

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING, SELECT AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

#### Standing Committee on Communications

**Clerk Assistant:** — Mr. Gerich, as vice-chairman of the Standing Committee on Communications, presents the third report of the said committee which is as follows:

Your committee has considered the recommendation of the Public Documents Committee under The Archives Act, contained in retention disposal schedules comprising sessional paper no. 171 of the third session of the 20th legislature, as referred to the committee by the Assembly on May 9, 1989 and June 14, 1989 pursuant to the said standing committee's terms of reference dated March 9, 1989.

Your committee recommends to the Assembly that the recommendations of the Public Documents Committee on schedules no. 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293 and 294 be accepted.

**Mr. Gerich:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the third report of the Standing Committee on Communications be now concurred in.

Seconded by the member from Regina North East.

Motion agreed to.

#### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Hon. Mr. Maxwell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to all members of the Assembly, three guests who are seated in your gallery, sir. They are visiting us from Dublin, Ireland. They are Eve Barret and her sons Connor and Damon. Connor and Damon spent all of last summer in Regina, Mr. Speaker, and I had the honour to introduce them to the Assembly at that time. This year their mother has been able to get away and join them for a few weeks here in the sunshine.

So we welcome you to Regina and to Saskatchewan. We trust that you have a pleasurable visit and when you go back to Ireland you'll take many fond memories of Saskatchewan with you.

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

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me to introduce to you, and through you to the other members of the House, 30 students from grade 1 to 10 from the Arm River Hutterite colony near Disley, Saskatchewan, which is just a little bit west of Lumsden. They're here with their teachers, Jean McClure and Mona

Ruecker, and chaperons Lydia Hofer and Annie Hofer.

I understand they've been touring the legislature. I hope you've enjoyed your visit. I'm going to visit with you afterwards for some pictures and refreshments, and we'll talk about the things that you're going to see in the legislature today.

So I would ask all members to please help me welcome the students from the Arm River Hutterite colony.

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

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great pleasure today to introduce to you, and to all the members of the Assembly, 39 grade 4 students from the Outlook Elementary School from Outlook, Saskatchewan. They are sitting in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker.

They are accompanied by their teachers, Mrs. Barbara Peardon and Perry Johnson; chaperons, Mrs. Bonnie Irvine, Mrs. Gerry Joes; and bus driver, Russ McPherson.

I say to all the guests today that I'm very proud that so many people from Outlook through the years that I've been representing them, there's hardly been a year, Mr. Speaker, that there hasn't been representation from the Outlook school, and I congratulate them for that interest.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'll be meeting with them for pictures and drinks, and we'll be having a chat out on the lawn, and I ask all members to join with me in welcoming my students.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Gerich:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, and to the members of the legislature, I'd like to introduce 11 grades 5, 6, and 7 and 8 students from Cochin School in Cochin, Saskatchewan. It's in the north-west corner of my riding. They're seated in the west gallery. Their teacher is Mr. Lorne Voinorosky; chaperons Chris Delorme and Mrs. Cheryl Rann.

I will be meeting with them on the outside lawn at 2:30, and I'd like to ask all members and you, Mr. Speaker, to welcome them to the legislature. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Martin:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and to the other members of the House, Mrs. Margaret Clark. Mrs. Clark, are you in the speaker's gallery, I believe? Yes. Would you please stand up, please, Mrs. Clark?

Mrs. Clark is another one of the seniors who is taking part in the seniors lifestyle survey at the Dr. Paul Schwann (Fitness) Centre at the University of Regina. We've had occasion now to introduce a number of them, perhaps 20 or so, of seniors who've been taking part in the survey. As we had mentioned before, this survey is to try to establish

some statistics about fitness for senior citizens.

Mrs. Clark, I hope you have enjoyed your survey, and I'll have an opportunity to talk with you in a little while down in room 105.

Would all the members please welcome Mrs. Clark.

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

**Mr. Gardner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce some guests to you today also, from the constituency of Pelly. The students are 11 in number, and they're from grades 5 and 6, I believe, from the Togo School in Togo, which is in the south-east corner of my riding.

They're accompanied today by their teacher, Wendy Hunter and chaperons, Gail and Bryan Ruf, and their bus driver, Brian Hilderman. I hope that you enjoy your visit to Regina today and your tour of the legislature. And I'll meet you at 3 o'clock, after you've done those things, to answer some questions and take pictures and have drinks with you and see you on the front lawn at 3. I would ask everybody to help me welcome them in the usual manner, Mr. Speaker.

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

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Financial Arrangements with GigaText

**Mr. Anguish:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Deputy Premier, and we see today that the scandalous dealings with Montreal millionaire, Guy Montpetit, have made you the laughing stock of the national media. And you will know, Mr. Minister, that in the Montreal court case yesterday, the Quebec Superior Court judge indicated that you were taken by Mr. Guy Montpetit in the computer deal.

In the face of the comments of Justice Forget, are you still willing to maintain that you went into this deal with your eyes wide open and that you got good value for the taxpayers' dollars in the province of Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Order. Order. Order. Let's begin question period on a calmer note and allow the Deputy Premier to answer the question.

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, I've said before in this House that I'm quite prepared, as I think most reasonable people are, to rely on the outcome of the RCMP investigation that is currently being concluded, I'm told. I'm prepared to rely on the outcome of the civil action in Montreal, even though it has nothing directly to do with GigaText, Mr. Speaker. And I'm prepared to rely, Mr. Speaker, on the outcome of expert analysis and demonstration of the GigaText technology.

I said before in this House, Mr. Speaker, that

Bell-Northern Research and National Research Council and Defence Research Establishment and Simon Fraser University and the National Research Council, Mr. Speaker, all of them believe that they got value for their dollar when they bought Lambda computers. Our computers, the computers that were bought by GigaText were bought for in and around the same kind of money.

Mr. Speaker, if all of the others got value for their dollar, I don't know how it can be suggested that in and around the same ballpark, maybe slightly different configurations, that GigaText didn't get value for its dollar as well.

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

**Mr. Anguish:** — New question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, you can't keep putting it off on court cases and the RCMP investigation. What we're talking about here is Saskatchewan taxpayers' money being used for this high-flying Montreal financier to purchases suits, to buy a sail boat, to buy a motor launch, and to even have his dry-cleaning done, all done by the man to whom you gave sole signing authority.

My question to you is quite straightforward: at what point did you realize that the accountability process had broken down on this deal, or was there ever any consideration at all for accountability of taxpayers' dollars?

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, it should be remembered that the Government of Saskatchewan, through CMB (Crown Management Board of Saskatchewan), owned 25 per cent of a company. The other 75 per cent was owned by Norlus, which in turn was owned 50 per cent by Douglas Young and Guy Montpetit. The 75 per cent, Mr. Speaker, is clearly control. The minute that there was any indication of some difficulty through the civil action being initiated in Montreal, we moved to take control of the company, Mr. Speaker. We, through SEDCO, now have control of 100 per cent of the company, and we're trying to prove up the technology, Mr. Speaker.

I know members opposite would rub their hands with glee if this thing failed. They would rub their hands with glee, Mr. Speaker, if this thing failed, as they rubbed their hands with glee when Rafferty was stopped, as they rubbed their hands with glee with almost anything that we hit a bumpy road with, Mr. Speaker. They are against any kind of development in Saskatchewan. They were against Weyerhaeuser. They were against the Meadow Lake deal, Mr. Speaker. They're against everything that's ever been brought to this province.

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

**Mr. Anguish:** — All we find, Mr. Deputy Premier, is failure. What we're looking for is success in the province of Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Anguish:** — New question. Mr. Deputy Premier, Justice André Forget has stated categorically that it would require, and I quote:

... a lot of imagination to believe that Mr. Montpetit's Bermuda firm, which received the money for the computers, was entitled to any of it.

Now that is the considered opinion of a high court judge in the province of Quebec. Will you now admit that the opinion of Justice Forget and the vast majority of Saskatchewan people, that you were taken in on this computer deal? Is that the correct assessment? And will you tell the taxpayers today in Saskatchewan what steps are being taken to recover the \$4 million plus that you blew to Mr. Guy Montpetit?

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, I understand that there's a civil action going on in Montreal, and they may be two or three weeks into that civil action. It's not been concluded. All the evidence and examination hasn't been concluded, Mr. Speaker. I said earlier, I'm quite prepared to accept the outcome of the civil action, and I'll wait for that to happen.

As it relates to the security for the province's investment, Mr. Speaker, right now, right now we have more security sitting in Saskatchewan in terms of hardware, technology, software — and they laugh — and I think somewhere between 25 and 30 very, very highly qualified people working down at GigaText, Mr. Speaker.

And I want you to compare that, Mr. Speaker, to the 8 million equivalent that those guys blew on Nabu, Mr. Speaker. Shipped a cheque, \$8 million, to some Toronto firm, Mr. Speaker, their friends, their friends, 50 per cent partners, some entrepreneurs from Toronto and central Canada, and they blew the whole thing. Do you know what that was worth? When we tried to ... \$9,000, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Anguish:** — You would have thought that an astute business man like yourself could have learned from past mistakes of your government.

Now the issue here is accountability, Mr. Deputy Premier. Now you're well aware that the federal government would not provide funds to the operations of Mr. Guy Montpetit because of his inability to administer and raise funds. They checked out Guy Montpetit.

Now can you tell us, Mr. Deputy Premier, today in this House, who checked out Guy Montpetit from this government before you gave him \$4 million taxpayers' money? Was it Ken Waschuk? Was it Terry Leier? Or was it the Premier himself while he rode around in Montreal in the back of the limousine?

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, there were normal commercial checks done, like Dun & Bradstreet and ...

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order, order. Order.

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — And the member opposite, Mr. Speaker, wanted me to allude to some of the successes in the province, and I want to talk about them for a minute.

While he won't admit it, Mr. Speaker, I doubt that even his seat mates from Prince Albert will admit it, but the Weyerhaeuser deal, Mr. Speaker, is a huge success, a huge success. We're now in an enviable position in Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker, where we have the largest paper plant of its kind in Canada sitting in Prince Albert. In that member's own constituency, Mr. Speaker, we have Hunter's in the RV (recreational vehicle) business, Mr. Speaker. He's asking for the successes ...

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — Mr. Speaker, I would also like to direct a question to the Deputy Premier. I have this morning's report from *The Globe and Mail*, which headlines it as this: "Saskatchewan bought stake in worthless firm, court told."

Mr. Speaker, a couple of other references:

The Saskatchewan government paid \$4-(billion) for a company whose assets were virtually worthless ...

And Guy Montpetit, the president of GigaText Translations Systems (Inc.), pocketed more than \$1.25 million from the sale ...

Pocketed. Mr. Minister, not only did you not check out who you were dealing with and the reliability of it, but also you put on no restrictions as to how the money was going to be used. I ask you, how do you justify such gross negligence on your part and on the part of your officials and the Premier?

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, I'm prepared to rely on the final decision of the courts in the civil action in Montreal. I'm prepared to rely on the final report of the RCMP investigation that's going on right now, Mr. Speaker. I'm quite prepared. I think most fair-minded people are, Mr. Speaker.

They, throughout all of this, Mr. Speaker, have been taking those little snippets out of evidence that serves their own political purpose, Mr. Speaker. But they certainly haven't offered any balanced view in any of this. I'm quite prepared to wait to the conclusion of the civil action; I'm quite prepared to wait until the filing of the RCMP investigation; I'm quite prepared to wait, Mr. Speaker, until the expert analysis of independent experts of the technology.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — I have a new question to the Deputy Premier. Mr. Deputy Premier, Mr. St. Laurent, the auditor appointed by the court, testified that the 1.25 million Mr.

Montpetit pocketed from the sale of the computers to GigaText was used to pay off \$100,000 personal loan and various other purchases, including two luxury boats.

I want to ask you, Mr. Minister, have you taken any actions to freeze these assets, which were purchased by Montpetit, to protect the assets of the people of Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm going to say . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order, order. Now the hon. member has been asked a question. I think we should give him the opportunity to answer without steady interruptions, and we'll give him that opportunity now.

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm going to say one more time, fair market value is determined, Mr. Speaker, by what they can be sold for in the market-place. GigaText . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Order, order. Order, order. Hon. members will have their opportunity to ask questions, and we allow the hon. member to answer, and let's do so now.

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — GigaText Translation Systems, Mr. Speaker, paid \$152,000 ballpark for their computers. That compares, Mr. Speaker, to Bell-Northern Research of \$204,000; National Research Council at \$199,000, Mr. Speaker; Defence Research Establishment at \$234,000, Mr. Speaker; Simon Fraser University at \$148,000, Mr. Speaker; the National Research Council at \$142,000.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that we got value for the dollar when GigaText bought the computers. If it is assumed, Mr. Speaker, that Bell Northern Research and the National Research Council and all of these others got a bang for their buck, I don't know why it shouldn't follow that GigaText got a bang for their buck buying in about the same ballpark, Mr. Speaker. And I don't know why it is that members opposite . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order, order.

**Mr. Koskie:** — I have a new question to the Deputy Premier. Mr. Deputy Premier, you're aware that a Japanese business man has also launched a civil action against Mr. Montpetit, and that is in progress at the present time . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's right.

And you realize the allegations that he has indicated in his lawsuit include how the money is spent by Mr. Montpetit. The money was used to purchase a \$2.9 million Cessna jet, the same one rented to GigaText, \$1.5 million for a mansion, and \$1 million to pay off a personal loan. These are the allegations and these are the facts from the auditors. And I'll tell you, the people of Saskatchewan are going to believe a court-appointed auditor over your statements; I'll tell you that.

But what I want to ask you: when did you first become aware of the civil action commenced by the Japanese

business man, and why did you not in fact seek to join in, in order to protect the assets of the Saskatchewan people?

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm not exactly sure of the date that we first became aware of the civil action in Quebec, but the moment that we became aware we moved to get control of the company . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — And left him with signing authority for five months.

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — And he says, leave him with signing authority for five months. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, it was a private company, 75 per cent owned by Norlus. Would he suggest, Mr. Speaker, because we own 18 per cent of Ipsco that we should go out and say to Roger Phillips, we're signing your cheques from now on? I mean, you're nuts. You're absolutely nuts, and you don't understand how it works, Mr. Speaker.

The fact of the matter is, we moved the moment that there was anything seemed untoward, Mr. Speaker, because of the civil action in Montreal. We moved through SEDCO to get control of the company. We now control the company 100 per cent. And, Mr. Speaker, I've said — if I've said it once, I've said it a thousand times — that fair and reasonable people, Mr. Speaker, would be quite anxious to see justice done. Justice done is done through the police investigation, through the final decision of the court, Mr. Speaker; not pulling out snippets to satisfy your own little selfish political purposes, Mr. Speaker, but justice is done when all of the facts are known and a decision taken based on all of the facts, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — A new question to the Deputy Premier. Mr. Deputy Premier, you became aware shortly after you entered into this deal. I want to ask you: did you in fact seek independent legal counsel to advise you what steps could be taken in order to secure the assets and protect the people of Saskatchewan, the taxpayers?

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — We had legal counsel throughout, Mr. Speaker. We moved to protect the assets of the company from the very first moment, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Legal Counsel re GigaText Court Proceedings

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the Deputy Premier in connection with this GigaText. I hadn't intended to ask questions, but I must.

Is it the Deputy Premier's information to the House that the legal counsel that he and the government have engaged have instructed them or advised the government that notwithstanding the fact that Mr. Tsuru has sued to protect his assets, notwithstanding the fact that there is an RCMP investigation involving this entire matter, is the Deputy Premier advising the House that his counsel is

telling the government that we should not similarly move by way of legal lawsuit now to protect the interests of the taxpayers' of Saskatchewan in the face of all of this evidence?

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

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Order, order, order.

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order, order. Order. I do believe we should give him the opportunity to answer the question. I think it's only courteous. I don't like to be on my feet interrupting constantly. Let's allow the hon. member to answer the question.

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, we have here in Regina a company called GigaText. We have all of the assets of GigaText here in Regina. We have a technology, Mr. Speaker, that we believe will work. We have gained 100 per cent control of that company, Mr. Speaker, 100 per cent control of that company, and, Mr. Speaker, we have had legal counsel throughout. We have 100 per cent control of the company, Mr. Speaker. We believe that the \$4 million investment is protected to the extent that it can be protected, whether or not there's any joining of the civil action in Quebec, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Fertilizer Plant at Belle Plaine**

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the Deputy Premier. I'll leave for the moment GigaText and his, what I can only describe as, complete non-answer. When the world is suing, apparently, Mr. Montpetit — not the world, but certainly Mr. Tsuru to protect his interests — and the Deputy Premier refuses to answer — we'll come back to that another day.

But my question, the new question to the Deputy Premier, the Monty Hall of the Saskatchewan government, is in connection with Cargill. In light of the fact that the GigaText deal was concocted in secrecy and remains largely secret by your government's failure to answer, in view of the fact that the Cargill deal is also concocted in secrecy — and I might add in a great deal of confusion — will the Deputy Premier undertake today, on behalf of the government, to today table all of the documents that the government has in connection with the Cargill proposal at Belle Plaine: evaluations, technical assessments, environmental concerns, to table those today in order to guarantee to the House and the people of the province of Saskatchewan that you haven't got us into another GigaText-type scandal with this deal.

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, we put together what we believe to be a very good deal with Weyerhaeuser. And when that deal was completed, Mr. Speaker, when that deal was completed, and at the appropriate time, we tabled all relative documents. And it was a pile — I remember it sitting on the table here, Mr. Speaker — it was a pile that high. I don't think they even

cracked the book on it, Mr. Speaker. I don't think they even cracked it open.

Now as it relates to the Cargill deal, Mr. Speaker, or more specifically the Saferco deal, we'll be quite prepared to table that deal, Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time.

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

#### **Suggestion for Meeting with Various Mayors**

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the Deputy Premier. I must warn the Deputy Premier that we will be pursuing this issue of tabling the documents in advance, not after when it's too late and the RCMP investigations are around, as is the case in GigaText, and you're still refusing the documents.

I want to ask you a new question. The Cargill deal obviously has a lot of confusion surrounding it in the light of the two different stories that the government is advocating with respect to the financial principals on this transaction. We know one thing for sure. We know that rural Saskatchewan, and in particular five community mayors in rural Saskatchewan, are greatly upset about what has transpired.

I want to ask the Deputy Premier whether he will undertake, on behalf of the Premier, today, in the light of the new information that came to light yesterday, will he undertake to arrange with the Premier a meeting with the mayors of the five communities involved — Rosetown, Melfort, Tisdale, Melville, and Yorkton — to arrange a meeting with those five mayors and the R.M.s, if necessary, as soon as possible, to explain to them why it is that this government, the Deputy Premier and the Premier — I stress the Premier — to explain to them why this government has seen fit to advance an exposure of \$290 million to Cargill and has left those communities and their small businesses high and dry?

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — Mr. Speaker, I've already met with all but two of the mayors that the member is talking about, and I've explained to them the reason for the support of the Saferco project over the . . . what has become known as the Energy '88 project, Mr. Speaker.

It seems a little bit strange to me, Mr. Speaker, that you can take seriously the proposal that is proposing three 400-tonne-a-day fertilizer plants, Mr. Speaker, and promise them, by the Leader of the Opposition's admission, to five communities. I think, in fact, that they're offered to more than five communities, Mr. Speaker, but he's offering . . . he says, he says they are offering them to five communities, and there's only three plants. I don't know how they can do that, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Romanow:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the Deputy Premier. He asks, how in the world can that happen?

The Deputy Premier knows full well that in phase two the

plant was to be in the Melfort-Tisdale area, and both communities would benefit. And in phase three, the plant would be in the Melville-Yorkton area, and both communities would benefit. That's why you've got five mayors wanting to see you, and that's why I want you to give a commitment to this House that the Premier will meet with them.

But my question to you is this, Mr. Deputy Premier. I want you to confirm to the Legislative Assembly today that the decision taken by your government with respect to Cargill and the \$290 million for this wealthiest corporation was a cabinet decision made by all the cabinet. I want you to confirm that — not just you as the Monty Hall of the government.

And secondly, if you confirm it, I want you to explain what reasons you gave that convinced your colleagues, the member from Rosetown-Elrose, the member from Biggar, the member from Melville, the member from Yorkton, the member from Kelsey-Tisdale, and the member from Melfort, what it is that convinced all of your back-benchers who are so silent on this issue for rural development, what arguments did you give them to remain quiet when the money went to Cargill?

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

**Hon. Mr. Berntson:** — One of the reasons, Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons that the Saferco plant and the Saferco technology had a great deal of appeal, Mr. Speaker, and one of the reasons that the Belle Plaine site had a great deal of appeal, Mr. Speaker, is because at the Belle Plaine site there's virtually zero infrastructure costs. The pipelines are there, their railroads are there, No. 1 Highway is there, major electrical transmission lines are there, and so there's virtually zero additional infrastructure costs, Mr. Speaker.

What motivated us in this project right from square one was to find the cheapest possible fertilizer for the farmers of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, for the farmers of Saskatchewan. Now it's estimated by the people who have done the analysis — and these are experts in their field, Mr. Speaker — that this particular plant, in this scale and with the particular technology that they're using, that they can, Mr. Speaker, produce fertilizer, nitrogen urea, for 35 to \$40 a tonne less, Mr. Speaker, than the plant that would be proposed for the Rosetown area. I think that is not insignificant savings to the farmers of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

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

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order, order. I believe question period's over. Order, please. Order.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### Bill No. 53 — An Act to amend The Public Libraries Act, 1984

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Public Libraries Act, 1984.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second

time at the next sitting.

### Bill No. 54 — An Act respecting Emergencies

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill respecting Emergencies.

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

### Bill No. 55 — An Act to establish the Agriculture Development Fund

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to establish the Agriculture Development Fund.

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

### Bill No. 56 — An Act to amend The Human Resources, Labour and Employment Act

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Human Resources, Labour and Employment Act.

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

### Bill No. 57 — An Act to amend The Wascana Centre Act

**Hon. Mr. Maxwell:** — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Wascana Centre Act.

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

### Bill No. 58 — An Act to amend The Wakamow Valley Authority Act

**Hon. Mr. Maxwell:** — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Wakamow Valley Authority Act.

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

### Bill No. 59 — An Act to amend The Meewasin Valley Authority Act

**Hon. Mr. Maxwell:** — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Meewasin Valley Authority Act.

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

## MOTIONS

### Referral of Bills to Standing Committee on Non-controversial Bills

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, prior to orders of the day I would like to move, seconded by the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden:

That the order for second reading of Bill No. 43, An Act to amend The Highway Traffic Act, be

discharged, and the said Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Non-controversial Bills.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to move, seconded by the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden:

That the order for second reading of Bill No. 44, An Act to amend The Liquor Board Superannuation Act, be discharged, and the said Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Non-controversial Bills.

Motion agreed to.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

#### SECOND READINGS

##### Bill No. 34 — An Act to amend The Parks Act

**Hon. Mr. Maxwell:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased today to move second reading of An Act to amend The Parks Act. The primary purpose of this Bill is to incorporate a number of housekeeping changes into The Parks Act. Mr. Speaker, The Parks Act was introduced in 1986 and has subsequently won widespread recognition throughout Canada for its protection of parklands.

The Act provides comprehensive authority for the management of parkland in Saskatchewan. The proposed amendments to this Act will build on that legislative base by correcting some of the provisions in the original legislation, enhancing our management capability, and providing proper authority and due process for dealing with infractions.

I now move second reading of The Parks Amendment Act, 1989.

**Mr. Thompson:** — We have a number of concerns, Mr. Speaker, regarding this Bill, so what I would like to do at this time is beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

(1445)

## COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

### Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Education Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 5

#### Item 1 (continued)

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. Mr. Minister, this afternoon I want to pursue some questions on your government's actions recently on deaf education in Saskatchewan.

And in particular, Mr. Minister, I want you to relay to the House the process that was undertaken by your department in terms of these two reports. One's called the

*Report of the Task Force on the Education of the Deaf*, and another report, Mr. Minister, is the equity report, or the equality report submitted to your department on behalf of Mr. Lockert and Mrs. Trofimenkoff.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, both reports have been widely distributed. And by way of background, when I established the task force relative to deaf education, the first point I would like to make and make very clearly is, why did we establish this task force?

The reason was to see if we couldn't do even better, relative to educating deaf children. It wasn't to go backwards. It wasn't with a view to closing down anything particularly. It was with the view to, can we do better? That's the first and primary point I would like to make.

Now when the report came in — both reports, if you so wish — it became immediately apparent that the recommendations in the task force report did not enjoy a total consensus. That became apparent very quickly.

It also became apparent very quickly that there was a great polarization around one or two or three of the recommendations, particularly the one relative to the closure of the R.J.D. Williams School. There were strongly held views by a number of individuals, a number of groups — strongly held views around that one — one view being it should not be closed, the other view being that we ought to pursue mainstreaming in an even much more aggressive nature.

Despite everyone's, I think, best efforts, the polarization led to a highly charged, emotional environment as well, and that's always unfortunate. And so that was the . . . that's the scenario, I guess, that surrounded the report and its recommendations, particularly around the two or three.

Now I'd like to also, at this time, paint the average person's view on this question, who may not have deaf children to educate, may not have been part of either a school for the deaf situation or a mainstream deaf education situation. But certainly the average public sitting at home today or reading the newspaper reports on this, or television reports over the last two or three months, when they hear that a task force report comes out and makes a recommendation to close the school for the deaf, the average person sitting at home, if you like, not close to the situation in any way, shape, or form, would have to wonder about the validity of that kind of recommendation.

I mean the average person sitting at home thinking what would . . . how would one come to the conclusion that you should perhaps close a school for the deaf down, because inherently and instinctively to the average person it doesn't seem to make sense. The average person would say, well, you know, we have deaf children; we ought to have that kind of facility. I mean, that would be the instinctive kind of reaction.

Certainly from a politician's standpoint, one doesn't like to be seen to be going against the grain of what many in the public would see as common sense. I mean, that's a

given. I mean, no politician ever likes to be in that situation.

But of course public perception isn't always the reality. The public probably don't fully understand that over the last 10 or 20 years parents with deaf children have been voting with their feet, if you like, to the point today in this province we have three out of four hearing impaired children enrolled in our public school, or the mainstream system, and about one-quarter continued to be institutionalized at R.J.D. Williams.

The average public doesn't understand, quite frankly, that over the last decade or more an enrolment at the school for the deaf has gone from 200 down to something in the range of 60. The average person out there doesn't understand that the rubella epidemic and what that left in terms of hearing impaired children, that those numbers have largely moved through the system.

What they see is a recommendation in the newspaper to close down a report and that it's a contentious recommendation. So certainly the public — and I would probably have been one of them were I not in this job — would have to wonder about that recommendation. But of course those are the additional facts.

It's a highly emotional issue; it's highly charged. And where I'm coming from is that there's a . . . of the 16 or 17 or 18 or 19 recommendations that are in that report, I think all but two or three are very good recommendations. They are recommendations that I believe we will want to move forward on.

I think we've made some substantive headway, and I must say some of our officials have made some substantive headway on bringing these highly polarized groups to the table in terms of drawing together an advisory group to move the agenda forward. So that's where we are at this point, for the most part, Mr. Chairman.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, I want to relay to you a concern that I have in terms of the process that occurred after the two reports were submitted to your office. I believe they were submitted on March 6, 1989.

My concern, Mr. Minister, is that the *Report of the Task Force on the Education of the Deaf*, which has been become known as the Houghton-Livingston report, contained the names of Mr. Lockert and Mrs. Trofimenkoff. Mr. Minister, there was another report, and it was a report submitted to you by Mr. Lockert and Mrs. Trofimenkoff.

Now when your department or yourself decided to send the task force report out to the various stakeholders in deaf education, you chose only to send one task force report, the report that I will call the Houghton report. You did not choose to send out the Lockert report. And therein began the problems for yourself because many people felt that you were involved in a bit of a cover-up, that you were parading this report, the Houghton report, as a majority report, as a report that enjoyed the consensus of all task force members, when in fact that wasn't the truth.

Now, Mr. Minister, I would like to know why it took yourself two months before you decided to distribute the Lockert report to the various groups that were interested and have a stake in deaf education.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Relative to the reports, the Houghton and the other commentary, what I would say about that is the day that I met with the task force report, all members of the task force, to receive the task force report, the chairman, along with other members being there, went through the recommendations for me.

At the end of that meeting, because a couple of the members of the task force had some differing views on three recommendations, the chairman also went through those. The chairman went through those, pointing out that there was a difference of opinion in three areas, or in three recommendations particularly.

And so on the basis of that meeting, I guess I never, ever considered the additional commentary a minority report or a dissenting report, although it did become characterized in that fashion in the media afterwards. And if that's how it want to be characterized, that's fine by me. I never viewed it as that. I certainly had no difficulty in distributing it widely if that was what people wished.

And in fact, at the meeting when I received the report and the additional commentary on the three recommendations, I asked specifically for those two members, and others, if they had any additional comments to make relative to the commentary that had already been provided by the chairman, and in response to any questions that I might have raised. That was the nature of that . . . of those reports being presented to myself.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, for two months the debate raged on. You had letter after letter after letter from members of the deaf community, from people who were concerned that this report was not being released to the public. And you can shake your head and say that's not true. Well I have copies of those letters, Mr. Minister, and I was called by those people. And I want to know why it took you two months.

Shortly after the report was distributed, you became aware of the fact that Mr. Lockert and Mrs. Trofimenkoff wanted their report to be distributed as well. And I want to know, Mr. Minister, why did you parade this report as enjoying a consensus when obviously it did not, in view of the furore that has taken place over the last several months?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Mr. Chairman, the hon. member suggests that I paraded the task force report as enjoying consensus. That is not true. I said earlier that this whole debate has been an emotional one, one where we've had almost the two solitudes, if you like. I've never tried . . . In fact, I suggested it doesn't enjoy a complete consensus. I openly admitted that.

However, having said all of that, and I say again today that except for about three recommendations, the other 14 recommendations, I think it is, do, I think, enjoy a consensus. And I'm not going to throw out the report and



all the good work that can come out of it on behalf of hearing impaired people and young people in this province just because of some disagreement around a couple or three recommendations. There's no sense stalling the agenda on kindergarten initiatives or on post-secondary initiatives or looking in at new technology because of disagreement.

There's no question it's been a controversial area as to what to proceed. There's no question that the R.J.D. Williams closure has two opposite views. There's no question that there's great debate amongst the educational system relative to the usage of American sign language and signed English. I readily and openly admit that, and I have nothing to hide. It's been an engaging debate. I too had hundreds of letters both pro and con the report. That's what leads me to believe that there's strongly held views by both sides.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, I am not arguing with you over some of the recommendations contained in the report, in that those recommendations do enjoy some consensus. That's not my point at all, Mr. Minister.

And I continue to be appalled at how you try and mislead and misrepresent the comments that are coming from your critic. I continue to be appalled. I would suggest, Mr. Minister, that you listen carefully, listen carefully, because that's one of the roles of a minister of Education, is to listen to people and try and hear what they're trying to say to the Minister of Education.

Mr. Minister, one of the key dissenting views in terms of this Houghton report was the future of the R.J.D. Williams School. And by sending out this Houghton report to everybody, it appeared as though all four members of the committee agree that the R.J.D. Williams School for the Deaf should be closed, when in fact that wasn't the case at all. And in fact, Mr. Minister, that is one of the key points of division in this province is over the future of that school.

(1500)

Now I want to simply ask you again. We're not talking about three little recommendations where there is some disagreement; we're talking about a major recommendation in this report that suggests that the R.J.D. Williams School for the Deaf be closed. We're talking about a report from Mr. Lockert, or the Lockert report, that suggests that the R.J.D. Williams School for the Deaf continue.

Now, Mr. Minister, lots of people realize in this province that your government, while you can spend millions of dollars on the GigaText scandal and you can spend millions of dollars on Cargill grain when they have a \$36 billion a year annual sales — they understand you've got money for that — but you're looking at ways to cut all kinds of social spending in this province. And we see it day in and day out. We see it health; we see it in education; we see it at the universities; we see it everywhere. And people realize what you're looking at is trying to reduce some of your expenditures, Mr. Minister, because of some of the problems you're facing. So people don't quite trust your agenda.

Now had there been an adequate assessment in terms of review of deaf education in this province, that would be important. But in my view, Mr. Minister, there has not been an adequate review of deaf education in this province. And so I'm wondering, Mr. Minister, do you believe that parents in this province should have the option of sending their children to a provincial school for the deaf if they so wish? Do you believe in that sort of option for parents of hearing impaired children?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Mr. Chairman, I believe there has to be an institutional option, and I think that's what the task force report tried to say, that it shouldn't be simply an either/or situation when dealing with the hearing impaired children, that we should provide the full range of choices right from those who might need some special services before they go into school, those in the mainstream or the normal school setting, Mr. Speaker, and as well those who require the additional attention that comes with an institutionalized setting such as R.J.D. Williams.

The question then becomes one of, it should be R.J.D. Williams or should the configuration be "mini R.J.D. Williams" in three or four centres across the province as opposed to just one centre. I think that's the real question, Mr. Chairman.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — So, Mr. Minister, you don't believe that there should be a provincial school. Is that the case?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — What I'm saying is that we may want to have several mini R.J.D. Williams in the schools as opposed to one in one location in the province that's 60 years old and three-quarters empty.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — So, Mr. Minister, I just want you to be clear. Are you saying that you support four or five congregated class-rooms around Saskatchewan, and you don't support a provincial school for the deaf?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — To restate, our view is . . . my view is consistent with the recommendation in the report to having more options. And I think that recommendation has much merit.

I think there is much merit to having perhaps three or four — I don't know what the right number is — mini R.J.D. Williams, if you like, across the province, closer to the parents and closer to the children that are affected. In fact, I could go so far as to say when I was on my northern school tour a couple of weeks ago that was one of the questions I got, was, are we going to have one of these schools — knowing that the task force was recommending that — in La Ronge, for example, as opposed to some of our people having to send their children 5 and 600 miles to Saskatoon.

And I suspect that's exactly the kind of story that the task force report had heard during their hearings and which led to the recommendation. And I think it is one that has considerable merit.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — So, Mr. Minister, do you support congregated class-rooms within schools, larger schools,

that have children that are in mainstream programs, or do you support four separate schools for hearing impaired children in Saskatchewan; schools that would be controlled by the provincial Department of Education or schools that would be controlled by local school board divisions?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Mr. Chairman, I support the range of options being available, as the task force report outlined, being made available to deaf children across the province.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, where in the task force does it say that there would be four schools? I'm not talking about congregated class-rooms, but four schools, like Brevoort Park School, or Walter Murray school, or Sheldon-Williams Collegiate. Where in the task force does it say that?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — As I recall it, and I don't have the report right in front of me, it talked about having an institutional-like setting — and I don't think they used those words, but I will — in three or four centres. I think that three or four centres was mentioned.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Well, Mr. Minister, I'm surprised that you don't have the Houghton report here, because you knew I was going to be speaking with you about that.

Mr. Minister, no place, nowhere in this report do I find the notion that there should be three deaf schools or schools for hearing impaired people in Saskatoon, Regina, La Ronge, or other centres. What I do see in this report is the notion that there be congregated programs in certain centres.

Now I'm just wondering what your position here is, because this is very important. Because there is a debate over congregated class-rooms within schools and the notion of a setting away from schools, but certainly the deaf having their own school. And I want to know, Mr. Minister, what is your position? Do you support congregated class-rooms within a larger school as another option to parents? Or do you support the notion that there should be a school in various centres that would totally cater to the needs of deaf students?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Well I think what you have mentioned are the complete and wide range of options. And as I said earlier, I think those options have merit.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Does one of the options include, Mr. Minister, a provincial school for the deaf?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — No, Mr. Chairman, I have difficulty supporting the notion that we will only have the single R.J.D. Williams (Provincial) School for the Deaf in Saskatoon where we have some of our deaf children and their families five and six and 700 miles away from that institutional setting, when clearly an additional option that's been laid out — although different twists on it, that would provide the institutionalized type of services closer to the children and closer to their families — to me makes sense.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, I said included in the list of

options for parents, not the only option being the provincial school for the deaf, but included, Mr. Minister.

And there are a variety of ways to deliver deaf education in Saskatchewan. There is mainstreaming; there is congregated class-rooms within the regular high school or elementary school, Mr. Minister. There are pre-kindergarten programs for hearing impaired children. There are a variety of options.

And I want to know, Mr. Minister, in terms of parents having access to choices and options, does your vision of deaf education in Saskatchewan include: congregated class-rooms within schools; mainstreaming; and a provincial school for the deaf as an option for parents, depending upon their own wishes for their child?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — I think we're starting to re-cover some ground that we've covered several times already. As it relates to the provincial school, the R.J.D. Williams, I've already said that it exists only in one location. It's 60 years old, it's three-quarters empty, and it's a long ways from a lot of its clients.

I think the option that has much . . . we need an institutionalize option. There are different ways to do that, and having three or four of those kinds of options available in communities closer to the people is the one that seems to make sense to me, and that has much merit.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, can you tell me . . . and I find your answer very surprising because I would presume that the Minister of Education would want a whole host of options available to parents, depending upon the needs of their children, and depending upon the communities from within which they live. Mr. Minister, can you tell me what the status of your forum, or your advisory committee on deaf education is in Saskatchewan?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Relative to the status of the advisory committee on education of the deaf, officials from my department met with representatives of the stakeholder groups on June 5 and developed the membership in so far as the groups that would sit on this committee and the terms of reference for that committee.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, can you tell me what the mandate of this committee is?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — The purpose of the committee is to advise me on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the task force, and other significant issues in deaf education. And I'd like to see the plans developed that would meet the various expectations of parents for their children and will also result in improvements; that is to say, a better educational service for deaf children.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, is the mandate of this committee to implement the Houghton report?

(1515)

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Yes, that's part of it, but not limited to that.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Did he have the mandate to say, we believe that a provincial school for the deaf should continue? And will you act on that recommendation should it come from the committee?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — I think it would be a bit presumptuous of me to speculate on that “what if” scenario.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Just so I’m clear, the mandate of this committee then is to implement the Houghton report which recommends that the provincial school for the deaf no longer continue to exist.

So really, if I’m clear on this, the committee will have no other purpose than to implement the Houghton report and advise the minister on certain issues in regards to deaf education in Saskatchewan; that this committee really won’t have the opportunity to say to the Minister of Education and the Government of Saskatchewan, we believe that that the provincial school for the deaf is an important option for parents and students, and we believe that this option should continue to exist.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Mr. Chairman, the hon. member is, with that last statement, clearly putting words in my mouth. I just finished reading to her explicitly what the mandate was — the report plus other issues that may be of significance to parents and to deaf children.

And I guess I’m intrigued that the hon. member would stick to the view that we should continue with the *status quo* relative to deaf education, that we should continue to have deaf education be the R.J.D. Williams School — 60 years old, three-quarters empty, several hundred miles from many of the parents and of the families of those children that are deaf, when quite frankly, if we retrace history, Mr. Deputy Chairman, it was the NDP government in 1978 that put the legislation in place that clearly said we should not require all deaf children to attend a provincial school.

I mean, it seems to me where they were coming from then was that we should not just institutionalize deaf children, that there were other ways to be more useful to these young people, better ways to educate them — the mainstreaming was the obvious one. And what we find now is three out of four children are in the mainstream situation, and yet this honourable member continues to cling to the old ways. I can’t understand that.

It seems to me that she would embrace a recommendation that says, yes, we need an institutionalized option. We should put it closer to the people and we should have it in more places — decentralized.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Well, Mr. Minister, once again you misrepresented the words that are emanating from my mouth. Mr. Minister, I support the 1978 changes. I think that parents should have the option of having their children, particularly those children with special needs, integrated and involved in community schools if that meets the needs of the children. I support that, Mr. Minister. And what I’m simply trying to do, Mr. Minister, is get you on record as to where you’re coming from.

Now you’ve had this report for two, three . . . three months, I believe. You said that you were going to make some decision on this report some time in May. This is what you were peddling to the public and to the various stakeholders in deaf education. And, Mr. Minister, we don’t yet know what you think about deaf education and the future of deaf education in this province, and so my job is to try and get you on the record as to what you think.

Now I notice you’ve got about 13 officials behind you and several up here in the gallery, and surely, Mr. Minister, they can assist you in helping you develop your thoughts on what you think about deaf education. And I simply want to know, Mr. Minister, in view of the fact that you have struck this task . . . or this forum or advisory committee on deaf education, I just want to know, what is their mandate? Do they implement the Houghton report, which only had two people supporting it, or do they get to implement the Lockert report, which had two people supporting it?

Mr. Minister, you have two different reports on some fundamental issues facing deaf education in Saskatchewan, and I’m trying to get you on record as to what this committee is supposed to do. Do they implement the Lockert report or the Houghton report?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, we’ve gone through the status of those two reports. And I guess where the hon. member and I are going to have to agree to disagree is, I’m saying clearly today there are going to be changes relative to the education of deaf children because I will not cling to the past — I will not.

And as I said at the outset, this is not an easy issue to deal with because the public perception is that you’re somehow callous in your treatment of these special children. And I know that perception can create some difficulty in how one deals with this. That’s a reality I accept; that’s a responsibility I accept. But I do know, I do know that three out of four — the parents, if you look, have voted with their feet — three out of four are putting their children in the regular school system. And I think that’s a tribute to the parents and to the teachers out there. I really believe that.

I will not cling steadfastly to the notion, as you do and as your party does, that we should protect the *status quo* at all cost, that we should not move forward and have this committee look to implementing, it seems to me, the 14 recommendations that everybody agrees on.

There’s not the division that you would suggest, that this report says this and this, and you must take one or the other. You see, that’s the old style of politics. Can’t we go beyond that and try and be useful in this debate. And can’t we say, look, there are 14 good recommendations here that both sides, that everybody agrees to; let’s move forward on them. Let’s move forward and address kindergarten children. Let’s move forward and address the post-secondary. Let’s look at what we can do more in the regular system. Let’s look at what we can do in providing that full range of options, because that’s the other thing that I clearly believe in — we must provide the full range of options. That’s what the reports say. That’s

what we intend to do.

And if you're criticizing me for saying I was going to deliver the goods, if you like, in May and here it is June — whatever the day is — I could go through the schedule of meetings that have been held or attempted to be held. I have three pages of them here. And the reason we're at the point we're at today is because we are making some headway. We have finally got these highly charged, very emotional, polarized groups to come to a meeting to agree to a membership and a terms of reference. I think we are making substantive headway in dealing with a complex and difficult issue, and I applaud them all for that — difficult, complex. You might want to reduce it to a simple duality — either/or, them/us. We've had enough of that. Let's try and be productive and co-operative and work forward on behalf of these children.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, you could have been a lot more productive way back in March. You started this, Mr. Minister, you started this by refusing to release both reports. You started this, Mr. Minister, by parading the Houghton report as enjoying consensus of the committee when it did not, Mr. Minister. You got it going.

Your government has cut programs to special needs people all over this province, Mr. Minister, and the people of this province don't trust you. And they think, Mr. Minister, that you want to close the school for the deaf to save money, Mr. Minister. That's what they believe. They don't think you have any good intentions, Mr. Minister. This isn't about progress in deaf education, Mr. Minister, this is about saving money.

Now I've ask you, Mr. Minister, do you believe the provincial school for the deaf should be an option for parents? Obviously you don't believe it should be, Mr. Minister. Not at all. You think that deaf education should be available in communities, in community schools, and I agree with you. I also believe that deaf education should be available to children residing in the North in places such as La Ronge. I agree with you, Mr. Minister.

What I haven't been able to get out of your mouth is whether or not you think the provincial school for the deaf should continue to exist. We haven't been able to get to that point, but I presume because you have failed to answer the question, that you don't — you don't think it should exist.

And I'm just simply asking you to be honest with the people of Saskatchewan and say, no, I don't believe in the provincial school for the deaf; I don't believe in it; I don't support its continuation — and be done with it.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Mr. Chairman, the hon. member has allowed partisan politics to override everything that I've come to know on this issue. And I can state categorically and unequivocally — and in fact I checked with my officials to see if I was wrong — I can absolutely, categorically, and unequivocally except for, I think, a media person, say in all the meetings I was in relative to deaf education and to the task forces report and/or the minority report, the dissenting report, or the commentary, whatever label we want to put on it, not one person ever suggested that any of this was being put forward to save

money, not one person except you, who, I think, is trying to be mischievous on this issue. Not one person!

In fact, my commentary has been, it seems to me any time you commission a report to do better for those people, I have yet to receive a report that didn't cost money. And so I was quite prepared to expend dollars on these initiatives, just like we were on the northern education task force report.

You are the only one in this political Chamber that has ever raised that issue, and it's been a highly charged one. You are the only one. And I'll tell you what — you and I are going to have to agree to disagree on what we think of a 60-year-old building that's three-quarters empty that's a long ways from most of its clients. And I don't know if I can put it any simpler than that.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — As my colleague says, it sounds like most of the buildings that your government's renting from your friends, Mr. Minister. We know that there's empty space all over Saskatchewan in government buildings because your government has chosen to move government offices over to the private enterprise friends of yours so they can get lots of money, Mr. Minister. We know how much money you're wasting.

Now, Mr. Minister, I want to talk about the Livingston report. I'm wondering if you have it with you today.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Mr. Chairman, yes, we have it here with the officials.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, the other night I asked you for a copy of it. I'm wondering if it's available to your critic.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — No, it's not, Mr. Chairman. And the reasons are — and this issue came up the other night; I undertook to examine the whole question of releasing it. My understanding on the history of that report is that it was never a public document, if you like. It was an internal document, and that's the status of it today.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, can you tell me what's contained in that report in terms of the recommendations? I mean, this is a report that was done by your department in 1985. Mr. Houghton in his report talks about some of the studies that have been conducted by Saskatchewan Education. In fact, to quote to Mr. Houghton, it says:

Saskatchewan Education has continued to study evolving education practices as they affect deaf students.

It lists a number of studies, and it includes the study done by Mr. Livingston called, "Educational Services to Children with Hearing Impairment." As a result of you not being prepared to deliver that report to me, Mr. Minister, can you tell me what's contained within that report in terms of recommendations?

(1530)

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — We can rehash the environment,

if you like, in 1984-85, some work that was done five years ago. The reality is, in 1989, now nearly a half a decade later, as it relates to the R.J.D. Williams school, enrolment has dropped another 30 or 40 per cent; the situation continues to change and over those five years has changed dramatically.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Well, Mr. Minister, I do have a copy of the Livingston report, so I'm going to read into the record some of the recommendations coming out of your own Department of Education some four years ago, Mr. Minister. And what this report is talking about is the implications to the R.J.D. Williams school.

And a number of recommendations . . . in fact it's called "The Design has Five Components to Reshaping the Role of the R.J.D. Williams (Provincial) School for the Deaf." And I just want to briefly run through some of these components.

It talks about a comprehensive educational centre, a pre-school, Mr. Minister. It talks about an elementary school for elementary-age deaf children. It talks about services available to:

Children with social, emotional or family problems that impair their educational opportunity in a local program may be most appropriately placed in a residential school.

It talks about:

Multi-handicapped children require an instructional strategy characteristically different from the program for other deaf students.

It talks about a secondary program.

The provincial school is the only real alternative to a comprehensive, sequential secondary education opportunity.

The provincial school can provide a cost-effective approach to the ever-increasing complex and costly aspects of a wide range academic and vocational preparation program uniquely designed for secondary deaf pupils.

Local boards should be strongly discouraged from initiating a secondary program unless there is clear evidence that all components of a quality program can be provided and maintained.

An example, all subjects at a variety of levels, a good variety of vocational training pursuits, with a full range of support staff trained to serve the deaf.

It talks about child/study assessment services, Mr. Minister. It talks about a learning resource centre, and it says, and I quote:

The provincial school should be expected to serve a leadership role to benefit all programs throughout the Province. Such activities (Mr. Minister) should include:

— curriculum development; design and testing of instructional methods and materials; promoting new instructional concepts; design and develop new career education programs; test (and repair) equipment for instruction; conduct on/off campus inservice education programs for teachers and paraprofessionals; design and develop parent educational programs; maintain a comprehensive library of books, materials and research on the education of the deaf; co-ordinate research efforts province-wide in cooperation with universities; design and develop program evaluation techniques.

Which is very important, Mr. Minister. We haven't really developed and designed how we're going to evaluate programs.

And then it goes on:

A demonstration school. The provincial school serve as a practicum centre for the preparation of teachers, psychologists, audiologists, speech therapists, teacher aides, residence counsellors, social workers and others. The practicum experience must be in planned cooperation with university programs.

And then the final recommendation is:

Community continuing education centre. The provincial school should be staffed with personnel who can initiate, plan and marshal community resources to serve the educational needs of the post-secondary deaf population.

This would include adult education classes, community college and technical institute programs.

The facilities of the residential school could be used by the adult deaf to provide programs not otherwise available.

Now, Mr. Minister, I ask you: what has changed in your department in four years?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, what has changed is, number one, that through the last half decade we've seen a 50 per cent decrease in the enrolment at the provincial school. History speaks for itself. I would suggest the report, I guess, hearing what you've read of it — which is more than I've read, quite frankly — is that history has shown that observation to be clearly in error. We've had a 50 per cent reduction.

So if the test of time is the truest one, then history bears out that the provincial school, as an option, has been seen by more and more parents as less and less of a desirable option — not that there isn't a needed option there in terms of an institution. And history, I think, bears out that observation.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Well here is a Minister of Education that is charting the future course in our province for deaf education and you haven't even read your own reports?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Well the reason (a) is that I wasn't around when that report was delivered, and (b) my understanding it was never viewed as a departmental document. It did not, if you like, go up the ladder.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — I'm not quite sure what that means, Mr. Minister. It was a report conducted and done by your Department of Education. You weren't the minister then, but surely, Mr. Minister, as a person who is involved in the future of deaf education in our province, my assumption would be, Mr. Minister, that you would have taken the opportunity to read some of the reports that are referred to in the Houghton report. And I ask you: as the chief educator in our province, why didn't you take that opportunity?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Because it was not accepted as a good report in every which dimension, I guess, so I could say, number one. And number two, it's a little difficult for me to be much more specific than that because I wasn't around then.

But my understanding is, it was not accepted; it was done by an official as part of a task, but that the report was not accepted and did not become an official departmental document, did not become an official ministerial document, did not become a document for the public domain.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, why wasn't it acceptable? I'd like you to articulate the reasons why you found this study unacceptable.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — I didn't find it unacceptable. It was found unacceptable by management in the department.

And I think in hindsight, if we look at the observations of time, look at what's happened through time, the enrolment continued to drop at the provincial school by 50 per cent. Is that not a significant point relative to this issue in the hon. member's mind?

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, if you had taken the opportunity to read the report, you would realize that the vision contained in this report went beyond the school for the deaf simply being a K to 12 program. They were looking at having a pre-school program, Mr. Minister. They were looking at having a learning resource centre, Mr. Minister. They were looking at having a demonstration school, Mr. Minister. They were looking at having a community continuing education centre, which is still a serious problem for the adult deaf.

Now, Mr. Minister, I'd like to know: what happened? Who made the decision that this wasn't an appropriate report? You've had so many officials going through the revolving door in your department, I'm wondering if you even know who made the decision, Mr. Minister.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Why is the member on his feet?

**Mr. Petersen:** — Mr. Chairman, I seek leave to introduce some guests.

Leave granted.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Petersen:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to introduce to you, and through you, a group of students from Foam Lake Elementary School, seated in the Speaker's gallery; their teachers, Jim Hack, and Ruth Nichol; and their bus driver, Chris Norman.

I'll be meeting with them, I believe, at 4:30 for pictures and drinks on the front lawn, and perhaps we'll have a chance to discuss the proceedings of the day. I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming these people here today.

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

## COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

### Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Education Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 5

#### Item 1 (continued)

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Mr. Chairman, I can only, given that I was not in the ministry at the time, I can only advise the hon. member that the management in the department did not accept the report.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Which management, Mr. Minister? You've got several officials here; I think there are 13 on that side and several up here. Which management? Who was it? Who didn't accept it? Was it the deputy minister? Was it the assistant deputy minister? Was it one of your aides? Or who was this person?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — The employees' supervisor raised concerns relative to the report. I'm advised it was, as a result, not adopted as a department policy paper, a position paper. I guess I probably should elaborate though as I understand it. That doesn't mean to say that there wasn't lots of good material in the report, but obviously there was some substantive concerns, and as a result it was not adopted.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, do you think that there's a need to have a centre, a community centre, for . . . a community continuing education centre for the adult deaf? As you know, many adult deaf are unemployed and having a great deal of trouble receiving training. Do you think that this might be a useful concept, Mr. Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — That's a suggestion that may well have some merit, and I suspect that the advisory committee may well want to examine that one.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, do you think it might be useful to have a practicum centre for people who are involved in deaf education, people such as psychologists, audiologists, teachers, speech therapists, teacher aides, counsellors, social workers and others? Would that be a useful program idea or concept to endorse?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Are you going to go through a

number of these?

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, this is not *Reach for the Top*, where we both ask questions. I ask the questions; you answer them. So I'd like you to answer the question.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — I forget what your question was, but I assume that the hon. member is going to reiterate . . . I presume, it would appear that the hon. member is going to go through, point by point, all of the things that she earlier read into the record. It intrigues me, quite frankly, as to the sincerity of the hon. member in this whole process, when if you recall the line of questioning, Mr. Chairman . . .

**The Deputy Chairman:** — Order, order. Could we just allow the minister to continue to speak. I believe the minister and others have allowed the member from Saskatoon Nutana to give her questions. I'd just like to ask you to allow the minister to respond to the question.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Mr. Chairman, what I find intriguing is when the hon. member started off this line of questioning, she asked me if I had the Livingston report, as it's known. Then she asked me if she could have a copy, to which I gave the response, no. And then she stood up and said, well I have a copy. Now does that smack of some ulterior motive and some other agenda, or is that really a sincere effort to deal with the question, or are we just playing silly politics, Mr. Chairman?

If there are several recommendations from wherever, relative to educating deaf children, that could be better, relative to educating deaf children, and meeting the needs and desires and wants of those children and their parents, I'm sure that this committee will look at all legitimate options, Mr. Chairman.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Well, Mr. Minister, the only silliness that I've seen today is me asking you a question and you standing up, saying you didn't hear the questions, then starting to answer the question.

Now, Mr. Minister, I have another question for you. Mr. Minister, do you think that it might be useful to have a learning resource centre that would serve the purpose of providing a leadership role in the area of curriculum development for students who have hearing impairments; that this learning resource centre could design and test some instructional methods; that it can promote new instructional concepts; design and develop career education programs; test equipment; conduct an on-campus, in-service education program for teachers, and a whole host of other things? Do you think that that might be an important concept, Mr. Minister?

(1545)

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — My answer would be same as before, Mr. Chairman.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, I think that these are important concepts, and I think that Mr. Livingston in the report has raised some very, very critical questions and issues for you as the Minister of Education to be thinking about.

I think that there is a need, Mr. Minister, for a community continuing education centre. I think that there is a need for a demonstration school, because right now if you are interested in doing your practicum, there is no centre in Saskatchewan that would allow you to get some of the very fine training that could be available in this province.

I think it's important to have a learning resource centre where we could have curriculum development done, where we could design and promote new instructional methods, Mr. Minister. I think it's important that these things be looked at. And so I find it odd that you would dismiss this report without ever having read it, and rely solely on someone, who we don't quite know who it is, that dismissed this report.

So, Mr. Minister, I'll leave it at that in terms of deaf education. I want to go on to another area. I have one more question in terms of deaf education, which I forgot.

**An Hon. Member:** — Listen carefully.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — And listen carefully. Good point.

Mr. Minister, I want to know what's happening . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Make some notes.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Yes, if you wanted to get out your pencil and write down the question, it might be useful.

Mr. Minister, I want to know what's happening in terms of funding for hearing-impaired students that are in mainstream programs, because as I understand it, there are lots and lots of young people in Saskatchewan who are in mainstream programs and they get very few dollars from the provincial Department of Education, and the local school boards have to come up with 9, 10, 11, \$12,000 to educate those students in their local communities. And this has placed a real burden on local schools, Mr. Minister.

I'm wondering if you can advise me on what you're going to do to ensure that there is equality of funding for those children who wish to be educated in their home locale in order that they can have access to a fine quality education.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Mr. Chairman, I think that perhaps is one of the best questions the Education critic has put forward all day. And the reason I say that, the reason I say that — the reason I say that, Mr. Chairman — is that when I met with many of the parents, I particularly recall two events, one being a meeting I had with the Alexander Graham Bell Society — I think 20 or 25 parents there. I heard some very compelling and sincere stories in terms of their desires and wishes for the students. And their big thing of course was just give us some additional resources to help our children to some greater degree. And I had two rallies out here in front of the legislature: one against the Houghton report; one very much for the recommendations, and urging us to move forward with that agenda.

And the key here is if parents, over this last decade and

more, have voted with their feet, and in those instances where it made sense having those children in the regular school system, the question is a legitimate one: are you going to do something more, as the task force report suggests.

And so I'm happy, Mr. Chairman, to announce again today that we have acted on one of the recommendations of the task force in this last provincial budget to help those school divisions that educate deaf children. We have increased funding to these school divisions by 35 per cent. Through the enhancement fund, the profoundly deaf children will see the per capita grant go from \$9,000, Mr. Chairman, to \$12,000. Mr. Chairman, I would call that concrete action on a significant recommendation.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Well, Mr. Minister, I raised the problems with the enhancement fund yesterday, and part of the problem is, Mr. Minister, that if you have several students that require high-cost funding, you have to spend the money before you can apply for the money, and there's no guarantees by your department that you're actually going to receive the money if you're the local school division.

So I would encourage you, Mr. Minister, to do a bit better than that. Every high-cost student who is hearing impaired, Mr. Minister, shouldn't have their school board placed in the position where there's no guarantees that they're going to recover the real costs of providing that student education on the part of the Department of Education.

And I'm wondering, Mr. Minister, can you give parents and school trustees any guarantees that high-cost students who have hearing impairments that cost the local school division \$20,000 a year will be recovered by those local school divisions?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — We talked yesterday in committee, Mr. Chairman, about the hon. member's views about the administrative handling of the funds. I talked as well yesterday about that's been . . . albeit that these are new funds, the enhancement fund is a new fund. And she would make the argument that that's not a traditional way of doing it because it's a new fund, but it is traditional in terms of how we've handled special education funds.

I guess what I would just say is if there are some individual cases that she is aware of that she would like to bring to my attention to see what I can do, or my officials can do with school boards, if we have some particular hardships, I'm prepared always to examine those. Obviously I can't give any guarantees.

And I know that this enhancement fund is not the be-all and the end-all either. I'm happy that we've been able to have an enhancement fund. But I would just restate what I said yesterday. If I stand back and look at the entire area of special education, I think it's one that society, of which government is very much a part of, we can do even much more in the next 10 years compared to what we've done in the last 10 years. And it requires some understanding and even some education of society as a whole, a better understanding of the issue.

And I know I'll be held accountable for this statement, but I make it anyway because I feel that strongly about this area. That albeit we are expending significant dollars in this area, and this year I've been able to find some additional new dollars, I would as well say that there is much more that can be done here. It's my view, and I don't pretend to bring the professional, technocratic view — we have officials that help us do that — but my view is that there is even some of the new technology that I think has greater applicability than we've even seen to date.

And I think maybe to do some of these things requires tremendous resources, both human and otherwise, and it may well be that we're going to, down the road, try to put together some plan perhaps to get major, major funding into this area — and I'm talking 20 and 30 millions of dollars, Mr. Chairman. I don't have that number based on any report or any study or anything else. It's just my gut feeling as a politician as I go around the province, see what some school boards have done, see what has been done . . . and the institutionalized settings which I've had a chance to look at, as well, albeit in some limited fashion.

But I do believe it's an area that we can even do more on and more in. And you may even hear more on this over the next 6 or 8 or 10 months as we complete some projects that my Legislative Secretary has been involved in, in terms of looking at some new technology, to talking to some professionals in the area. It's one I'm excited about. And I guess if I have a regret here in this budget, my only regret is that I wish I could do more, Mr. Chairman.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Well, wishing and hoping to do more isn't helping lots of people out there who aren't having access to an education that they desire as a result of your government's underfunding, Mr. Minister.

But I will move off the subject, Mr. Minister, and on to another one. And I want to talk about AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) education in Saskatchewan.

As you're probably aware, Mr. Minister, there was a study that was recently released by Queen's University at Kingston, called *Canada Youth and AIDS Study, the Saskatchewan Report* and what this study showed us, Mr. Minister, is that grade 11 students in our province are below the national average when it comes to AIDS awareness. It shows us, Mr. Minister, that students in our province receive far less instruction in school than the national average, but are more sexually active than the national average when it comes to students who are in grade 11.

Mr. Minister, I am wondering what your government's going to do about this very serious problem where we have students who are active sexually but don't have the information that would indeed prevent them from acquiring a virus such as AIDS.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Why is the member on his feet?

**Mr. Kowalsky:** — I would ask leave, Mr. Chairman, to introduce some guests.



Leave granted.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Kowalsky:** — Mr. Chairman, members of the legislature, it's a pleasure for me to introduce in the Speaker's gallery a group of nine students who are here from Prince Albert. They are enrolled in a program sponsored through the Canadian Jobs Strategy program and through the Prince Albert Friendship Centre.

The program that they are taking is a hospitality training program through Lokken Associates, training consultants. And with them are the instructors, Rick Lokken, George Joyce, and Harlen Miller.

We welcome you to Regina and certainly welcome you to the Assembly here. I hope that you have a pleasant visit and that you have a safe journey home, and I ask the members to welcome them with me.

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

## COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

### Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Education Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 5

#### Item 1 (continued)

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — The study and the findings in the study that you refer to are of concern to us and to our province, as they are to other provinces. The survey was done . . . The study the findings were based on was done before some of the initiatives had been put in place. But having said all of that, I certainly wouldn't want to try and suggest that the issue is still not before us, because it is in a very real way. All a study today might do is just move the numbers a little bit.

So the question then becomes one of what are we doing about it. We have to date developed and piloted an AIDS curricula for grades 7, 8, and 9. It was introduced this past fall. It is not mandatory that school boards use this. I think it's fair to say that it's strongly recommended.

(1600)

I could additionally say that if we look at our entire government strategy relative to AIDS, it has been health-driven because of the life and death nature of this virus and the associated complex with it. And so we really have had health as the lead. We identified early on that one of the ways in dealing with this as a government was the educational component, and I have just described to you what we have done to date on that. Additionally you should know that we will be piloting the grade 10 component this next year on AIDS.

And the final comment that I would make, and one that I have made consistently, is because when you get to dealing in matters such as AIDS, yes, it's a life and death issue, but obviously it starts to get very close if not indeed right into speaking to people's values and moral and

religious views. The very strong piece of advice I consistently give, as Minister of Education, and I would state again today, is how very important it is to involve parents in initiatives like this. I can't state that too strongly.

I have to say, as Minister of Education, when I get calls around this whole question of sex education or AIDS education, when parents phone me, as Minister of Education — and rightfully so, they think, well you're the Minister, you're the top guy, you should deal with this. In most of those instances where we have distraught parents, for whatever reasons, I find that it's been where there's perhaps been some defensiveness on the case of the local board and the trustees; there's maybe been not the full explanations or the appropriate, if you like, in-service with the parents in dealing with those issues. And I wouldn't want to suggest that this is the general case — these are those exceptional incidences.

I can't say strongly enough how important it is to involve the parents. And obviously the parents are represented by the trustees; but as well, if trustees were here, I would say that I feel very important for them to as well make sure they have mechanisms to engage and have their parents have as full understanding as possible in areas like this.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Minister, first of all I want to say I concur with you that this is a sensitive area when it comes to parents and parents' involvement. But I also think that the study confirms what a lot of people have known for a long time, and that is that young people in our province are sexually active, and in fact young people in our province in grade 11 are more sexually active than the national level. And what this study also confirms, that young people in our province are receiving less instruction in our schools than the national average.

And, Mr. Minister, I know that this is a sensitive issue. I know that you were quite prepared to send a letter out to parents over core curriculum, which is also a sensitive issue. And it seems to me, as the leader in education in our province, that you might take the bull by the horn and provide some leadership and send a letter to parents advising them of this study, advising them that we have a serious problem in our province and that we really have to come to grips with this problem as a province, as parents and trustees and as educators, and as the Minister of Education and as the public.

Because if we don't come to grips, Mr. Minister, and if you don't provide some leadership, it's quite obvious to me that young people will continue to behave in a manner that is not conducive in terms of preventing them from attaining this horrendous virus that does kill. There's no way around it. Once you have the virus, the consequences are inevitable — you die.

And it seems to me that we can't stick our heads in the sand any longer and that we have to have some leadership. And the leadership can't only come from the Department of Health in terms of an advertising campaign on television or a few brochures in the drug store or newspaper ads. It seems to me what the study points out is that young people get their information at schools.

And it's not enough, Mr. Minister, to simply develop a curriculum and then say, if the local school board wishes to have this curriculum, they have access to it. Somehow we have to promote this curriculum and promote the importance of having young people who are educated and know that this behaviour can't continue to exist if they want to prevent themselves from obtaining the AIDS virus.

And so, Mr. Minister, I guess I'm interested in knowing what leadership role you're prepared to take on the part of the Department of Education, in order that we can get good factual information to our young people so that they will change their behaviours.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, in addition to, as I mentioned earlier, our department having piloted and developed and put in place curricula for grades 7, 8, and 9, and as well as one in the piloting stages for grade 10, the department has conducted on a regional basis many in-service for teachers already, relative to AIDS and in AIDS curricula. I can't say that all schools have been covered or all teachers have had that yet, but that has gone on.

And additionally, one of the options that is being looked at to get more information out on this subject is that . . . and because we do feel parental involvement and communication is important.

You may know that over this last year we've established a newspaper format to go into the homes of children and to the parents of our school-age children, entitled *Homeworks*. It's a relatively new phenomenon. And that's one vehicle that could be looked at to perhaps provide an information base as well here.

Having said that, however, and before committing myself to it showing up on the September edition, if you like, because I'm very sensitive to the consultation and the very grass roots nature that this must take to be effective so you don't get some of the problems that I've seen that can occur out there, I would probably want to have some further consultation with trustees on that particular issue.

But those are the three areas, over and above the ones which you mentioned — television, advertising, etc. — that we've been proactive in relation to this issue.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I want to go to post-secondary education again from now until 5 o'clock and after supper. I'm just letting you know that we'll be back after supper.

Mr. Minister, yesterday we spent a fair amount of time on private vocational schools, and I do want to just return for a very brief moment. I don't want to make a big issue out of it, but I want to extract some further information from you, if I can. I asked you yesterday to provide to me the number of loans that had been made for private schools and how many students also received the forgivable portion of that loan and how many of those students did not complete the particular course in those private vocational schools.

Mr. Minister, I want to, because of the article that appeared in the media in the last few days on Bridge City College, I would like to have more specific information, if I can. And some of the information that came out of the articles, Mr. Minister, you must admit, were shocking information. And it confirmed what I had been saying, although I didn't have the statistics, of what people on this side felt.

But the director of the school, or whatever her title is, Mrs. Prior, I believe, and some of the students in the school and some of the staff clearly indicated that — maybe it wasn't Mrs. Prior, but certainly the staff or some of the students — clearly indicated in some of those classes they had 46 students starting the class and only two graduating. Another one, they had 21 students in the class; only seven graduated.

And a comment being made by some of the students that some of the students only took the class or the course in order to qualify for the student loan, and then they were on their way. That should concern you, Mr. Minister, and should certainly concern the people of Saskatchewan because there are huge sums of money involved.

So I'm asking you today to provide for me — you don't have to comment on it except to say yes or no to my request — would you provide for me the number of student loans that were made to Bridge City College; first of all, the number of applications that were made from students who went to Bridge City College; number two, the number of loans that were requested and the number of loans that were approved; fourthly, I want to know how many of the students completed the course and how much forgivable loan there was pertaining to Bridge City College.

I think those are very clear. I'd like to have them. I've asked for all the other private vocational schools, but I would like to have it split out for Bridge City College specifically.

Mr. Minister, there is a concern that I have, and I'm not certain who the individual was . . . yes I do; it was Lorne Sparling. Now I don't know Lorne Sparling but I believe he works for the department.

But there is a concern that I have, and I'm not being negative against Mr. Sparling at all, but there was a concern that I had and that is, Mr. Sparling said:

The school's curriculum which was criticized by the instructors and students will be reassessed.

What concerns me is, who did the assessment when the school was licensed, and why, if the curriculum at that time was satisfactory or met the standards, why suddenly now does it have to be reassessed?

And my last question — which I should have asked first — was when was the school licensed? Could you answer those questions for me before I have some other questions I'd like to ask.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Mr. Chairman, I probably can't give you everything you want today but my officials . . . I

probably can't give you all the numbers that you need today but my official have pulled out the numbers, at least some numbers, relative to the student loans to the Bridge City College. And there's an audit going on so it's pending some additional numbers.

But what we have relative to the '88-89, the loan profile for Bridge City: number of students, 205; Canada student loans, 469,000; Saskatchewan student loans, 627,000; for a total of 1.096 million — or an average, which I think is what you had asked for as well, of \$5,346. The school was licensed — I don't have the exact date — but approximately a year and a half ago.

Now I know that that doesn't give you the defaults and all that, but that's part of that audit process that I think is probably going to take two to three weeks to do.

I mean, obviously there are significant concerns there. We too want to see them addressed for lots of reasons, quite frankly, whether it's a student or faculty or an interested parent. And I would just restate what I've said before, is that my officials are actively investigating this, doing an audit relative to student loans and refunds that may or may not be forthcoming.

I'm not happy that we face this situation. I'm not here to prejudice either. But obviously there's been some significant concerns to the point where officials froze enrolments. And in the larger context — as I said yesterday and the day before — we, a year ago roughly, put in place a task force to look at the whole question of private vocational schools to make sure that we had the appropriate regulations for the '80s and on into the '90s.

(1615)

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Minister, as I had indicated, I didn't want to spend too much more time on this. I just assumed you didn't have that information. And if you can break out that kind of information for all the private schools, this is what I would like to have. If you can break them out for each individual school and they can provide that for me later on, that's fine. I don't want to take the time of the House to have that done now.

But what I . . . The question I did ask however was — what you didn't answer and that's what I'd like you to answer — is on the assessment of the school itself, on the curriculum. I wanted you to answer that for me. How come it has to be reassessed now when the school was only licensed a year and a half ago? What went wrong?

If Mr. Sparling thinks it should be reassessed now, what went wrong with the original assessment? Who did the original assessment? And obviously, when the assessment was done, your department must have felt that it met all requirements. And now suddenly it's going to be reassessed. What is wrong with your mechanism of assessing private schools that come to you to be licensed if a year and a half later you have to reassess it? That was a question I wanted you to answer for me.

Mr. Minister, before you answer that, a colleague of mine has to leave, and he has a question he would like to direct to you. Would you mind taking a question from him and

then we can revert back. Is that all right? Okay.

**Mr. Upshall:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I wanted to spend a few minutes talking about the single parents' incentive program. And just for openers I would ask you just to explain in brief terms the procedures that one follows to go through the single parents' incentive program, to get involved in it, and what the grants are and what the pay-backs are, and the time periods that go along with.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — I'll briefly go through it and if the hon. member would like more details on this in a written form, I could provide that as well. But roughly it goes something like this . . . And, Mr. Chairman, our government is in fact quite proud of this additional help that we've been able to put in place for those students with special concerns that need special considerations.

The program that you asked about is for single parents. But, as well, the special incentives program which this is a part of includes as well, handicapped youngsters who may want to get some post-secondary education, and as well it includes native young people who may have some disadvantages.

And what they do to receive the assistance is obviously they have to apply. We have to have some financial information to make a needs assessment, if you like. For example, I suppose, if somebody came to us and they already had a net income of \$80,000 per annum, they may well not be eligible.

But those who do meet the criterion and who do have the need, such as single parents, are eligible for up to \$360 per week as a loan. And in fact they are eligible for up to 60 weeks at that rate, which would be 21,600 which is totally forgiven provided they pass their courses, Mr. Chairman — 21,600 by way of forgiveness — which I think far exceeds the kind of support that I know the hon. members viewed as important by the old bursary system. This far and away outstrips what a bursary could provide and has been extremely well received.

And that, in a very sort of thumb-nail sketch way, is what's available for single parents and others that would fall under the category of single . . . of our special incentives. And if you want more detail, I can certainly make that available to the hon. member, if he so wishes, in written form.

**Mr. Upshall:** — Mr. Minister, what happens to a person who goes through a course under this program and finds out that the course that the person has gone through is not accepted generally by many of the businesses in the province? It has to do with accrediting the course and the value that the person gets out of the course.

There are situations where courses are offered and unfortunately are not recognized by many of the business people around the province. And if a person goes through this, gets the money and has it forgiven but finds that he cannot get a job, are they out in the cold or do they have an opportunity to reapply?

I guess what I'm asking is, whose fault is it? Is it the fault of

the person going into that course? Is it the fault of the course that is being given? And what opportunity does that person have to continue an education, especially if they have no money at all?

Under your program, part of it is forgiven — in the second year about 50 per cent; in the third year about 33 per cent. But if a person has no money at all and has no funds to draw from, could they reapply for that course and would they be entitled to again find a course that was suitable to them and suitable that they could find employment?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — The question, as I understand it, is that a young person may receive this special assistance — for example as I pointed out earlier — could receive 60 weeks at \$360 a week, would be 21,600. They might take a year or two more, and at the end of the day come out with a substantial amount of debt. And the question is, if they don't get a job or they had some illness, they're faced with debt, what do they do? That's your question essentially?

And what I would report to the hon. member, and perhaps he missed this when I went through it, 21,600 of that debt is forgiven, so there's nothing to pay back on that first 21,600 if they pass. On the next . . . on 50 per cent of another — I don't have exactly — of another substantial amount up to five years I think it is, that too is forgiven. So a lot of the debt of people eligible in this category, if they pass, is forgiven. So they come out almost debt free, one could argue. However there could be still, if you went to school enough years, you could still come out with some debt.

So then the question becomes, if I didn't get a job or I got ill, very ill, couldn't work, you know, do we start foreclosing on them or something? And the answer is no. There is provision for hardship cases, if you like. And the first thing I would have to say, as we say to virtually all students, I think, who inquire, is to contact our student loans division.

And there is provision, and I don't want to say that this is a . . . it's a general policy, but it's not something that's triggered or triggered lightly, because we still have that additional responsibility of being the custodians of the taxpayers' dollar. But there are provisions to trigger a mechanism in hardship cases, or in cases of illness where payments can be waived, quite frankly, up to probably 24 months in some of those dire or real hardship cases.

So two issues. Number one, much of the debt is forgiven; and number two, there is a provision triggered through student loans to look at hardship cases.

**Mr. Upshall:** — Well, Mr. Minister, perhaps I didn't explain myself quite well enough. If a person goes through a one-year course, passes that course, and finds that the course that was taken was not accepted by employers, would that person requalify for another first-year forgivable program, or would they automatically be going into the second year at a 50 per cent pay-back?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Well the individual would have up to 60 weeks — this single parent example that you've

used would have up to 60 weeks at \$306 a week of forgivable loans. So if the first year was 30 weeks, or whatever, there would still be 30 weeks that that person would be eligible for.

**Mr. Upshall:** — Okay, that's answered my question, I believe. So in that first 60-week period, if the course they took was just a portion of that, then they can take another course, a totally different course, but still qualify up to that 60-week period. Is that correct?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — That's right, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Upshall:** — Mr. Minister, the problem that I'm getting at here is that in fact there are some courses that are offered that are not accepted by employers, and I don't know the reasons for that. There's a course called — an office education course that goes by the name of Samna. It's a word processing course. And as I understand it, many employers or most employers do not accept that as a course that would give the person adequate training for somebody to have them in their office.

Now what I'm getting at is what type of guide-lines do you have, what type of reviews do you have that ensures that the courses given are going to result in the people taking them having a job? Because I have had situations where people have gone through this course and put out numerous, numerous résumés and only to find that they're not accepted.

Now what happens in those cases is that person has fallen between the cracks because they didn't know the course was not going to be accepted. Obviously the colleges or something didn't know that the course work wasn't going to be accepted. So what I'm saying is there's some lack of information between the person taking the course, the people giving the course, and the business community.

What action or what guide-lines do you have, and how do you monitor whether a course is actually suitable for someone to take so that they can be assured of employment so that they don't have to go back and take another course in order to get a job?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — If the hon. member has a specific case that should be investigated, I would be happy to have him bring that forward to me. Because I'm advised that for the most part . . . at least we are of the view that we've put sufficient safeguards in place relative to the issue that you raise. And we don't know of, at least in the last year and more, where we've had complaints of that nature; but if there are some, we would like to know about them.

As I said last night, relative to, I think, one of the tests relative to a course, a private vocational course, is that three employers must state yes, a need for that. So that's kind of an automatic check in the system, if you like. And the Samna or whatever it was that you referred to, if you have some information there, then I'd be . . . my officials would be very happy . . . they actually want to see that so they could investigate further on it.

(1630)

**Mr. Rolfes:** — . . . (inaudible) . . . and go back, an assessment of private colleges, Bridge City — pertaining to Bridge City.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Yes, your question was if Bridge City was licensed a year and a half ago and it was okay then, sort of what happened all of a sudden. Okay? A legitimate enough question.

You're right; the assessment and courses were approved — curricula, faculty, all the kind of stuff — a year and a half ago. I guess the concerns now, given there's an investigation, is what was approved the year and a half ago and what apparently was to be the curricula. In light of the concerns, was that delivered?

And I guess that's what has to be determined, and that's what's part of the investigations that are ongoing are all about.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Minister, I appreciate that, but I do think that we need to . . . we can't wait. I think this is a special case, and I would urge you to get an official into Bridge City College, examine that curriculum now so that we don't have any more students who are going to be taken to the cleaners. And there's a lot of money involved, as you had indicated earlier, and I do think we need to take care of that immediately, and I'd urge you and your department to do that, to take care of that right now.

Mr. Minister, I want to get off the private schools, because I have a number of other areas that I want to cover, so I will leave the private schools. But I hope that I don't have to wait too much longer, and I'm sure that you and I can discuss these further if there are any questions that I still have after I get the information from your department.

Mr. Minister, I want . . . these are what they call, in *Reach For the Top*, some snappers and plays — abide by the rules, okay? Abide by the rules. Mr. Minister, have the universities been advised of the division or split of the enhancement fund?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Mr. Chairman, yes.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Okay. When were they advised? And while you're thinking of that, have they received their money?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Yes, they were advised in writing, roughly four to five weeks ago, by the deputy, as to the split. And the second question was . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Have they received their money?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Oh, have they received it? The answer to that is no.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Well I'll give him full points for the first one, but he flunks the second one, because . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well I had to ask it again.

Mr. Minister, also will you answer yes or no. Okay? Will the funding be incorporated . . . will the enhancement funding be incorporated in the base operating grants?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Mr. Chairman, I think he's asking me to answer a question about next year's budget, which I clearly can't do. But I can say this. The whole issue of whether that becomes part of the A-base or not is under discussion with the universities, as well as the whole question of the university renewal and development fund — a second fund there, or a son of URDF (university renewal and development fund), whatever. So we are engaging with them in discussions in a couple of areas with the universities on a couple of pretty major chunks of money.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Minister, you must have given some indication. I was hoping we could stay with the snappers, but I guess we can't. There is some concern, Mr. Minister, not just at the universities but particularly at the universities, but there's also concern at the technical schools whether or not you will incorporate this into their base funding — I guess you call it the A-base funding, or whatever — but whether or not it will be incorporated into their funding because this is key, this is key to the crisis that they are having at the universities.

If they don't get this into their base funding, then they're going to have a real problem next year with their quotas and being able to function properly and providing the quality education that we were talking about yesterday. So I would really like to have some assurances from you more than just saying, well, you know, we're having discussions.

If you weren't serious about putting it into the base funding, then why don't you tell them that? I still don't understand, if you had full intentions of doing so, why you didn't do it this year. I don't understand that. So I have some suspicion that you will not incorporate it into the . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, the bell only goes for you. You see, I don't get my bell rung in these; you do.

So, Mr. Minister, will you please answer that. Do you have intentions of incorporating that, or are you just playing the game?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — No, I'm sensitive to the point you raise. And if I was a university or a post-secondary institution, I mean, the security that one can get, I suppose, with it being in the A budget is an argument that probably has some merit. All I'm saying to you today is that we've neither ruled that in or out at this point in time. Obviously there's some discussions going on and it becomes part of next year's budget decision.

So to date, I hear what you're saying and I'm not ruling it out either way. It's just that I can't give you an answer at this very moment.

**Mr. Kowalsky:** — Mr. Minister, I want to ask you a couple of questions pertaining directly to the Prince Albert Rural School Division and how they're affected as a result of . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Prince Albert Rural School Division and how they're affected, and there may be some solutions that you may be able to put forward to help them out here.

But what prompts me to do this is two things. I'll deal with the first one with respect to a letter from the East Central

home and school people, who have chosen to write directly to your department and ask specifically that you consider special funding for rural children who are facing drastic consequences — I'll deal with those in a minute — and they're wondering whether a program could be implemented that would provide for teacher aides in combined class-rooms, because the drastic consequences that they're referring to are the reduced grants in '88-89 to their department and what their school board is faced with.

So what I see happening here is that the East Central home and school people have decided to go directly to the department to ask for additional funding because of what they have seen as a trend in that school unit as their taxes have continued to rise rather dramatically on a local basis, while the provincial share, percentage-wise, has been shrinking.

I ask that question because I want to know whether, first of all, if the P.A. rural unit is in a very unique position that has caused this rather dramatic shift. And when I look at what's happened to it, the local percentage from '82 to '88 has increased from 26.4 per cent to 36.8 per cent, according to their own calculations. From 26 to 36, that's 10 points from '82 to '88, whereas at the same time they tell me . . . I'm advised that the provincial share is decreased from 73.6 per cent to 63.2, so a corresponding decrease.

Now there's been several other things that have happened in that school division. They've had a reassessment as well. Starting back since 1980 they've had reassessment and that's caused continual difficulties, and then they found that they were into tax arrears.

They've been trying to maintain, to their credit, I believe, smaller community schools, you know, schools the size of 4 and 8 and 12 teachers. And I believe their record is quite good, that they've been able to keep those schools at a cost not unlike, or not much greater than, if at all greater, than if they would have combined them into one big school, but certainly to the satisfaction of the community.

But what they've had to do is they've had to institute teacher cuts and they've had to introduce program reductions; they've had to fall way back in some of the programs. They used to have a music consultant and they've had to — a code I — and they've had to cut that. They used to have a Cree language program and they've had to cut that.

Their school maintenance program has been cut back and reduced; they're down to two people in maintenance now where they used to have a way much better maintenance program, and that's falling behind.

Their equipment, I'm advised, is falling behind. They used to like to replace their buses on a 10-year cycle. They have 65 buses and they should be getting six to seven buses a year, and they're unable to keep up with that.

My understanding is that their enrolment has kept up at approximately 2,100 students. I know that they have a

large number of high-cost students, but I think they feel it's quite important for them to maintain that.

So really the question is, what can you do? First of all, is their situation unique and why is it unique? And secondly, what is it you can do to assist in a situation like the home and school association from East Central School are asking with respect to providing money, special money for a teacher aide programming?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — The hon. member, Mr. Chairman, raises questions about Prince Albert rural, and some concerns there in the home and school association and are they unique across the province. And this gets right back into the money that comes from the province as opposed to what's raised locally in property tax. As I said the other day, over the years it's traditionally been viewed that about one-half would come from the local tax base, about one-half of the money would come from the provincial government — say all the taxpayers. And then there was a formula to divide it up fairly. And so some areas get more and some areas get less, based on a number of things.

Now over the years, if you look at from '81 through '88, one can say, yes, it is true that Prince Albert rural used to get 73 per cent of its operating dollars from the province, and now it only receives 66.83, so it is down by six or seven percentage points. But obviously that's still well above 50 per cent, so nearly two-thirds of their income continues to come from the province.

Other cities, other areas that are richer, because the formula tries to help those who have less of a tax base to draw on or less of an ability to pay, have only 35 per cent coming from the province, and they think they're hard done by. These people have two-thirds, so they're ahead of some of the larger, richer districts, but that's why the fairness formula is in place.

This year the question is, you know, is there some additional factor that's causing some hardship? And looking at the numbers that I would share with the hon. member, have student enrolments gone down in this area particularly? The answer there is no. We show a net decline of only four enrolments, four students.

Their basic grab, that is to say the amount that they will get from us this year, that cheque will increase by a little over 3 per cent, so they are receiving an increase from the province's share. Why it's not higher is likely because their assessment has grown by about \$2 million, nearly \$3 million.

Sorry. Sorry. Percentage . . . Their assessment grew by 3 per cent. So the grant from ourselves grew by 3 per cent; their tax base grew by 3 per cent as well. But just as you said, they still face challenges.

Now I don't know what the history is of that school board, particularly of whether they've held their assessment or their mill rate for a number of years or whether they've got to have a jump or play some catch-up. Those kinds of things I can't address, but I think I've . . . I think it's clear that obviously they are still receiving a fair chunk of their funds from the provincial taxpayer as opposed to their

local tax base. But I'm not saying that there aren't challenges in running school boards these days.

(1645)

**Mr. Kowalsky:** — Could you direct an answer to a request from East Central Home and School Association, their special request for money for teacher aides?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — If I haven't responded to them, and if they've reported to me or to the department — whoever — they will receive a response.

If you've asked if there's going to be a special cheque go to them, the answer will be no, obviously. If we started doing that, the whole formula, equalization formula, the equity approach of the formula would break down and everybody would start writing. That's why we have a formula — to try and be fair to all.

And as I said to your education critic the other night . . . I mean, if you wanted to get into some discussion about whether this formula is doing the job, I'm prepared to entertain that discussion. I have to say though that I haven't really heard the trustees as a body coming forward and saying there should be changes there.

That doesn't mean to say that there aren't challenges. I don't know, perhaps the home and school association should engage in some discussion with their board.

I don't know what the status of the board's funds are relative to that special excellence fund that was set up, the educational development fund. Perhaps it could do something there; I don't know. If it's for a position, that's not a route that we recommend boards go in terms of utilizing those funds. But obviously we've put together \$150 million over a 10-year period for boards to use for special situations.

**Mr. Kowalsky:** — When I asked whether they were in a unique situation, I was referring to the decrease in the proportions paid by the provincial government; the decrease that they've experienced with respect to their . . . (inaudible) . . .

I understand that they get paid more than perhaps the average school board, and there's good reason for it, and I think that that's quite accepted. It's this shift in their funding that seems to be causing them the problem. See, what's happened is that their operating interest is now at \$230,000, is how much it's costing them. Now last year that was an equivalent of eight teachers, just the operating interest that they need in order to operate.

Now this year one of their additional problems, and it's compounded, is that they're faced, as a result of the rather dramatic tax increase in that area, plus the reassessment, a bit of a tax revolt, which you know about, in that Candle Lake ratepayers' area. Now what's happened is because the Candle Lake ratepayers' association has tripled the assessment and they're offering a reduction of I think it's 66 per cent to those people who pay their taxes before then, this means that the school board is going to end up having a reduction in the amount of money they receive from those ratepayers who pay their taxes ahead of time.

Are you taking any measures with the minister to help the school board through this situation? because they're obviously the victims of it.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — The issue that you raise is one that's of concern to us. We've met with trustees over the issue and it's . . . what I can say today is it's under active consideration. And I can't report exactly what shape or form the action will be, but it's under very active consideration.

Just relative to your suggestion that perhaps we're off-loading onto school boards, the reality is the provincial versus local share hasn't really changed much over the last eight or nine years. It hovers around that 50, 51, 52 per cent, plus or minus a couple points. And you know, if there's anything . . . if somebody's share goes down, if the formula is patent, which it is, then somebody else's share has to go up.

And I read into the record yesterday, you had raised that theirs went from 73 to 66; I would talk about Assiniboia that went from 43 to 53. That's the equalization factor working in there. Another, Battle River went from 35 to 48. So if somebody goes down, somewhere else somebody else goes up, and that's the reality of that equalization formula.

**An Hon. Member:** — Short snappers.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Chairman, no, these aren't short snappers.

Now, Mr. Minister, I know you are aware of the trend that has happened. And since 1985, Mr. Minister, my understanding is that 42,470 more people have left Saskatchewan than have entered Saskatchewan — 42,470. That's as of May 3 this year. If that trend continues for the rest of this year, Mr. Minister, approximately 60,000 more people will have left this province than will have come in.

My question to you, Mr. Minister, is this: has your department, in the elementary grades from grades 1 to 12, and also in the post-secondary, have they done a calculation of what effect that is going to have on both the school systems and on the post-secondary, in so far as the university is concerned, both the U of R and the U of S, and also on the SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology), the various programs at SIAST? Have you done a calculation of what effect that will have?

And by a rough calculation, Mr. Minister, I would expect that that would mean about . . . between 7 to 9,000 students who may otherwise have entered the education system now won't be there because of this exodus of people. Are you doing a study, or have you done a study on that so far?

While you are considering that, Mr. Minister, would you also, if you have, have you calculated where the exodus will be felt the most? Will it be in rural Saskatchewan, small towns, will it be the cities, or is it about the same?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Your question about are we

tracking, because of the impact it could have on our educational system, the movement of people either within or without the province, and the answer is yes. What we use is the Saskatchewan hospital services plan covered population, and we get breakdowns here relative to year-by-year, going back several years, by age group.

The observation that I make, that is made to me, is that the student population isn't where there's a big impact being felt. Those that are leaving tend to be not those with school-aged children. Not that there aren't some, but that's not the big group, if you like. That's observation number one.

The observation number two — and I don't have a statistical base on this one — but certainly the StatsCanada numbers spoke to it in the '86 survey that talk about the continuing urbanization of Saskatchewan.

And the third observation I make and one that school boards, particularly I think in Saskatoon make maybe even more so than Regina, is the tremendous movement within the K to 12 system itself, where, I think when I met with them three years ago, they talked about, oh I don't know, one in three, maybe even more, moving either to a different school or to a different system in the same year, which just provides them a real planning nightmare.

So we try to stay on top of it. In our blueprint, our post-secondary blueprint, we chart out there some demographic charts that spoke to our age profiles, the ageing of the population, what that means for lifelong education and all of those things. So yes, it's been a big factor in our educational planning.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Minister, you conveniently avoided the . . . and I'm not going to let you get away with it. No, Mr. Minister, look. These are not my statistics, these come from your department . . . not from your department, from your government. Let's not quibble about the numbers because you can check those out for yourself. I mean, I've got those from every year.

What I'm saying, this year, from 1985 to 1989, till May 3, and if we add in the trend, if it continues to what has happened this year it's not a small amount for the school-aged children from 15 to 29, aged 15 to 29, 60 per cent. Sixty per cent of the people who leave the province are aged 15 to 29.

Now take off the ones on the . . . the 15, 16, 17-year-olds, and take off the ones at the top, you're still going to end up with about 40 per cent of those people are post-secondary-age students. Now 40 per cent . . . and it is believed that this year alone, if the trend continues, the net out-migration this year has been already 14,000 as of May 3, if that continues we'll have 30,000 people leaving — 40 per cent of that is 12,000; 12,000 post-secondary-age students.

Now I know all of those won't attend school. All of those don't attend school. But even if half of those only attend school, even if only half, you're still looking at a lot of students. And my question to you simply is, Mr. Minister — not the movement within the province — I want to know what effect will it have, the out-migration, the net

out-migration? And surely you must have looked at that. What effect will that have on the numbers at the universities and the numbers at the technical schools? What effect will that have? And you must have been doing some projections. I know you have.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — Well if you're asking me, are we cognizant of trends and shifts in population within and without the province, well that's . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — No, not within.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — He says no, not within. Well it is important to us because we've got to know whether the kids are going to go to school in Saskatoon or in Biggar or in North Battleford, so don't say it's not important, because it is. On the post-secondary . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — I didn't say that. That wasn't my question.

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — I don't think we need to quibble here. What I'm saying is, whether it's the post-secondary side or the K to 12 side, we are on top of, as best as one can be, looking at population shifts by age group to address the post-secondary age group so that we factor that into our planning, because that's the important thing — are we factoring that into our planning as best we can, and the answer is yes.

**Mr. Rolfes:** — Mr. Minister, I don't want you to muddle the situation. I know you are planning for the shifts within the province. I want to know specifically what studies have you done, what studies have you done on the effect on the universities and technical schools of the net out-migration of students, and have you got something available? Could you make it public? Could you make it available to me? The effect of the out-migration if the trend continues as it has this year — have you got something available?

**Hon. Mr. Hepworth:** — The load on the post-secondary system, a major factor is people moving into the province . . . people moving out of the province in that traditional 18 to 24 age group, for sure — the traditional high school leaver, for sure. We try to plan around that as best we can, as do universities, technical institutes, and regional colleges.

The hon. member, however, would be a poor planner if he didn't recognize that probably far exceeding that factor, likely in the future as it has in the last 10 years, has been the impact in a much greater way on our numbers of university enrolments that now see one-third of the enrollees not in the 18 to 24 age group — the mature student, one-third — a new phenomena. It speaks directly to the lifelong learning reality of this information economy, major factor.

The other one that's obviously a major factor, although I would put it in sort of third place, if you like, is probably the economy itself in terms of, is there a job or do I have to be retrained for one? So I would add those two. It's not a simple . . . one simple factor that you plug in. And I guess I will just leave it at that. I was going to remind you about the 1978 survey that your government did . . .



**Mr. Chairman:** — Being 5 o'clock, this House does now stand adjourned until 7 p.m.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.