benefit.

So there we have it, Mr. Minister. We have a situation where the review committee appointed by your government made a unanimous recommendation, the unanimous recommendation was very simply: to follow the Act. That's all they were recommending, that the Act be followed — nothing more, nothing less.

And we also have, Mr. Minister, your recognition that deeming is the number one problem facing the Workers' Compensation Board today, and the commitment that by December 31, 1987, at the latest, that the problem of deeming would be addressed and a new practice and policy would be in place.

So in light of all that, Mr. Minister, I ask you simply this: what changes were made by the board relative to deeming, and at what date were they implemented?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. We recognized that deeming was a problem. The report says that deeming should be used sparingly, and the board is using it sparingly now. We are preparing legislation to implement those parts of the report that require legislation. I hope to introduce it before we adjourn this spring, and I hope to have it passed, as a matter of a fact. I'm sure you'll co-operate in that regard.

The majority of the recommendations of the report will be

implemented, and I think you will probably see a record number implemented this session, as compared to other reports, but that will have to be counted later.

The board has taken my advice and done so in its deeming more sparingly and is following the guide-lines set in the report as much as possible. And in the future, you will see deeming used less and less and more sparingly. But the report recognizes that in some instances you'll still have to deem the amount that a worker can earn and then pay the difference.

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Minister, would you please advise me then on . . . because you did make the commitment that it would be done by the end of the year. I hear your words saying that there will be less and less over a period of time.

Will you be more specific, please, as to how deeming has been changed in the application of deeming of injured workers? Specifically, how has that been changed by practice of the board, and what dates did that begin and when you predict that it will be used less and less over a period of time? I simply ask: if there is room for improvement, why isn't that happening now, and what does it take to do that, in your opinion?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, we've been following some of the recommendations on deeming made in the report with the intent to implement these recommendations. There will be a new policy statement issued shortly indicating exactly how the board intends to about the process of deeming, using it more sparingly.

We have already made those changes that we can make without legislation. We will be bringing in legislation this spring. The member opposite will see the legislation when it's introduced. So we have started, as I indicated last August, in making improvements; we will continue. The legislation will be the last improvement in this session once legislation is introduced and passed.

(2115)

Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Minister, I look forward to the legislative changes that you propose, and you have my commitment, that if, in my view, those changes are in the best interest of a fair compensation system — both for employers and employees — that it will receive my support.

But again, I ask the same question that I asked, Mr. Minister, and that is: specifically what changes were made and when did those begin? I'm recognizing that you made the commitment in estimates last year in August to implement them by December 31 of 1987. I'm hearing you say you did that, and I'm simply asking you how you did . . . not necessarily yourself, but how the board did that? What policy changes or what procedures were changed, and effective what date?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Chairman, as the member know, I don't have control over the wage of a Workers' Compensation Board. I can only make suggestions, and the only control I have over the board is the appointment of the members. But they have behaved

responsibly. Since we last were in this Assembly, I suggested that they be more reasonable and particularly take into account the wage rates in rural Saskatchewan as compared to urban Saskatchewan and what it's possible to make out there in the real world and not what they might hypothesize could be earned. And they have applied those rules more reasonably because it's a problem area.

But it's still a judgement call, even when we follow the report exactly there will still be some judgement calls and there will still be, on occasion, some people who think that they should have more money than the board determines. But that's the board's system, and you have already agreed that we should not have this before the courts.

So the board will make these decision, and they have acted responsibly in the past and they have been more sensitive since you and I last had this discussion. They've taken the suggestions to heart, have tried to be more reasonable, a little more understanding, and they are tying their best to do what's fair. but boards are like judges and politicians — they can't please everyone all the time so they're trying their best.

Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Minister, I don't take issue with the words that you're using when you tell me that the board has become more sensitive and has attempted to be more reasonable and understanding. I think that's commendable and I would hope that's the case.

I hear you saying that there was . . . has been some attempt to give a more realistic assessment as to what employment potential is in rural Saskatchewan. And I'm asking again the same question, Mr. Minister . . . I don't want to be facetious here as we deal with these estimates, but as someone once said, and I think maybe it's not entirely untrue, that if every injured worker who was deemed capable of being a security guard became a security guard, we would have one of the most secure nations in, certainly in the western world, if not in all of the world.

And I simply ask again the same question, Mr. Minister, other than attempting to be more reasonable about earning potential in rural Saskatchewan, have there been any other changes to make the practice of deeming more fair and reasonable, to use your words? And I would ask as well, Mr. Minister, you may wish to respond at the same time to a second question, and that's: what is it — in your view — what is not possible to do with the current legislation in order to make deeming more fair and reasonable? What are the limitations that the board is faced with under the current legislation?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, I'm advised by the chairman of the Workers' Compensation Board that the legislation is not necessarily holding up the process in this area, and that to finalize the changes they have to do some administrative things. I said earlier, there will be a policy statement coming out as to how they're going to do it. It will contain, generally, a reorganization of the unit that does the deeming. It will be an increase in staff in that unit. Every person who, in the position of having their case assessed with respect to the possibility of deeming,

will be dealt with individually by an individual counsellor there, will have their case reviewed in a personal interview. There will be no bureaucratic deeming as has happened in the past; it will be an individual situation.

We still won't be able to please everyone, but I believe with that reorganization you will see some considerable improvements. We are trying to correct it as fast as possible. You have to realize, though, that by all accounts we have the best workers' compensation system in Canada. It is the best-funded . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

A member opposite says, ha. I say that that is a credit not only to this government but to her colleagues who went before her, and to the Liberals who went before them, who all did a good job in setting up a system that we have maintained as a government. And she is slighting and slandering those members of the CCR (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) who carried on this system, and those members of the Liberals who started the system, and we as Progressive Conservatives are continuing the system. And I wish the member would not speak from her seat because the critic here understands that we have the best system in Canada. We have probably the best in all of North America. We have delegations coming from New Zealand coming to study our system. They do have a labour government in New Zealand that they are trying to improve their system, to get it up to our standards.

So we have the best system, but it's not flawless. And we'll try to make these changes to solve the major problem in the deeming area where it's very much a judgement call.

But we cannot, we cannot solve every problem. One of the problems is that if you're injured at a certain wage level and you have gone through retraining and everything else and you can't find a job at that same wage level, then someone has to make a decision on what wage level you should be able to find a job at, and pay you the difference.

And we've asked them to be more realistic as to what you can possibly find a job at now when the rural economy is in difficulty due to the agricultural situation, and when that lack of money in rural Saskatchewan is starting to reflect on the economy of urban Saskatchewan. We're all in this together in this province, so we've asked the board to consider not only what the person can do but what is available out there, and that's what we're trying to solve.

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Minister, I hope you didn't misinterpret my comments regarding trying to improve the practice to reflect reality out in rural Saskatchewan. I concur with that, and that simply makes sense.

I also share with you the view that historically The Workers' Compensation Act in practice by and large in Saskatchewan over the last large number of years has been a model compensation program. And for that reason it's not surprising to you or me or anyone else in the Assembly that the Saskatchewan model is being studied by other jurisdictions.

That's also by the way, Mr. Minister, why I think as we are standing and discussing the Workers' Compensation Board and its function that, probably contrary to other times, I don't think the tone of this exchange is adversarial. We all have a common objective here to have a fair compensation system. And I repeat, in the interest of both employees and employers, both have a vested interest in that.

I just want to, because it's not clear to me yet — and I do appreciate your clarifying your original statement that it was requiring some legislative change in order to clean up the practice of deeming that's a problem now, because that, quite frankly, is my interpretation, that legislative change is not necessary to deal with that problem. So I appreciate your clarifying that.

I would like to go back to the statement that you made in review of estimates last year again because it's simply not clear to me what you are meaning when you said:

Mr. Deputy Chairman, when you change the provision like deeming that was implemented many years ago, there has to be a calculation as to the cost that will be involved and who will pay for it.

I assume, Mr. Minister, there you're referring to the fact that, in your opinion at that point in time, that some kind of number crunching was going to have to take place in terms of fees assessed to employers across the province to make the compensation Act feasible with an improved, more fair, and more reasonable, and more just practice of deeming for employees.

And you went on to say then, Mr. Minister, and I quote:

Now we just about have that calculation completed, and once that calculation is completed, we anticipate making changes.

I didn't say we'd wait until the end of the year. I said we would do it before the end of the year, and that would be the latest that it would be done.

Could you please explain for me, Mr. Minister, because it's not clear to me at all from what you've said, what happened between August 31, 1987 and December 31, 1987 that prevented the board from crunching those numbers and from making the complete number of changes that are necessary to get the practice of deeming consistent with the spirit of the legislation and consistent with the recommendations put forth by the review committee.

You may very well . . . Maybe there's something I'm not understanding that happened between the months of September and December. But I do know you made a very clear commitment last year, and I hear you saying today that you've made some moves, but we're not where we want to be yet. And I'm simply asking, Mr. Minister: what happened to prevent the board from being where they should be by the end of 1987?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, at the time that you

quote me we had the report of the review panel, and their calculation on the actuarial costs of some of the recommendations was a little bit fuzzy, and they did not have access to actuaries the way the board does. So they did some guesswork and a little calculating and we found that their recommendations were sound, but their cost calculations and their review of the investments of the board were not entirely accurate, and they had to . . . in fact, they retracted their calculation of the board's investment practices.

And so since then we've completed the calculation, we find that within the scope of the current employer costs that the costs of being more reasonable on the deeming are not excessive; that employers should be able to bear those costs. We have started to implement those changes. I've indicated to you that to complete the implementation, first of all, we had the calculation, which took a little time; then we started implementing the changes; now we are finalizing it with a reorganization of the whole division and the addition of extra staff.

So the process is being completed, and I would say, yes, it's taken three or four months longer to finalize it than I had anticipated, but we've gotten there. I think people will be satisfied with the changes. We've done the best and we've given it serious consideration, looked at all the possibilities. We've got to where we think we should be, where you believe we should be, where the committee of review things we should be, and we've done it responsibly and so . . . Yes, I do admit it's taken a little bit longer, but we have done it.

Mr. Hagel: — And also for my information, Mr. Minister, will you — I'm not sure what you said there — is it your view then that as of this date, May 9, 1988, that the board is dealing with the practice of deeming as recommended by the review committee?

If that's not the case, Mr. Minister, if that's not your opinion today, May 9, 1988, then by what date do you anticipate, or more to . . . let me be firmer than that: by what date do you commit that the board will be dealing with the practice of deeming as recommended by the review committee?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, we anticipate that the complete reorganization and additional staff can be in place in two to three weeks, possibly four weeks, but approximately that time frame.

Mr. Hagel: — So is it correct therefore then, Mr. Minister, to assume that to pick a figure by the end of May, by the end of this month, that the board will be dealing with the practice of deeming as much as it intends in order to respond to the recommendation, the first recommendation of the review committee. Am I correct in drawing that conclusion, Mr. Minister, that that will be the case by the end of this month?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, we believe that's a realistic target for the implementation of the reorganization and the completion of the deeming changes I've said we've started for the last few months. That's a realistic target. We think we can reach it.

Mr. Hagel: — Thank you very much for that commitment, Mr. Minister, and you can rest assured that as you carry out your responsibilities as the minister of the Crown responsible for The Workers' Compensation Act, I will also carry out my responsibilities as critic for The Workers' Compensation Act, and will forward to you any concerns that I may have in that regard, and would expect that within the spirit of our exchange here today that those would be given clear consideration.

(2130)

Mr. Minister, I'd like to move then to the second recommendation of the committee, and that has to do with the practice of rehabilitation programs for injured workers. As we both have already discussed, two of the recommendations for dealing with deeming had to do with either having completed participation in a rehabilitation program or an injured worker refusing to participate in an appropriate rehabilitation program.

In the recommendation dealing with the rehabilitation programs, it would be my view that the committee is simply saying this, that it's in the best interest of both employees and employers when a worker is injured that that worker should participate whenever appropriate and whenever possible in a rehabilitation program so as to become fully employable in a new career, and hopefully, at some point in time, up to and beyond the level of income at the time of injury.

The committee is recommending also then, Mr. Minister, in terms of the board dealing responsibly with the long-term best interests — the long-term interest being that it is in everybody's best interest to have the worker rehabilitated, therefore no longer drawing benefits and becoming a fully active participant in the work-force; that's in the worker's best interests, it's in the best interests of cost to the compensation board, and also in the best interests, therefore, of employers — the committee was recommending that when a worker is receiving rehabilitation which involves a course of less than one year, that it would never be considered acceptable to deem a person until that person is able to — and they use quotation marks — “find a job.”

Secondly, they recommend that if the training program is 12 or 24 months, that the worker be allowed six months before deeming was applied, and if the case of training program longer than 24 months, that deeming would be put into practice after a three-month period of time after graduation.

Mr. Minister, is it your opinion that that is wise recommendation, and do you concur with that recommendation?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, I can't agree totally with the recommendation. It is our position that we will get a worker to a position where he or she is job-ready. That means they're capable of obtaining employment, but we cannot have a workers' compensation system that guarantees a job. And we don't have that anywhere in the world, such a system that you are guaranteed a job.

So we can get people job-ready, but we will not go so far

as to guarantee that they will have a job or we will pay them for not having a job. And for those workers who are not injured, there is no job guarantee. We try to have as much job security in this country as possible, but there is no job guarantee for anyone. And we can't have a job guarantee for a rehabilitated injured worker, but as much as possible we will have them completely job-ready. And with the things that are going to happen in the future in this province — with freer trade, with economic diversification, with a recovery in agriculture that is starting now — we feel that being job-ready will mean that people will be able to get jobs.

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Minister, it's my opinion as I read the recommendations of the review committee that they are speaking something a little more strongly here than some kind of faith that free trade and privatization and whatever else will provide the necessary job opportunities. I read this recommendation and it seems to me that the committee is talking about "finding a job" in the same context as its first recommendation having to do with defining whether deeming would be applied or not.

Mr. Minister, I find your response a bit interesting — a bit confusing, quite frankly, because it seems to me you're saying something a little different in this case, having to do with a rehabilitated worker, than with your endorsement of the recommendations regarding deeming. Can you clarify the difference, in your opinion, between these two situations, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, we are spending a record amount this year on rehabilitation of workers who have been injured, and we're putting \$12 million into the Wascana rehabilitation hospital in Regina, the construction of which will cost in excess of \$54 million.

So we believe that our actions in assisting injured workers are quite reasonable and that our investments have carried the board. Even when the stock market dropped, I believe that we still had capital gains of \$7 million when other people took losses. So the Board has been very responsible in their investments, and I commend them for that, that they actually were still able to make a capital gain in a falling stock market.

All of this has led to reasonable cost, maximum benefits, and an excellent rehabilitation program. And if you look just outside of this building, you see the bricks and mortar of the new hospital. So I think the member opposite and I are agreed that we have an excellent program in Saskatchewan. And he can't seem to find fault with the program, so I think we should just get on with the job of taking care of injured workers.

Mr. Hagel: — Well now there's a fine idea, Mr. Minister. Let me then ask again for your clarification because it's getting more confusing here as you speak. Are you concurring with the second recommendation of the review committee or are you not? I guess to be more specific I'm asking: when a worker has participated in a rehabilitation program of — let's use the terms that the review committee used, a program of 12 months or less, 12 or 24 months, more than 24 months — at what point do you determine, Mr. Minister, that it is appropriate to introduce the practice of deeming with that injured

worker?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Minister, as I indicated earlier, we believe very much that we should spend the money at workers' comp to rehabilitate the worker to be ready for a job. And if that job does not pay as much as the job that the worker was injured at, workers' compensation will pay the difference.

For example, if you're earning \$12 an hour, and then if you're injured and you're rehabilitated, you're retrained or re-educated, but the job that you are re-educated for only pays \$10 an hour, if you take that job we will pay you \$2 an hour from the Workers' Compensation Board possibly until your retirement — and that happens.

So what we do is we compensate to the level that you are at, but we do not guarantee a job. That's where the deeming comes in, is where a worker says, I can't find a job at all, no job of any sort. Then the board at some stage says, well we have to sit and decide that you can do a job that may pay \$6 an hour and therefore we will pay you \$6 an hour difference, but you have to go out and earn that other \$6 an hour.

It is a very complicated process; it's difficult. The member opposite agrees that you have to deem in some situations.

So what we are doing is spending a record amount on rehabilitation. As a result, there are people having a much higher level of education and training after their injury than they did before their injury; we find that most of them are still able to find jobs. Most people are satisfied with the workers' compensation system. There are few people that have difficulties, and we try to deal with them as best possible.

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Minister, specifically what is the record amount being spent in rehabilitation?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — In 1987, academic educational upgrading, number of workers, 240, expenditure, \$1,799,358; technical education upgrading, injured workers, 289 in 1987, expenditure, \$1,651,658; on the job assessments of injured workers, 179, expenditure for on the job training, \$556,871; training on the job . . . job assessment is the first one, the next one is not an assessment but the actual training only, no assessment, 76 workers, \$182,860; and that's the 1987 expenditures.

It's in the report, by the way that was tabled today, page 16.

Mr. Hagel: — And the anticipated budget for 1988-89, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, we don't set a budget. We spend what's necessary. Injuries are down somewhat. We hope that 1988 would cost less. But even with injuries down we will be spending more per worker, so we anticipate it will be somewhat higher for 1988. But we are pleased to say that the injuries have been down in the last year.

Mr. Hagel: — If I can come back again to the second recommendation, Mr. Minister, because when you

responded three questions ago you didn't respond to my question. You were talking about deeming, and just on reflection, I don't think you said a great deal that I can disagree with, but that wasn't my question. My question was, relative to a rehabilitate worker as defined by the review committee with their second recommendation, do you concur with their recommendations that deeming shall be applied to an injured worker in a rehabilitation program of less than 12 months, not until that person is able to "find a job", or in deeming practice, "have a clear opportunity for a job" — training program of 12 to 24 months, six months until deeming; over 24 months, three months till deeming. Is it your view that that is a reasonable recommendation that the committee is putting forth? I ask specifically about these time periods for a rehabilitated workers.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I take the view that in some cases that is reasonable, and in other cases it may not be, depending on the situation, depending on what you had been retrained for. If you are being retrained as a nurse, and I understand there's a shortage of nurses, then you shouldn't have to be paid for six months to look for a position. But if you were retrained for something else and there's not a great demand, maybe you have to be paid for six months to look for the position.

And so some people find jobs in two weeks and we pay them for two weeks of job search, and some people take six months and we'll pay six months or even longer, depending on the circumstances. We don't accept that there should be a standard formula that everybody gets paid to search for a job for an exact period of time, depending on their education time that they were in rehabilitation. Each individual's circumstances have to be examined and, depending on the circumstances, that's the length of time that the board pays.

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Minister, can we move then to the next series of recommendations, recommendations 3 through 6, if you have the committee's report handy and in front of you. These are recommendations, Mr. Minister, that you will recognize have to do with the spousal benefits for injured workers. And can I ask you, first of all, you plans related to the third recommendation, which is a recommendation for a legislative Act, related to the five-year limit placed on spousal benefits for a worker who suffered a fatal injury, and the dealing with the hardship clause. I think that's the particularly problematic part of this particular section of the Act, Mr. Minister, is the interpretation of hardship that is used when calculating benefits for a spouse of a fatally injured worker.

Mr. Minister, is it your intention to deal with this through a legislative Act, or otherwise through the board, because I note that recommendation number 4 is that the board should immediately review its current interpretation of 83(4), section 83(4) of the Act, with a view to implementing the principles included in that recommendation. So my question to you, Mr. Minister, is: has the board, since the — well, at any time — moved to act on this, and is it your intention to introduce legislative change to address the recommendation of the committee?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Chairman, our interpretation is that we have to have a legislative change to enact that . . . or to implement that recommendation, and we will be so moving in the legislation that will be coming forth.

Mr. Hagel: — Am I to assume — and I accept, Mr. Minister, you may not want to pre-announce the legislation — but am I to assume, Mr. Minister that in your view that legislative changes you will be making will be completely consistent with the recommendations made unanimously by the review committee?

(2145)

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Well, Mr. Chairman, the member opposite will have an opportunity to see the legislation in the not too distant future, and I give him an assurance that the problem will be addressed. The details of the legislation will come before this Assembly in a few weeks.

Mr. Hagel: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I appreciate at least that assurance, and there will be a number of people who are significantly affected by the hardship clause related to spousal benefits, and I look forward with anticipation to that.

Mr. Minister, recommendation number 5 — and with the time that we have available left to us tonight, I think what I'd like to do is just walk through some of the recommendations and get your views and plans related to them. Recommendation number 5 suggests the benefits paid to a surviving spouse for a period exceeding 24 consecutive months — that an amount equal to 10 per cent of the payments be set aside for an annuity for that spouse at age 65. has there been any action, Mr. Minister? If not, are we to anticipate something again during this legislative session?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, we'll deal with that when the legislation comes forward. We anticipate making the improvements suggested.

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Minister, we can drop down to recommendation number 9, which again suggests legislative action to section 99(1) of The Workers' Compensation Act, related to the ability of survivors who receive Canada Pension Plan benefits. Mr. Minister, is it your intention again to deal with that recommendation through legislation in this session?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, we'll be making some changes there. The details will be announced at a later date when the legislation is introduced.

Mr. Hagel: — I'm sorry, Mr. Minister, there was noise here. I didn't hear your answer. If I could ask you to repeat it please.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, we are making some changes in that provision. The details will be announced and revealed in the legislation when it's introduced in the House.

Mr. Hagel: — Regarding the recommendation 13,

section 74(3) of the Workers' Compensation Act, again to provide where there is an annuity of \$5,000 or less at age 65, that a lump sum be paid to the worker.

While I'm on my feet, why don't I just ask two or three because the answer may be the same here. If you want to deal with them separately, fine. Section 93 . . . recommendation that that be repealed — and that's to deal with the ceiling; recommendation that Section 86 of the Act be amended to enable the board to make additional allowances to a foster parent. Those again are all recommendations to change the legislation, Mr. Minister. Are we to expect some changes in legislation in those three areas?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, I'm not going to give the member opposite the legislation today, when the final draft is being prepared in Justice and drafting right now. What we have here is that the member opposite and the members of the Assembly have the Workers' Compensation Board 1987 annual report which I tabled earlier this afternoon. And if the member opposite will look at pages 23 and following, committee of review recommendations, the ones that do not require legislation are addressed in that report, and an overview is given as to what has been done.

The other ones require legislation, and I will be introducing legislation later in this session to deal with the other recommendations, and then we can proceed with the debate at that time. It's not that I'm trying to hide anything but there's no need for us to go through the Act twice, and when I introduce it I think then we could debate it.

So if the member opposite could just show some patience until we get to the Act, I think we can deal with it then. That's about all I can give you now, that most of these things will be addressed in the legislation and you will see the details then.

Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Minister, I appreciate the explanation, although it's not a surprise. I have seen that and, as you pointed out, those recommendations that don't deal with legislation, there is some comment there. I'll review that carefully. That's why I'm asking you about the ones that are recommendations dealing with legislative change because they're obviously not referred to in the report. I would not want to run the risk. Mr. Minister, of when you come with your legislative changes, that you have failed to respond to some of the recommendations made by the review committee, and we will have . . . I would assume that by the time that you bring in your legislative changes we will have completed the review of this department, and there will not be the opportunity then to question you on your intentions with relation to this.

Maybe we can summarize all of these, Mr. Minister. There are . . . In my view, recommendations 13, 14, 15, 24, 62, 67, 68, 69, 70, and 71 are recommendations that call for legislative action by you, the minister responsible. Let me ask you then, Mr. Minister, are there any of these . . . We'll put it the other way; maybe we can proceed a little more quickly. Are there any of these recommendations to deal with legislative action that you're not planning to

deal with your introduction of legislative change in the next few weeks in this session of the Assembly?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, there may be a few. I can't say whether there'll be one or two or four or six, but not very many that we won't address in the legislation. This government has set a record for implementation of recommendations of the committee of review, and we will keep up that tradition when the Act is introduced. We can't have the committee write the entire legislation, but where practical — and the great majority of them are practical — we will implement them.

Mr. Hagel: — Well, Mr. Minister, part of the record of your dealing with the recommendations has not been with the speed, quite frankly. The report was presented some two years ago, and if you're . . . You've obviously said nothing to me in your response just now. You said the ones that are reasonable, and it might not be all, it might be some. Let's just limp through this then, I guess, if we have to. Recommendations 13, 14, and 15, are you planning to deal with those through legislative change? Let's all go back to that original question.

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, we're considering them.

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Minister, you know, we don't have to play silly games here. I would assume that in the interest of both your and my commitment to be of service to the people of — Saskatchewan that we can deal with serious questions with serious answers. I give you my commitment that I will ask serious questions, and as long as we can avoid playing silly games — are you intending then, Mr. Minister, to bring about changes related to section 74(3) of the Act, section 93 of the Act, and section 86 of the Act?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — well, Mr. Chairman, I'm not going to answer anymore questions; I'm not going to go through the entire Bill today. What I'm saying to the member opposite is: if he doesn't ask silly questions, I won't give him silly answers.

And so he should stop asking about the Bill till we get into the debate on the Bill, because I'm not going to give him any more of what's in the Bill and what isn't in the Bill. I said the majority of the recommendations will be dealt with, and it's not a question of silly answers; I'm simply not going to tell him anymore about what the actual wording of the Bill is because we're not discussing the Bill here. We're discussing workers' compensation, which isn't even part of the department under review, but traditionally we answer questions on workers' compensation. So we're answering question, but if you want to see that legislation, wait until it's been drafted and printed, and then I'll show it to you.

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Minister, is it your view that domestic worker should be included under coverage of workers' compensation?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, I'll give you an answer on domestics. I am contemplating including domestics under labour standards, but we are not contemplating including domestics under workers'

compensation. It was tried in Manitoba; no one applied. It hasn't gone over very well. It's a difficult area with respect to domestics and farmers and so, therefore, we will not be making that mandatory in the legislation.

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Chairman, it would appear that some of the members opposite are either being bored by this conversation or insulted or something. The Minister of Health is deeply offended by the fact that we should be taking a close look at the plans of this government related to The Workers' Compensation Act.

Mr. Minister, in the hubbub being raised by members on your side, I heard you make some reference to farm workers, and I wasn't clear as to what you said. Is it your intention to include and improve the coverage for farm workers covered by workers' compensation?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Chairman, I indicated . . . I am considering, Mr. Chairman, domestic workers with respect to labour standards, but we are not considering domestic workers with respect to mandatory workers' compensation. We have had a problem in that area. Manitoba tried it and they have not had very many people applying . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm advised none, but maybe there were one or two, very minimal number of people interested. It has just been an ignored part of their law.

Farmers and domestics are difficult areas to regulate, and we don't intend to go into that area at this time, but I will examine that situation on the labour standards side of it. And then in a few years, if there is a possibility that it can be properly regulated without abuse, then we will look at it under workers' compensation. But at this stage we have to look at some other things first.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 9:57 p.m.