

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to present two petitions today on behalf of the people in my constituency and across the province. The one deals with the feed grain assistance program and it says that it's an essential tool in the preservation of a competitive livestock and feeding, slaughter and packing industry in the province of Saskatchewan.

And I want to present that to the Assembly today. And there is a great deal of concern, Mr. Speaker. And this petition says that the livestock cash advance program was vital in putting the Saskatchewan livestock sector on an equal footing with the national grain sector.

And that is supported by these people and they want to see that program put back in. So I make the presentation of these petitions here today.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Clerk: — According to order, the following petitions have been reviewed pursuant to rule 11(7), and are hereby read and received:

Of citizens of the province of Saskatchewan humbly praying that your Honourable Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to restore the livestock cash advance program;

Of citizens of the province of Saskatchewan humbly praying that your Honourable Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to restore the FeedGAP program;

And of farmers and citizens of the province of Saskatchewan humbly praying that your Assembly may be pleased to allow the 1991 GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) to stand for this year.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to the members of the House, I'd like to introduce some of my family members that are seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. Vi and Joe Muhle from Calgary, along with their family, Kelsey and Jolene are down here visiting in Saskatchewan. Vi and Joe are my sister-in-law and brother-in-law, and they're spending some of their summer holidays here in Saskatchewan visiting with friends and family as well as taking in a family wedding this weekend in Norquay.

They're here in Regina today, Mr. Speaker, to tour the legislature and to take in question period, as well as visit Vi's sister, my wife, who presently is a patient in the Plains Hospital here in Regina. And, Mr. Speaker, today is Vi's birthday, and she wants me to assure all the members in

the House here that she's 29 and holding. And I'm going to ask all the members to extend a warm welcome to them.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Federal Funding for Agriculture

Mr. Devine: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Mr. Premier, in light of the fact that there is evidence of drought in Saskatchewan in the northern part of the province particularly, and in light of the fact that there's a late crop in a good part of the eastern part of the province which could suffer damage from frost, which is clearly an equally dangerous threat, and given the fact that the federal government has offered a post-harvest opportunity for farmers to collect more money, would the Premier now reconsider accepting the federal offer that allows farmers after harvest to make an application for more money?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Thank you, Mr. Premier. First of all I want to say to the first half of the question, the preamble of the Leader of the Opposition, that it is correct to say there are some areas of the province of Saskatchewan where the crop is under some stress. But I would say that there are many, many areas of the province of Saskatchewan where the crop is looking quite good, certainly moderate and maybe even moderate-plus.

I happened to be in the Tisdale-Nipawin area after a very extensive rain there this last week. In some areas the crop is a little bit too late to benefit from that rain, but in other areas it will benefit. So I think that time is required for us to get a better assessment of this, and I'm a little more hopeful than perhaps the Leader of the Opposition might be.

None the less, having said that, on the second aspect of his question we take the position that the letter from Mr. McKnight to us and the producers is the basis for discussions and negotiations between the two governments. We think that the negotiations need to be carried out as quickly as possible. We are going to approach those negotiations in an optimistic point of view.

But also I must tell the Leader of the Opposition, mindful of the very, very precarious financial picture that the province of Saskatchewan currently faces and has, we have to look after the interests of all the taxpayers of the province of Saskatchewan, and be mindful of the fact that the federal government over the last couple of years has off-loaded considerable hundreds of millions of dollars onto the taxpayers at a time when we can ill afford it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, my question is again to the Premier. Mr. Premier, I just want to make sure that we

know that you understand that the offer coming from the federal government to the farmers is such that the farmer can go through harvest and then, after that, decide whether they need more protection.

In other words, if there's a drought or if there's a frost or if there's severe damage to his crop, after harvest he could apply to get more money. Now you know what that means in terms of insurance. It's like having a fire in your house and saying, after and only when I have a fire will I be able to get insurance. So it's a very unique opportunity.

Won't you ask your Minister of Agriculture and your cabinet colleagues to seriously consider this generous offer from the federal government to let the farmers respond after harvest? And they've never had that opportunity before.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, again I want to take the position and reiterate the position that we are viewing the letter as a letter which is an invitation to negotiate without accepting the conditions. And we're going to do this. I want to stress that, because what I'm going to say hereafter should not be viewed as mitigating against the earlier statement. And what I'm going to say hereafter is that I do not share the Leader of the Opposition's characterization of this as a generous offer.

At a time when the federal government is actually trying to recapture money from farmers under the stabilization program — \$51 million there — at a time when the federal government on the GRIP changes has at least saved 40 million — I would say more than that — at a time when the federal government promised the farmers of the province of Saskatchewan \$500 million more on the '90-91 third line of defence, it's hardly generous. In fact I would say it is not adequate enough.

And we're going to go down to Ottawa to fight for more, to fight for more federal money for the farmers, to be truly a generous program for crop disaster, as my letter to the Prime Minister requests.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Premier, I just want to make sure that you understand, so that you don't contradict your Minister of Agriculture or indeed yourself.

You know that a third line of defence is for all farmers. It applies to everybody. But in the situation in Saskatchewan, where you alone have changed the crop insurance program and the GRIP program, and where we suffer the potential consequences of drought and frost, and you have an offer where farmers after harvest can not only get third line of defence but can actually get more insurance money, don't you think it would be a good idea for your administration to pick up that opportunity so farmers can not only get third line of defence like everybody else in the country but can actually protect themselves against a serious situation in the province of Saskatchewan alone?

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I again repeat to the Leader of the Opposition the position of the Government of Saskatchewan. We think that — and I don't mean this in any political, partisan sense — but finally at long last the federal government has acknowledged the nature of the crisis. And if nothing else, I'm not sure it's my letter but at least certainly after my letter to the Prime Minister, Mr. McKnight has made this offer.

I think that's a positive thing. I cannot accept what the letter indicates in totality other than as a basis for negotiations. As the member knows himself, because he was party to the development of the third line of defence, the committee in 1990 talked about events which require additional income supplements over that provided by second-line programs and identified as Canadian crop drought assistance in 1988.

And we're saying that this is exactly a kind of a situation which involves the federal government's contribution in the amount in recognition of what might be special circumstances. We have to see how the crop actually unfolds, whether there is harvest, whether there is a frost this fall, whether or not the rains are too late or not.

We have argued for a permanent crop disaster program which is the responsibility of the federal government. We think that's where the responsibility is, both in law and economically. Mr. McKnight's letter acknowledges that there is a responsibility. Now we want to sit down and negotiate with him to get the best deal for the farmers of the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — My question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, you're running the risk of having the federal government finally say, well look, if you're not going to accept this generous offer to farmers post-harvest, then there's no offer.

You would end up, Mr. Premier, thumbing your nose at this offer. You remind me of a national politician, Pierre Trudeau, who came out to Saskatchewan, thumbed his nose, and says, why should I sell your wheat? And you're saying, why should I take the federal money? Mr. Premier, you're running a situation . . . the risk of a situation here where you have an offer from the federal government to give you not only a third line of defence for all Canadians that are going to receive, but a special line of defence for Saskatchewan farmers. And you're saying no, I don't think we're going to receive that.

Don't you think that you might run the risk, Mr. Premier, of losing a great deal of money — maybe \$100 million — for the Saskatchewan farmers if you pass this opportunity up?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, the position of the Government of Saskatchewan is — I repeat again for the Leader of the Opposition — that the letter from Mr. McKnight to us is the basis of negotiations. If the Leader of the Opposition wants me to say that we adhere with every condition set out in that letter by Mr. McKnight, I have to

tell the Leader of the Opposition we view those as suggestions or as bases for negotiation. And we're going to negotiate.

I don't know how the Leader of the Opposition gets the \$100 million figure. I read the offer to be in the neighbourhood of 39 or \$40 million.

But on the first part of the question that the Leader of the Opposition talks about, is frankly a little bit disconcerting because he argues that we run the risk of Ottawa withdrawing. And I say to the Leader of the Opposition, why would Ottawa do that? Why would any federal government genuinely concerned with the concerns of the farmers in the province of Saskatchewan, or for that matter the concerns of other Canadians — why would they withdraw?

They didn't withdraw when it came to the cod fishermen in Newfoundland. They haven't withdrawn with respect to the purchase of \$4.4 billion of helicopters in Quebec, with respect to the regional and national interest there. I don't see why they would draw if there's a legitimate need for the province of Saskatchewan and the treasury of the province of Saskatchewan for the farmers in this circumstance.

Surely the Leader of the Opposition is not suggesting that there's some form of blackmail being suggested here, because we reject that. We don't buy it. We think we can negotiate, thanks to Mr. McKnight's initiative and opening a proper settlement which carries the responsibility by Ottawa, and the farmers and the taxpayers of this province benefit.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, we get to the nub of the question. The Premier says, well why would the federal government even think about withdrawing. Well the reason is, number one, your track record — you're now going down in popular support all across the province, and you see that in all your polling and all the editorials and everything else that's coming out.

And secondly, you've withdrawn from every program that was there before the Government of Saskatchewan and the Government of Canada. You've got a comparative disadvantage now for all kinds of Saskatchewan people — the livestock people, the agricultural people, AECL (Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd.), native people. You look at economic development, you look at taxation, and you're putting Saskatchewan people behind the eight ball, deal after deal after deal. You've withdrawn.

Now the federal government in the light of that has come in and said, after harvest, even with your record, we will offer you a special arrangement, only in Saskatchewan, where you can take the crop off and then decide. And you're saying no, I guess we'll turn that down as well.

I'm saying to you, your track record is putting hundreds of millions of dollars in a vulnerable position in the province of Saskatchewan . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Does the Leader of the Opposition have a question? I'd like him to put it.

Mr. Devine: — Mr. Premier, your record speaks for itself. The federal government wonders if you will eventually co-operate to help farmers and tens of thousands of families who need your help. Don't you realize that you run the risk of losing this kind of special offer?

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I say through you, sir, to the Leader of the Opposition, that we will be talking to the federal government. I think, with the greatest of respect to the Leader of the Opposition, when he couches his question in the context of: the federal government wants to know; with the greatest of respect, maybe the Leader of the Opposition wants to know.

Our relationships with the federal government, while not perfect — to put it mildly — none the less have been quite productive in a number of areas, quite productive in a number of areas.

The fundamental assumption behind the Leader of the Opposition's question, I don't accept. The fundamental assumption behind the Leader of the Opposition's question is that the proposal in Mr. McKnight's letter, the deal that he offers to the farmers, is the deal that the farmers of Saskatchewan want. And I don't accept that. I think the farmers of the province of Saskatchewan want a better deal, and they want their provincial government to negotiate it. And they want you, sir, to join us in that cause, and I'm asking you to do that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Consultations on Wildlife Habitat Legislation

Mr. Goohsen: — Mr. Speaker, the former administration was in the process of setting up a process that would have brought in critical wildlife habitat which was recognized as important for the preservation of Saskatchewan's precious environment. Nothing was to be done until the public had ample opportunity to voice their concerns, to provide suggestions, and to have active part in designing the program.

However, Mr. Speaker, we see how things change when a government that thinks it can do anything to anybody gets a hold of such an initiative. My question is to the minister responsible for the critical wildlife habitat legislation. Mr. Minister, no meaningful consultation has taken place on this legislation, which affects the lives of hundreds of Saskatchewan residents and thousands of acres of pasture land.

Mr. Minister, is your government intending to force your will on these people without their input, as you have been doing with every other piece of legislation in this session?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, if there's been consultation messed up on this particular program, I think the blame rests with the former administration. This program was brought in in 1984, which is a fair number of years ago. And if the negotiations have been not properly

conducted, it was certainly not the fault of this administration. We have been talking to farmers and to ranchers. And we sent a letter to every, every, every producer out . . . every lessee whose land was picked.

We are not picking any new land, Mr. Speaker. This land was all picked by the previous administration. We are only carrying out the program as it was presented by the former administration. And I commend the former administration on a very good program, and I hope they will continue to co-operate with us in implementing it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, this is your legislation, nobody else's. And the reality of life is that you have misled ranchers when you say that there is no difference in this legislation than the previous plan. The fact of the matter is that you have extended this program by 1.5 millions of acres more than was previously planned.

Mr. Minister, ranchers fear your legislation will keep livestock producers from feeding their cattle on the land that they now lease. Similar laws in the U.S. (United States) use the critical wildlife angle to prohibit cattle from their traditional grazing areas. Where do you suppose Saskatchewan livestock producers will take their cattle to feed them if they are no longer allowed to continue to use this land? I suspect it'll be into Alberta, Mr. Minister.

Would you consider changing the name in this Bill to alleviate some of the fears that these people have and some of their concerns?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I see in the gallery, Colin Maxwell, who was the minister at the time. And maybe some of the questions from the opposition may be directed to him. I think he could help fill them in on it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, in 1984 the land that was chosen for critical wildlife habitat was picked out as land that was necessary, was picked out by biologists, and it was approved in 1984. The process of consulting and putting the land under the Act began. About 2.5 million acres was put under the Act. We have had, since I've been in government, very few or no complaints from people who have had the land under the Act since '84. We assure them that they continue to use it for livestock, for grazing, for haying. We have not interfered with their use. And the people whose land has not been under the Act have been treated in exactly the same way and have not had a problem with it since 1984, will continue to be treated in the same way in the future.

And I assure you that there will be no adverse implications to the ranchers and livestock producers.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — Mr. Speaker, I would remind the minister that in light of their past performance that's been shown in the last eight or so months, it might very well do them well to go up into the galleries and find anybody they can to help them because the way they bungle things, they need all the help they can get.

Mr. Minister, your legislation will also prohibit land that has been in the possession of one family for years from being transferred to the next generation, effectively removing the land from production. Surely, Mr. Minister, you have heard these and other concerns over your legislation.

Many ranchers in the Maple Creek area are threatening to close their leased land down to hunting in protest. This would be a great blow to the provincial economy and to the government's revenue. In fact most of the ranchers have already ordered no hunting signs, affecting thousands of acres.

The tourist and service industry will be destroyed this fall in our area. Mr. Minister, will you at least listen to the concerns of the people that your government so often ignores? Will you listen and react to the problems you are causing the people that this legislation most affects?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, this legislation will in no way affect the ranchers' ability to transfer their land to the next generation or to other people who buy their land.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is not harmful to ranchers. It will not be a problem. And we have consulted with them. It makes it very difficult to consult with people and give them reasonable information when members of the opposition are running around spreading falsehoods and scaremongering. And if it was not for that, I think our job would be much easier.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I regret that I wasn't able to hear your last part of your comments because of all the noise of your colleagues, but I will read it in *Hansard* tomorrow and try to figure out what you're talking about.

I want to comment just quickly though, that legal advice has advised the ranchers that in fact they do have much to be worried about, that the next generation will not necessarily get the land that they have, and that there are many harmful effects for producers.

Mr. Minister, the . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I also have a lot of difficulty hearing the member, but I would appreciate it if the member asks his next question.

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, the former administration conducted extensive public consultation when it came to developing a land-use strategy for The Great Sandhills in the province's

south-west. In fact two rounds of public hearings were held where at least 2,000 people were heard and 175 written submissions were presented. The result was a plan that was widely supported by all of those involved. That is consultation, Mr. Minister — something your government has yet to grasp.

Will you endeavour to conduct similar consultations with the public on critical wildlife habitat, or are you bent on forcing your will regardless of who you hurt or what you destroy?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, I again submit, if they were so good at consultation that in eight years they would have had it done.

We will continue to consult and we have consulted and will. And again I ask the members opposite to . . . not to fearmonger and spread rumours and innuendo about things that are not true, and it will help us in our process of consultation. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Regional College Board Appointments

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In what was perhaps the greatest tongue-in-cheek answer of the decade from the Minister of Labour here a few weeks ago in this House, he said that there was no political patronage in the NDP (New Democratic Party) administration. No political patronage is what the minister said, despite the fact that the opposite is true: Jack Messer, Carole Bryant, Don Cody, and on and on.

The minister also pledged that there would be no political patronage hirings or firings in the future. He gave his word, Mr. Speaker.

With that in mind, my question is to the Minister of Education. Madam Minister, will you tell us whether or not you fired, discharged, the entire board of the North West Regional College in North Battleford, including the chairman, for no apparent reason other than the fact that he was appointed by the former administration?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to answer this question. I'm glad that the hon. member opposite raised it. When our administration took office, one of the areas that had been sadly neglected was the membership on regional college boards, of which we are responsible to appoint nine boards throughout the province of up to eight members each.

There were a large number of vacancies, a large number of expired appointments where there had been failure to reappoint. And in the situation of the North West we are also having a review of the regional colleges that we're contemplating as part of our review of post-secondary and we wanted to make sure that all the regional college boards were fully in place in order to assist in the review.

We have appointed, and reappointed in a number of cases, sitting members that were appointed by the

previous administration. And in the case of the North West college board, there were seven new members appointed. Three terms had expired long ago. There was only one eligible for reappointment. Three terms had expired. There had been three resignations. In other words, there were six vacancies out of a board of seven.

The Speaker: — Order, order. Next question.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Madam Minister, you state that there were eight people on the boards. Three of the terms had expired; three people resigned. That should leave two. What happened to those two?

The Speaker: — Order. I wish the government members would allow their colleague to answer the question.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Speaker, constitutionally there is provision for up to eight members on each regional college board, and in this case, there were only seven; the other would be represented by a vacancy.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Madam Minister, then there should have been one person left. What happened to that individual? Was he indeed fired? And why was he fired?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure whether this is a mathematics test or a question on the administration of the regional college board. I think this is seven.

But it's necessary, as the regional colleges represent a large geographical area, to take into account also regional representation to make sure that there's a balance of representation of men and women who are interested in education from throughout the region.

And in this case, it turned out that in order to achieve a balance it was necessary to fill all of those vacancies which had been there, inherited from the previous administration, and to balance the membership. We replaced the one person, the one valid, constitutionally valid, member who was existing on the board, who had served two out of three years. There was no problem with his contribution. We appreciate it. We communicated that to him. But we felt that in order to have the regional representation, we needed to appoint a new board — the seven.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Madam Minister, you fired the only person on the board who had any continuity, that understood what was going on in the light of the fact that you cut that regional colleges by \$128,000 in the previous budget. You talk of regional representation. Yet I would assume that person lived somewhere within that area and would have represented that area. Now why did you fire him?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I have tried to make it clear that we did not fire anyone, that we appointed six new members to replace vacancies and members who had resigned, and that in order to achieve a

regional balance, that it was necessary to appoint someone from another area than the one member who had served two out of three years.

Secondly, the member referred to funding. And I think you're . . . I know the press article that you're responding to. There was a subsequent correction in that same publication which clarified the funding issue. And the regional colleges received, in third-party funding all over the province, a reduction of only 1 per cent, as compared to 2 per cent in the K to 12. The regional colleges received, we think, very fair treatment. And the North West Regional College received treatment on a par with the others in the province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Goulet: — Before the ministerial statements, could I ask for leave to introduce a guest?

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you and to the members of the House, a person from my constituency from Pelican Narrows, Albert Ratt over there in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce him in our language from that area.

(The hon. member spoke for a time in Cree.)

So, Mr. Speaker, please welcome Mr. Ratt.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Why is the member on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, with leave, to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

Hon. Mr. Cunningham: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly, one Colin Maxwell who is the president or CEO (chief executive officer) of Canadian Wildlife Federation. And I hope that he continues. He's doing a good job and we're glad to see him in town. I hope the Assembly will welcome him here.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 80 — An Act to amend The Interprovincial Subpoena Act

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill to amend The Interprovincial Subpoena Act be now introduced and read the first time.

Motion agreed to and, by leave of the Assembly, the Bill ordered to be referred to the Standing Committee on

Non-controversial Bills.

Bill No. 81 — An Act respecting the repeal of The Criminal Injuries Compensation Act

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill respecting the repeal of The Criminal Injuries Compensation Act be now introduced and read the first time.

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

Bill No. 82 — An Act to amend The Victims of Crime Act

Hon. Mr. Mitchell: — Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill to amend The Victims of Crime Act be now introduced and read the first time.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Resolution No. 39 — Agriculture Organizations' Input on GRIP Bill

Mr. Martens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the conclusion of my remarks, I'm going to move a motion that deals with providing an opportunity by this government to provide to rural Saskatchewan some of the same benefits that have accrued to the individuals who are what we would call, so-called friends of the government.

And what we're trying to encourage members opposite to do is to deal with the people in agriculture in the same manner that they would deal with those people where they have provided information. And I outline two of . . . one of them in my resolution here, Mr. Speaker.

The one that deals with providing to the unions in the province of Saskatchewan a preview or an overview of what their legislation will entail. I understand also that the construction association received copies of the Bill that deals with the changes in the labour Bill. And I want to point out to this Assembly that I believe the Minister of Agriculture should provide that same opportunity in dealing with the problems that have occurred as it relates to the GRIP legislation.

The unions have received an opportunity to have input into the Bill. They have received an opportunity to study it. I want to point out that the Minister of Agriculture has seriously neglected his responsibility to agriculture, to farm leaders across the province. I want to point out in a few minutes here, Mr. Speaker, the seriousness of it.

Through the past winter the province and the government decided that they were going to implement the GRIP program, and implemented serious adjustments and alternatives that altered the farm safety net program. And in that process a number of farm organizations were involved in that discussion. And what they did, Mr.

Speaker, is they made a presentation to the Minister of Agriculture. And that presentation, Mr. Minister, was on the part of a number of those farm leaders, a submission that dealt with not what I would call whole-hearted support. And that came from the farmers union, number one, and SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities), number two. Those two organizations did not in fact support the Minister of Agriculture in dealing with the functions of the changes to GRIP.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that SARM wrote the Minister of Agriculture a letter, and I have a copy of that in my hand. And that, Mr. Minister, says that there are at least five areas that they qualified their decision to lend their support in a signature to that brief that they presented to them.

And subsequent to that, Mr. Minister, they have gone across the province and dealt with the implications of the new GRIP legislation. And they have visited farms, and farm groups have told them that we need to have an opportunity to view the GRIP Bill.

And what we're proposing here, Mr. Speaker, is to present a resolution that would inform this Assembly and inform the farmers across the province that they should do that. There were limitations that SARM sent to the Minister of Agriculture on February 10. They said that they wanted to be involved in deferring some of those opportunities.

Now I just want to read for the record some of the things that they presented. On April 27, after the farm rally at the Agridome where the director from the south-east part of the province came to the meeting and said, we do not agree with the Minister of Agriculture, and told him that pointedly and specifically, this is the response that SARM said that they wanted registered.

After the committee report had been drafted, the SARM voiced five major concerns with recommendations of the report and by written letter as well as a meeting with the minister on February 13, 1992. At that point, the five concerns the SARM had were added to the GRIP review committee report. Mr. Speaker, those concerns are these: time limitations, bankability of the program, federal and provincial agreement, lack of a broad-based producer input, and significant changes violates contract.

The report was then signed by SARM as a participant, not as a supporter, as a participant in the discussion. And that, Mr. Speaker, is clearly in my view a significant difference from what the Minister of Agriculture has presented.

What we are asking now, Mr. Speaker, is to have an opportunity for the legislation to be sent across this province. And I'm going to make some recommendations that I believe are important. You need to have, Mr. Minister, the farm leaders take a look at your Bill. You had a review process in labour. Labour took and said, this is what we want to have. You gave them back the Bill that dealt with those issues. Now what we're asking, Mr. Speaker, is where would this minister have a precedent to hold the Bill back and say, I want to go consult? It would be politically expedient; it would be the right thing to do. But no, he's hidebound to stay right inside this Assembly and not deal with any of those opportunities at all.

And, Mr. Speaker, I have had representation from across this province saying that we want '91 GRIP. And I believe that the minister is acting irresponsible in not allowing farm leaders across this province to be able to review the Bill. I believe that he needs to do that. SARM meetings across the province in late June asked the minister to come and review. Next year, Mr. Speaker, the federal government is going to do a review.

And what we see happening, I believe, fundamentally, is coming to this point: last year because of the election there was no opportunity to do an extensive review. The Minister unilaterally made a decision that he was going to completely upset all of the process that had been followed up to that point, which he did when he introduced the changes that he made at the end of March. That completely upset the kinds of things that farmers were expecting.

The next point that I want to raise is that he made the observations that this was better. When farmers realized what they were signing up to, they said, oh no, this is a whole lot worse, this is worse than we had ever expected. As a matter of fact, people have made representation to us from the Battleford area, from Tisdale, throughout the north-west and the north-east where there's serious, serious drought problems. And they have begun to recognize what the chairman of that committee said, that when you have a drought you're going to have serious problems in relating this kind of a Bill that's going to benefit anyone. And that, Mr. Minister, is exactly what we're telling you.

So what we're asking you to do: would you please, would you please take out to rural Saskatchewan your Bill and say, now here it is. What do you think? Would you have the courage to do that? Take it out there and say to the farm leaders, what do you think? Say to the Sask Wheat Pool, what do you think? Say to SARM, what do you think? Canadian Wheat Growers, to the farmers' union, to all of them — would you have the courage, Mr. Minister, to take that Bill out into the country and let them look at it and then just tell you what changes they really are prepared to accept? Would you be prepared to do that?

That's the question that we raise and we have raised in this session over and over again, and it's fundamental to the discussion because producers in the province of Saskatchewan really want to do it. They want to do it but they also want to do it right, Mr. Minister, and you are not allowing them the opportunity to do it right. They have told me over and over, there are some things that we didn't like in '91 GRIP but there are a whole lot more we didn't like in '92. And that, Mr. Speaker, is the reason why we are presenting this motion before this Assembly here today.

I want to indicate that I have a whole lot that could be said, but, Mr. Speaker, we are dealing here within a short time frame so I am going to read this into the record that this is the motion that we are going to present, seconded by the member from Thunder Creek:

That this Assembly demands that the government give all Saskatchewan groups the same preferred

treatment as unions who have been able to view legislation that will affect them before it is introduced in the House, and in particular demands the government not introduce the GRIP legislation before agriculture organizations have had equal time to examine the contents of the proposed GRIP Bill as unions have and are having to examine proposed labour Bills.

Mr. Speaker, I so move.

(1445)

The Speaker: — Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, with leave, for the introduction of guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly three people who were — were — in the Speaker's gallery a moment ago, from the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. I guess they must have left just momentarily for some business. The general manager of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, Doug Matthies; Kathy Strutt, the manager of client services; and Bonnie Meier, the manager of marketing. I understand they're going to be here a little bit later this afternoon for a few minutes so we'll maybe introduce them again at that time if they're here, Mr. Speaker. Please welcome these folks though.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Resolution No. 39 (continued)

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me to stand in the House today and second the motion of the member from Morse. This motion allows the government, I think, an ideal opportunity to actually live up to some of the campaign rhetoric that we were subjected to in this province for so long by the New Democratic Party. This was the party that was going to be so open and accountable to Saskatchewan people. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, as we've seen unfortunately in the past eight months, that that is far from the truth.

As the debate on the limits to bell-ringing I think proved to everyone in this province and certainly everyone in the Chamber, Mr. Speaker, is that New Democrats say one thing in opposition and say another thing when they're in government. I mean the most passionate defenders of democracy that the province has ever seen were sitting in the opposition benches in 1989, and now that they're in government they quite willingly will use their majority to trod over the opposition in any way that they can.

And unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, that's been the history of the entire GRIP issue. We've had a Minister of Agriculture who simply had his mind made up about change to the system before ever talking to anyone, into a hurry-up

offence; was warned over and over again that there was potential problems, there was legal problems, there was moral problems, there was all sorts of problems attached to this type of process. But the choice was, well we'll use our very large majority and we'll simply steamroll the opposition and it will be a done deal.

The result, Mr. Speaker, as you've seen, has very large ramifications for the province of Saskatchewan. We have producers now suffering extreme drought in some areas of our province, producers that have very little coverage underneath the proposed changes. We see disharmony between provincial and federal levels of government.

Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, we've seen the rules of this Assembly changed in a way that perhaps is irrevocable in the future because of this whole GRIP issue, and I think, Mr. Speaker, speaks to poor management on behalf of the government on this issue.

It's obviously time that this thing be resolved in a way that has some long-term and lasting effect. There have been multiple suggestions put forward as to how that could be achieved.

The one I think that made a lot of sense, Mr. Speaker, was the Standing Committee on Agriculture of this legislature which has not gone out and done anything constructive, so I'm told, since the 1920s, could have had an ideal opportunity. I mean the government has structured all sorts of commissions and bodies of this legislature and sent them out on various missions since the election.

Our most important industry — a 4 billion-plus dollar industry — they don't see fit to have the standing committee of this House do what it would normally do in most other jurisdictions. Take a piece of controversial agricultural legislation, take it out to the public and discuss with their stakeholders the process that should be followed.

And it's evident, Mr. Speaker, from the way the government operates, that they accept that as the **de facto** way of operation in other areas. And I guess that's what really upsets people in the province of Saskatchewan. The construction industry, which I'm told is a \$1.7 billion industry in the province of Saskatchewan — the unionized contractors and the construction unions are given a copy of the proposed changes to an Act representing labour relations in the construction industry.

It has "draft" marked on it, and the minister responsible has no problem in giving it to his friends in the union leadership. He has no problem in giving it to the unionized contractors in the province. I don't think he quite expected the reaction from the non-union sector that he got. But the fact is, Mr. Speaker, that he saw it quite proper to put that draft legislation out there.

The minister stands on the steps of the legislature, tells the 600 people assembled outside — the members of the construction unions — that this is the package, this is what you're going to get, that he will pass it through this legislature. And it is out there for the world to see.

Now I know a \$1.7 billion construction industry isn't

quite as important to the province as agriculture is, which is about three times the size, but I would think, Mr. Speaker, that an industry as large as agriculture should have the same opportunities as the construction industry.

I mean if anyone doesn't think that this particular piece of legislation isn't going to have cost implications for this province, they're dreaming. People in the construction industry tell us that anywhere from 20 to 40 per cent increase in costs will occur by adopting this piece of legislation. That means that every project that the taxpayers of this province are involved in — every last project — if this legislation goes through, will have a 20 to 40 per cent cost increase attached to it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Labour says it's in the best interests of the public, in the best interest of industrial and labour harmony in this province for the taxpayer to suck that 20 to 40 per cent up and proceed accordingly. And when we're going to suck up that 20 to 40 per cent as taxpayers in this province, we're going to do it with the Bill being public.

Now one of the fundamental arguments of the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Finance through this whole GRIP debate is that because it's a financially driven Bill — has nothing to do with the well-being of farmers; it's driven by finance — therefore we can't put it out to the public to have a look at. And there's where the basic flaw is, Mr. Speaker.

It's all right for the construction industry; we'll have tens of thousands of dollars of costs added to taxpayers in this province. It's all right in the environmental area. The minister can come into this House with very stringent measures which I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, will add to the cost of every taxpayer in this province. No hesitation to take draft legislation and put it out amongst the stakeholders. But here we have a government hiding behind the fact that this GRIP legislation will have cost implications and therefore the stakeholder, the 50,000 farm families that were signed up, don't have an opportunity to look at.

And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that there is a certain amount of hypocrisy attached to a stand like that. There's a certain amount of hypocrisy attached to a political party that stood on its feet year after year in this Assembly and out in the streets and byways of Saskatchewan, saying that they would never do anything like that. And now in fact that's what we see.

So obviously we've got a problem here, Mr. Speaker. And the right way to solve the problem, the right way for this government to regain credibility, the right way for the New Democratic Party, I say, to regain some credibility with farm people in this province, would be to have the Standing Committee on Agriculture take this Bill out before it is forced into this Assembly, before the government is going to use their majority to ram it through here; that the contract holders, the people most affected, should have an opportunity to review and look at this piece of draft legislation.

And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, if it isn't good enough for the farm families of this province to have the same

opportunity as the union leaders, then this government should never, ever again allow a piece of draft legislation to go forward in the public for purview before passage in this legislature.

And I don't think that process is right, Mr. Speaker. I think the public should have access to draft legislation, that they should pass comment on it, that the changes should be made before it ever hits the floor of this Chamber. And by doing so we won't get in the awful situation that the Minister of Agriculture and the Premier of this province have put us in with this whole GRIP fiasco.

And that's why the motion, as put forward by the member from Morse, gives this Assembly, gives this government, an opportunity to regroup and gain some credibility back with the people that it has been saddled the task of governing and governing properly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the end of my remarks I will be moving an amendment that goes along the following lines:

That the words following "Assembly" be deleted and substituting:

commends the government's continuing efforts to ensure public consultations with all sectors of society and encourages the government's promotion of unity, co-operation, and understanding among all Saskatchewan people — rural and urban, farmers, workers, and business people — in order to heal the division and disharmony promoted by the previous government of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to start by reminding the members opposite that they suffered tremendous humiliation and defeat by giving arguments exactly along the lines the two members gave the arguments today — trying to divide the people of Saskatchewan.

The second point I want to make right off the start is that it's ironic that the GRIP legislation was attempted to be introduced on June 10. It's now July 28; we could have had two months for discussion and consultations. The members opposite know that but they don't want to accept the fact that they made a democratic mistake. In fact I think as of last Friday the 229 names on petitions they submitted admits that.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite tried in the past to divide union and non-union workers. In fact during the era of their government they drove this province from 80 per cent unionized workers to 20 per cent — trying to destroy people, organizations, who have a right to organize. They tried to drive a wedge between rural and urban Saskatchewan on every agriculture program they attempted to put forward on the basis of their political agenda.

They were dividing the people of the province who elected them to govern them as one body. They tried to

divide the poor and the wealthy. I recall in the administration previous they were cutting back social services payments. At the same time they introduced a flat tax that allowed people to invest in MURBs (multiple unit residential building) before they paid their flat tax.

Now that kind of division in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, doesn't work, and obviously it doesn't work because the members opposite who sit there with 10 learned the hard way.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the members opposite and the people of Saskatchewan that this is a new era, the new era based on fairness, based on consultation. And the people of Saskatchewan understand that. Certainly there are people out in Saskatchewan who do not agree with everything any government does, including ours. That's their right and that's the democratic system, the way it works.

(1500)

But people in Saskatchewan understand that there were decisions that we had to make as government in order to promote this province and to sustain the economic activity and build on it in the future. So they understand why we made those decisions.

Even the federal government knows that we are serious. Mr. Speaker, just a few days ago the Premier of our province wrote the Prime Minister asking him to come here or we'd go there and discuss the need for third-line programming for agriculture. The Prime Minister, through his Minister of Agriculture, responded. We made public statements to say that although we did not accept every detail of the letter — which is common in every negotiation — that we were willing to consider and meet with them.

And what did the members opposite say? What did the Leader of the Opposition say today? You're rejecting it. He went on to say, you're doing the farmers out of \$40 an acre. He went further on to say, you're losing hundreds of millions of dollars. And check the record, Mr. Speaker, because that's exactly what he said. That type of exaggerating the truth — and there are many more better names to describe that — is the reason that that member opposite is now the Leader of the Opposition and not the Premier of this province — dividing people, manipulating people and telling half-truths.

Mr. Speaker, this is a new era, and this government will turn that around.

The federal government has responded, so now we will be discussing matters with them to make sure that Saskatchewan gets the best deal for the farmers and the taxpayers of this province. No middle-of-the-night phone calls in the wee hours of the morning before an election like the previous government operated because we understand and the federal government understands. The federal government understands, Mr. Speaker, because they know they're dealing with a government they can trust. Even the Tory government in Ottawa knows they're dealing with a government they can trust. And in the past — and the members opposite laugh and smile — they

know the trust that was instilled upon the last premier of this province by the federal government. There was none.

Mr. Speaker, I invite the opposition to come forward, put their political desires and ambitions on the back burner just for a while. I mean we have a situation, Mr. Speaker, where we have a federal government offering up a proposal to help out farmers. We have a provincial government who is ready to consult and negotiate with the federal government in order that we get the best deal for farmers and all the people of Saskatchewan. We have 10 tiny Tories in opposition, Mr. Speaker, who are sitting there saying, well they're going to back out if you don't take this deal as it is.

Mr. Speaker, what kind of an effective opposition is that? What responsibility do the people of Saskatchewan put on the opposition? Was it for them to protect themselves politically? Was it for them to sit there and say and make threats to the province and the people of Saskatchewan saying, well you better do this or else the feds are going to withdraw?

Well, Mr. Speaker, there's been no indication from the federal government that they're going to withdraw. They've put the offer forward. Only the Tories in Saskatchewan in opposition, who will never seem to learn the error of their ways in the past, who continue to try to put their political agenda — and their political agenda of course is trying to destroy the New Democrats — ahead of the responsible position that people elected them to, and that is if something is worth considering, to consider it and negotiate and bargain through it, instead of taking the negative position, absolutely saying no, you better do this or else.

Mr. Speaker, they were not elected to do that. And I think that the people of Saskatchewan made a very wise choice in the last October election.

I want to say a couple of other things, Mr. Speaker. I will predict that Alberta and Manitoba, in the years to come, will follow Saskatchewan's lead. And Saskatchewan's lead being working for all the people of this province by negotiating deals with the federal government that stops the tremendous off-loading that has been forced upon the three prairie provinces over the last number of years.

I can see Alberta, with their \$1.2 billion deficit, being forced back into the free-enterprise system and accepting the lead that Saskatchewan's taking, and Manitoba as well. We understand. We have nothing to lose by standing up for the people against the Tory opposition in Ottawa. And I predict, Mr. Speaker, that the provincial Tory governments in Alberta and Manitoba will see that this is the right way to go, and Saskatchewan setting an example, follow it in order that they protect their people as well.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line here is we have federal off-loading and we're going to do all we can to protect the farmers and the people of this province. We have a federal government who knows, because they're coming into an election period, who knows because Saskatchewan ... we well represented the position of our province in Ottawa, who knows the economic state of

affairs. We have an opposition who denies that there can be anything done, who rely on threats and trying to divide people of this province.

But most important, Mr. Speaker, we have a government now in Saskatchewan that is sincere and honest, and people know that. And a government that will — has in the past and will in the future — continue to ensure that we treat all people fairly, and that means the federal government fairly, but toughly, to ensure that the province of Saskatchewan gets its fair due.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that I would like to move, seconded by the member from Moose Jaw Palliser:

That all the words following “Assembly” be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

Commends the government’s continuing efforts to ensure public consultation with all sectors of society and encourages the government’s promotion of unity, co-operation, understanding among all Saskatchewan people, rural and urban, farmers, workers, business people, in order to heal the division and the disharmony promoted by the previous Government of Saskatchewan.

I so move.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is with great pleasure that I enter into debate and in support of the fine amendment moved by my good friend and colleague, the member for Humboldt.

Now, Mr. Speaker, just to put this into context a couple of weeks ago I was watching a Blue Jays game on TV and in the late innings, Alomar, in a close ball game, led off with a single with Carter and Winfield coming up to bat, Mr. Speaker. Now it never dawned, I think, for a second on any faithful Jays fan or the manager of the team that either Carter or Winfield should go up and bunt Alomar to second so that somebody can bat him home.

You see, Mr. Speaker, simply put, that when the going gets tough and when you’re in the late innings, what you do is you put your best foot forward. You go with your strength.

You see, Mr. Speaker, I’m proud to say that I am a Saskatchewanian by choice. I’m pleased to say that I’m a Saskatchewanian by choice. I grew up in a rural community in Alberta, spent my university years and started my career in Manitoba, and then in 1973, Mr. Speaker, chose to make my home the province of Saskatchewan.

Having lived in all three prairie provinces, it is clear to me that there is no province of the three that comes close to the quality of life that we enjoy here in Saskatchewan. But why is that, Mr. Speaker?

Simply put, it’s not the natural advantages that we enjoy. Here we are, land-locked in the middle of the prairies, a harsh climate, a small population, a long way from

populations . . . from markets for production of goods.

Mr. Speaker, but what we have in this province that we enjoy here more than anywhere else in the nation — in this nation which the United Nations has designated as the most desirable in which to live in the world — here in this province, Mr. Speaker, we have something that is stronger than any other province in the nation, and that is a spirit of co-operation.

You see, it’s the spirit of co-operation that has made our province and our people strong. It is that spirit of co-operation, it is in this province, that were born things like credit unions: when there were problems in funding the needs that people couldn’t have met through the funding of banks and institutions, Mr. Speaker, credit unions.

Wheat pools and unions were born here in this province, Mr. Speaker, in this province, as a way of bringing together people to solve our problems because we know in Saskatchewan intuitively that when the going gets tough, the tough get going by pulling together.

And Mr. Speaker, I want to stand in support of this amendment proposed by the member from Humboldt because . . .

An Hon. Member: — When are you going to drag Tommy’s bones out here one more time?

Mr. Hagel: — Well now the member from Thunder Creek, he doesn’t support this kind of approach to problem solving in Saskatchewan. You know, Mr. Speaker, when I sat — well in fact just a little less than a year ago — on that side of the House where the member from Thunder Creek parks his seat these days, Mr. Speaker, I would watch across the side, and I would see something, Mr. Speaker, that saddened me. And as I went around the province of Saskatchewan, I heard people say over and over again, it is despicable that any government of the province of Saskatchewan should make as its political agenda the desire to drive a wedge between rural and urban Saskatchewan.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the people spoke strongly on October 21. They said no more wedge; it’s time for the Government of Saskatchewan to be as good as the people that elect it and to start working together in the interest of the future of our people and our children and our children’s children.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — And so, Mr. Speaker, it has been with that in mind — understanding the strength and the history of our province — that a new government has made as part of its style of governing to work to bring people together, to remove wedges, to tear down fences, to build bridges, to find common bonds between people. And that involves the process of consultation so that at the end of the day it may be that every opinion you had is not what is decided upon and enacted by the government of the day, but at least your government respected in this democratic society that you had an opinion worth hearing and was willing to listen.

And, Mr. Speaker, it is with that in mind and this style of government that I support this amendment. And I know that this is a topic that is of concern to a large number of members in this Assembly and that there are other items of business that the Assembly wishes to deal with today. And so as to provide that opportunity at a future date, Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of debate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Speaker, I ask for leave to go to government business.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, thank you. I just wanted to indicate that it was our understanding that we would grant leave and move to government business and ask for adjournment at 5 o'clock and with that we give leave.

Leave granted.

(1515)

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

Consolidated Fund Expenditure Education Vote 5

Item 1

The Chair: — Would the minister please introduce her officials.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm pleased to introduce, on my left, the deputy minister of the Department of Education, Arleen Hynd; and seated directly behind her is Mr. Robin Johnson.

Mr. Chairman, prior to beginning, I would be pleased to table answers to a number of written questions which were transmitted to us prior. And I believe this represents answers to the entire set of questions, if I could have the assistance of a Clerk.

Mr. Chairman, I apologize that the letter of . . . I have not had time to prepare a letter of transmittal to my official critic, the Hon. Mr. D'Autremont. The covering letter is in the form of a memorandum from the deputy minister to myself. So with my apologies for the lack of a formal transmittal letter, I hope that this will provide the answers that the member seeks.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to welcome the minister and her officials here today, and I would like to thank her for her information, the replies to our global questions. And I look forward to reading through it and reviewing all the information. And the transmittal letter is fine, thank you, Madam Minister.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Minister, the other day we were dealing with some questions with respect to the priorities for the Department of Education with respect to funding of new construction as well as renovations. I'd like to pursue that a little bit

with you, just a few questions that I had about it.

What is the total volume of dollars allocated for this year for new construction?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, in response to the member, there is no allocation in this year's budget for new construction. There is \$65 million for payments of past commitments to new construction that has already been built — mortgage payments, if you like; and there is \$14 million, of which \$11 million is designated for the K to 12 system, the other 3 million being to post-secondary system.

And that is designated to be for renovations and maintenance of emergent nature. And it does include in some cases the construction of portable . . . relocateable units falls into that class. And it could be perceived to be new construction, but it would be to correct an emergency situation. So there's no new construction **per se** allowed for, or funds allocated for in the current budget.

Mr. Boyd: — Madam Minister, I wonder if we could deal specifically then with a couple . . . three different schools in my constituency. The Kindersley Composite School, the Dodsland School in Dodsland, and the school in Eston. I wanted to know on the list . . . You explained the other day that you have, I believe, arrived at a new way of prioritizing the different schools with respect to renovations as well as new construction. And I wanted to know what priority the Kindersley Composite School has for new construction or renovation as well as the Dodsland and Eston School.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, the new process for allocating capital for school construction that I referred to the other day that the member from Kindersley I think is referencing, is at this stage still a proposal. And we have almost completed our consultations with the community that will be affected, the education community and the construction community on this, but it has not yet been adopted as a policy, the new way of allocating and the new way of prioritizing projects. So I wouldn't be able to comment on exactly where the project specifically that he refers to will line up in the order of . . . in the new allocation procedures.

As the member from Kindersley will be aware, there are emergency construction or renovations going on with respect to the air quality in the Eston School right now. But in terms of replacement or new capital, I wouldn't be able to comment on where any project or proposed project in the province will exactly line up on the new schedule because we haven't finalized the new process yet.

Mr. Boyd: — Madam Minister, you mean to tell me in this province currently we have no idea of what any new school in the province is going to be built? Absolutely no idea of what priority a different town has or a different school has in a town or city in this province? We have no indication whatsoever that I can tell the folks, the good folks of Kindersley, Dodsland or Eston where their school rates?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, in response to the member from Kindersley, I would like to say that that's certainly not the case. What we did inherit from the previous administration was a backlog of construction projects that were being proposed in the K to 12 system that amounted to some \$350 million. And obviously no administration in Saskatchewan would have been able to address all those requests and proposals in any one year.

But I assume . . . well I can say with certainty that the same criteria that were important in the previous facilities priority index, if you like, will prevail in the new one. So that if there is a project proposed where there is a need because of increasing enrolment or the capacity of the facility, if there are health, fire, structural safety issues to be addressed in an existing building, if there is to be proposed the joint use of a facility so that it will be used more hours and for more time during the year than just as an elementary school building will be, there are a number of factors that would serve to increase the rating and bring a project, if you like, closer to the top.

So the criteria certainly will be reasonable and won't be changed that much from what the old . . . the previous criteria. What will change is that there will be a numbering system and there will be no jumping the queue, if you like. And it's proposed that once a number or priority is allocated to a project, under the proposed scheme, when it's adopted, that a facility or a school board will be able to predict with even more accuracy than in the past when their project will actually be realized and when they should go into the planning stages that start to cost money, like the architectural and so on.

Mr. Boyd: — Madam Minister, so now we're in the situation where if we accept your figure of \$300 million of new construction needed in this province . . . So you currently have absolutely not one penny allocated for new construction and yet you have \$300 million worth of schools, if we accept your figure, that need to be built. That's the situation as I understand what you're saying. So it's a tremendously great start to dealing with that problem, by not allocating one penny towards it.

Madam Minister, in these three communities there are identifiable problems with the schools, and you're well aware of it. The school in Eston with the radon concern is being dealt with, but that doesn't deal with the problem that's going to be associated with the moving of the lower grade students up to that school. It doesn't deal with that problem. In Dodsland it doesn't deal with the problem of the leaking roof. In Kindersley it doesn't deal with the problem of the leaking roof as well as the heaving of the floors and the grade beams under the building cracking up.

None of what you've said deals with those concerns, Madam Minister. And I'm asking on behalf of these three communities, when will these three communities be given some indication of when their school will be up for either a major renovation or a new construction?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, first of all I would like to say that the \$350 million is not my figure. It is the figure that we . . . it is a number of projects that were

proposed, that we inherited at the time after the election last October 21. This is what we found the situation to be, is that there was in the facilities branch a backlog of \$350-some-million of construction requests.

Now with the changing demographics in Saskatchewan it is difficult for school boards to predict and to rationalize their needs for space. And the most I can say about when funds will become available is that in light of the fiscal situation that we inherited, the hon. member opposite should realize that every dollar we would spend would be a borrowed dollar. So you would have to use the incremental amount of interest which would increase that \$350 million considerably over the 10-year term of paying for that school.

So the most I can say in terms of when, is as soon as funds become available. And we were, in this year's budget, going to take the time to do emergency repairs only, to re-evaluate how capital is allocated to make sure that we do make the very best use of scarce dollars and allocate those scarce dollars to the very highest priorities in terms of the facilities that are required. So that is when. And schools will be able to predict as soon as funds become available.

Mr. Boyd: — Madam Minister, I wonder if you could give us some indication then of when your method of categorizing the schools will be available.

(1530)

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, as I indicated earlier, the consultation process is nearly complete, and I expect that the proposal as revised through the consultative process — because we did receive some good suggestions — will likely go to the cabinet in August or early September for finalization and approval.

Mr. Boyd: — Madam Minister, I wanted to deal now specifically with the Eston School, the Eston south campus, with respect to the radon gas situation there that we're all aware of.

The levels, as I understand it, were extremely high — very, very high. There were temporary measures that were put in place that dealt with it fairly adequately, I understand. Now there is . . . the tender has been let and I believe construction has even started on the renovations necessary to improve the air quality in that school.

Now, Madam Minister, I'm wondering in light of the fact that the, I understand, the long-term plan is to move the students from the north campus down to the south campus and amalgamate them into one school — was there any consideration given to complete new construction rather than spending something in the order of \$300,000 on a school that may not be adequate to serve the needs of both of those campuses when they join together?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, the amount that was tendered and spent in the most recent renovation to address the radon problem at Eston location was \$188,000. And these decisions are within the purview of the local school . . . of the school division, and those

members of the school board are elected to represent the interests of the people in the school division and the people that they serve.

And while we attempt to support their requests and their decisions to the extent that we can — and we certainly did work closely for a long period of time with the division board over the situation at Eston because the health and safety of the students and teachers is of paramount importance to us — but how they accommodate the needs of their students and the configuration of their class-rooms is entirely within the authority of the duly-elected local board and the division board.

Mr. Boyd: — Well, Madam Minister, that isn't what they've told me. They have suggested to me that department officials told them that construction of a new school was out, might as well forget that idea completely. And renovation was the only thing that was going to be done, even in light of the fact that the board suggested to them that when the two campuses amalgamate into one, they were going to have some space problems accommodating all of the students.

Madam Minister, I would ask again: was there consideration given for new construction of that school?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Well, Mr. Chairman, a request for a new school, as I indicated earlier, there were no allocations for construction of new schools in the 1992-93 budget for obvious reasons. The cupboard was bare; there was no money.

This is the reason that we allocated whatever dollars that we could find for emergent repairs, and a significant amount of that was allocated to the project in Eston to repair the difficulties there.

So my remarks with respect to new construction are the same as before. And if the need is urgent at Eston, and if in fact a request comes formally forward to the facilities branch, it will be ranked according to the forthcoming criteria. And then the Eston . . . the division board can plan accordingly.

Mr. Boyd: — Madam Minister, Mr. Chairman, I wanted to deal now specifically with a situation with respect to a busing concern. Mr. Ryan Hennes of Kindersley, he had asked me if I would ask a few questions on his behalf.

What is the department's policy with regard to busing of students to Christian schools in the province?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, in response to the hon. member's question, transportation is the responsibility again of the division board. There is assistance for transportation. A factor is contained in the foundation formula, so there is assistance from the province in funding transportation.

The configuration of the transportation system is entirely the responsibility of the division board, and the policy has been that transportation to private schools of any kind is a matter for negotiation, I guess, between the parent, the student, and the board. But in most cases, boards have

adopted policies of having people who opt to send their children to private schools be responsible for their own transportation. That is generally uniform throughout the province. And again it's an area where the department or the government does not interfere with the autonomy and the decision-making powers and authority of the division board which is duly elected to serve the people of the area.

Mr. Boyd: — Madam Minister, I would like to just relate the situation to you for the record. Mr. Hennes, he lives in the rural part of the Kindersley school division; he's about 18 miles from town. His children, he would like them to go to the Christian academy in Kindersley. The school bus drives right by the yard, right in front of his house on the farm. He would . . . then when it goes into Kindersley, the elementary school where his children would be attending is one block removed from the Christian academy.

Now it seems to me that it would be a fairly reasonable request on his behalf, in light of the fact that he's a taxpayer the same as the rest of us in this province that . . . it would seem to me that it's a reasonable request to ask if his children can't ride that bus that passes right by his door and goes into Kindersley and drops the kids off at the elementary school, and then have them walk down there.

Now he suggested he understands the arguments about concern about liability and of that kind of consideration. He has made representation to the board as well as your office, I believe, that he is willing to provide for liability insurance on his children. He's willing to provide a waiver with respect to the discipline of his children on the school bus. He seems to me to have covered off all of the concerns that anyone would have about this type of thing.

And I'm wondering, Madam Minister . . . I know that you've received a number of letters from him and in them he's appealed to you as the Minister of Education for the province of Saskatchewan to support him in his concern to have his children ride that school bus. And I'm wondering, Madam Minister, what your thoughts on that are. Do you believe that he should be given some consideration . . . his children be given some consideration to ride the school bus to that school?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, I guess I can only repeat . . . and I do recall the correspondence with the constituent of the member opposite that he refers to, but I still believe that it is the responsibility of the division board, the school board that's elected at the local level, to provide for transportation and to decide how they will . . . what the configuration of their system will be.

And it may be a different case. May seem entirely reasonable in this case. May seem reasonable, but as a . . . And I know this may be an exaggerated case because we were close to an urban centre, but I was the driver of a school bus for a considerable length of time. And we lived in an area close to Saskatoon where there was a fairly large rural population, was fairly dense for a rural area, and the policy of the school board at the time . . . or the school unit was to provide transportation only to those schools which they operated or with which they had a tuition agreement. And if they had departed from that, we would have been making numerous . . . over half a dozen

stops to different kinds of schools of the parents' choices.

So that may be a situation on the other end of the spectrum, but I think in most cases — in all cases that I'm aware of — the position of the local board is taken with due regard to the well-being of all of the people that seek access to education in their jurisdiction.

And when parents opt or students opt to have arrangements for themselves that differ from the majority or that differ from the policy of the school board, if they can't work out arrangements, private arrangements with the school board, then I think and I support that the decision of the unit board, the elected unit board, should prevail and that the Department of Education or the government should not intervene.

Mr. Boyd: — Madam Minister, just so we can understand this. His children live 18 miles from town. The school bus passes right past his yard. Now they don't want to be delivered to the front door of the Christian academy in Kindersley. They are willing to walk that one block down the street from the elementary school to the Christian academy. That's not a problem. They're not being asked to deliver them all over Kindersley. They're being asked to deliver them right to where they would be delivered if they belonged . . . if they were going to the public school system. That's where they're asking to go to. They're not asking to be delivered anywhere else.

He is simply saying that he would appreciate, appreciate your support in his concern. And he would also appreciate the opportunity to speak to you about it, Madam Minister.

So far, Madam Minister, we have a situation now where a gentleman with a concern . . . a family with a concern about the delivery, the busing of their students to a Christian school cannot even get an opportunity to speak to you about it. He has requested it no less — if memory serves — three occasions a meeting with you. Five minutes of your time, at your convenience, in Regina.

He's not asking you to drive out or fly out to Kindersley to meet with him. He's asking for a few minutes of your time to speak to you about this situation. And I think it's a completely reasonable request that the Minister of Education should be able to take a few minutes of her schedule to address a concern about the busing of his children to school.

Madam Minister, I think it's incumbent upon you as the Minister of Education to make that kind of commitment to people like Mr. Hennes and his family, to give them a few minutes of your time.

Madam Minister, I would wonder if you would like to comment on that.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, I do meet with many, many people from all over the province that have various concerns with respect to the education of themselves or their children. And I have taken the time to reply to the correspondence of the constituent that the hon. member opposite refers to.

And I think it would be misleading and unkind of me to suggest that he should take his time and his expenses to drive to Regina to discuss this problem that he feels he's having with the school board when he could talk to the local school board at home. I cannot change the answer that he gets from the school board. I support the school unit's position on the transportation question.

And it is not as simple as it seems. When a person opts for a different style of education or a different opportunity for his children than what the unit is providing, then when that student is a passenger on the bus, they're not a student of the unit; they're not covered by the liability insurance. I can't imagine why a unit board would want to set up different sets of circumstances for all of the people that they serve.

So I think that when a person opts for something different than what is being offered, that they should be prepared to pay the difference or to make accommodations to avail themselves of that different opportunity. If free transportation is available to the school that the unit board operates, if someone voluntarily opts for different arrangements, then if there's a differential in cost or convenience, that should be incumbent on the individual.

And I support the board's position in that and I don't want to mislead anyone by giving them an appointment and asking them to drive all the way to Regina to visit me about it when I know that I cannot change the answer that I have given in the correspondence.

Mr. Boyd: — Madam Minister, I don't think you need to be concerned about Mr. Hennes. Mr. Hennes has made the offer. He has suggested that he is willing to come and see you for five minutes if you will give him five minutes of your time. But so far you've denied his request for a few minutes of your time. Surely there's five minutes within your schedule somewhere within the next month that you can fit him in for a brief consultation about this concern of his.

And I'm wondering, Madam Minister, is it not a fact that there are other locations within Saskatchewan that this is done?

(1545)

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, the transportation arrangements are the responsibility of the unit board. It may be true that in some cases that arrangements have been able to be worked out between individuals and the board that vary from the norm. It seems that in this case such an arrangement has not been able to be concluded.

I have no problem whatsoever with giving a few minutes of my time, but a few minutes of my time in Regina represents to this constituent probably a day of travel from Kindersley to Regina and back. And if the outcome is not going to change, I feel that I'm imposing upon him. The five minutes of my time is not the issue. I'd certainly be glad to offer it as long as there was no hope that the outcome was going to change, because I will continue to support the unit board. And I suggest that his time would be better spent really, talking to the unit board. And if no

arrangement can be made there, I would not be amenable to supporting a decision other than what the board makes.

Mr. Boyd: — Well thank you, Madam Minister. Now we're getting somewhere. We've at least got an appointment established for Mr. Hennes. I'm sure he'll be taking you up on that offer. He's not concerned about the cost of it. He's already invested \$75,000 of his tax money into the school system over the last number of years, so a trip to Regina is pretty incidental as far as he's concerned, Madam Minister.

All he is asking for, to suggest to the board that in other areas that there is some consideration been given to this type of thing; that the Act sets out or suggests that perhaps negotiated settlements in other areas have been done. And perhaps they should look at maybe a negotiated settlement in this area as well.

He's willing to pay to have his children ride that school bus as well as his tax dollars go into it. He's also willing, as I said earlier — you brought up the question of the liability insurance — he's willing to provide liability insurance. He's willing to provide that, Madam Minister.

So at your earliest convenience I would suggest, Madam Minister, that your officials take the opportunity to call Mr. Hennes and set up an appointment with him to discuss his concerns. I don't know whether or not he's going to be able to persuade you to change your mind, but that's not my judgement. I don't think it should be your judgement either.

I think you should just take the opportunity to hear what he has to say first of all, and then tell him what your position is going to be. I think he wants to get it right to the top, and you're the Minister of Education in this province. He wants to hear it from your lips that you do not support his concern about busing his children to school even though the bus drives right past his yard.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Well, Mr. Chairman, as I indicated, I would certainly be glad to take the time. There is a couple of things I would like to make clear though, that I wouldn't want to raise any expectations because I have indicated my position in writing. I would certainly be pleased, as I am always, to listen to people. I'd be glad to listen to his concerns, but in no way am I prepared to negotiate.

Mr. Boyd: — Madam Minister, as I said, I don't think he's wanting to negotiate with you. He's asking for your support. He's not asking for you to instruct the board. He's not asking for you to instruct the board to bus his children. He's asking you to simply sit down in your capacity as Minister of Education in this province and write a letter to the Kindersley school board and say to them that there are areas in this province that have done this type of thing; maybe you could give consideration to negotiating with Mr. Hennes. That's all he's asking.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — We're getting a bit off estimates here, I think, and we're also getting . . . leading down this path here. I said that I would meet with Mr. Hennes and listen to him. I did not undertake to use any suasion or

write any letters to the school board. I said I would meet and listen to him and I'll be happy to do that. Beyond that I will not make any commitments.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Minister, we have just started to review your answers that you have supplied, and we still need some time to review them a little further because I think that we're going to have some more questions dealing with those written questions and answers that we had asked for.

I'd like to go back to some questions dealing with another day earlier that you did supply some responses to, but there was three questions to which the responses were not part of the package that you had sent over. These questions were from June 8, page no. 956 from *Hansard*, and it was dealing with questions on the capital budget. You supplied most of the answers, Madam Minister, but I wonder if we could have a list of all of the schools that were receiving the renovation funding — the capital funding for renovations — and what those renovations were for.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, I believe that the information . . . For clarification, is this the 1992 amounts? The member is indicating yes.

I do have a copy of the news release that's dated June 2 and an attached list of all the projects which totalled \$8.8 million — the approved emergency repairs. If that's the information that the member wishes, with the assistance of the page, I'd like to provide him with a copy.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Madam Minister, on that list does that also include what repairs are being done, the reason why those emergency funds were needed?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — The list — I don't have it now, I just gave it away — but it has the location, the amount, and generally the nature of the repairs; like roof repairs, foundation repairs, that kind of thing.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Madam Minister. The other day you stated that this was just the preliminary set of repairs or numbers. You had, I believe it was, \$11 million to allocate to this and you had already spent 8.8. Has there been any new schools added to that list since the June news release?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, I'm not quite sure. I'll undertake to get the specific answer to that question. I know that as the projects have been tendered, that letters have gone out confirming the province's contribution to the whole project and so on. But whether there are any in addition to that list, I will undertake to provide that answer.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Okay, thank you, Madam Minister. Also on June 8, page 967 of *Hansard*, I asked for some documents dealing with the Oxbow School Division. You were quoting from a large group of numbers dealing with the Oxbow School Division. I also asked for the same information for the Arcola School Division. Can you supply that, please?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, for clarification,

I'm wondering if that was on construction or on grants. Because I think in the package of replies that we provided, we provided a page on the grant structure for every school in the province. So the Oxbow one would have been covered there, unless it's construction that the hon. member is referring to.

Mr. D'Autremont: — What I was referring to, Madam Minister, was the grant structure. And you were explaining how transportation had gone up and down, how student populations had gone up or down, and how the different numbers had changed to affect the final grant figures received by the Oxbow School Division. And it was all that complete set of numbers, those changes that I had asked for, and you had agreed to supply that then, Madam Minister.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, to the best of my knowledge, that information for the Oxbow School Division would have been included in the package of replies that we provided.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Madam Minister, you mean the package you supplied today?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — No, Mr. Chairman, whatever day it was that we got back into estimates for a few minutes. Last Thursday, I think it would have been, Thursday about 4:30 in the afternoon. And we provided a package at that time and it should have been included there.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Madam Minister, I'll check again but I'm afraid I didn't find it in there.

I have another question from that day, page 969 from *Hansard*, and this was dealing with the breakdown of all the changes involved in the Estevan School Division that caused their funding grants to drop so dramatically. I wonder if you could provide that information, please.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, I'm checking our copy of the package that we tendered in reply because I do believe that the information that the member is referring to would have been included in that. But we'll check our package to confirm that. But we did reply with what we thought to be, what we interpreted to be, the response to the questions on a separate page for each school division in the province.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Yes, Madam Minister, you did supply information for the separate school divisions, but in the case of the three school divisions I have mentioned, my intention, when I asked those questions, was for a more detailed . . . In the case of the Arcola School Division, you talked of tuition fees being paid to the school division or by the school division paying out. And it was all that type of information that I was asking for because those were the kind of information you quoted dealing with the Oxbow School Division.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, I have located the copy that we referred to in our own material. And this would have been the same material that would have been submitted in response. For the Oxbow School Division, what this information gives is the comparison, all the results of the adjustments in 1992 — a complete summary

and a comparison to 1991. And I think that would be the answer to the member's question. If he's unable to locate it, I can certainly give him a copy of this one. But this is part of the package that has a separate analysis for every school division in the province.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Madam Minister. We will check and just make sure that we don't have it, and then we'll contact you to get another copy of it, if necessary.

Madam Minister, on July 24 in *Hansard* you talked of the vocational rehabilitation disabled persons program that's in place to aid people at \$3.2 million. I'm just wondering, what are the requirements to access these funds, and who is qualified?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, in response to the question about the VRDP (vocational rehabilitation for disabled persons program), this is a program that the hon. member is probably aware started a number of years ago to provide funding to disabled persons to post-secondary education. And the situation is this, that when the program first started, for some of the years it was not completely subscribed. Then as the program became better known and as some of the groups, advocacy groups for disabled . . . people with various types of disabilities became aware of the program, the demand for the dollars became much greater.

Now in '91-92 the budget was \$3.257 million, and I believe at the time that our administration began at the November 1 or the end of October, the program was already fully subscribed. There weren't any more funds left for the balance of the year. The amount that we allocated in this year's budget is approximately the same, and I believe the situation is that it is already completely subscribed.

So we are looking at the whole range of student aid and how we increase accessibility to the post-secondary system to all students, and the VRDP is a very important part of that whole question of access. But the situation is now that for every dollar that we take out of the student aid fund to direct into VRDP, there's another student somewhere else then that has to be denied.

So while we're addressing the whole question of accessibility by all people on a global basis, we have left the allocation for VRDP at the same level. We hope to have a new policy in place for the next budgeting cycle.

(1600)

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Madam Minister, I'm sorry to hear that the program is out of money because there are still a large number of people out there who need access to this type of a program. The priorities that you have allocated throughout your whole budgetary process, this is one example of what's happening. People who are in need are losing out on opportunities.

And the reason I brought this particular program up is because just this week I received a letter. And I'll read it to you, Madam Minister, and then I'll send you a copy of it.

I am a single parent trying to raise 4 children. My husband left me 1 year ago and I have been on social assistance. I would like to upgrade my school and try to get some work. I am in a wheelchair and not just any kind of work will do. I applied to VRDP for the help and was informed they are out of funding. They would like to see people get off welfare but are very unwilling to help. Could you please look into this matter further (for me) . . .

So not only, Madam Minister, is this woman in a wheelchair but her daughter is in a wheelchair also. And these are the kind of people that should be your priorities, should be the priorities when you're setting your budgets for funding. And, Madam Minister, I would ask you to please take a look at this particular case and see if there is not some assistance that you could provide for them. I believe that there should be some place in your budget to help out with people like this.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, I would be happy to receive a copy of the letter and to reply to the writer. I should add that the VRDP funds are cost shared; they're 50/50 federal and provincial dollars.

And there was a change made last year by the province in the previous administration in the criteria which increased the demand on the program and reduced the number of people that would be able to be eligible for it if the amounts stayed the same because it's totally not repayable. And the way the situation was, was if you could meet the medical criteria, you just got the money. And it included a living allowance.

Now those people who cannot access VRDP because the funds are depleted this year are certainly still eligible for the regular student aid . . . depending on the circumstances, is not 100 per cent repayable for disabled people. It's not quite the same as VRDP funding, but it isn't quite accurate to say that there is no assistance available.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Madam Minister, I look forward to your reply in this case and for whatever assistance you can provide for this lady.

Madam Minister, I'd like to go back to our original debate in estimates concerning the transportation for students attending French schooling. At the time you said that there was no federal funds being provided to the transportation of students; also that there was no additional costs for students travelling to attend French schools.

What happens, Madam Minister, when a student is residing in school division A and is transported to school division B to attend a French school? Who picks up the additional costs?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Well, Mr. Chairman, as far as I'm aware, the situation would be exactly the same if they're going from one school division to another for any reason. And there is a variety of reasons where there are tuition arrangements, transportation arrangements made between school boards for access to students to programs

that one division doesn't provide and the other one does.

So this would be a matter of negotiation between the respective school boards.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Madam Minister, I talked to the person who was actually taking his children from the one school to another school in another division and he told me the rates that he was being paid. It is significantly further as compared to living across the street from the school to driving about 25 miles in this particular case.

I talked to the school division and asked them, well who pays for this; who pays this extra amount of fee to take these children to the French school? And the school board told me that it's funded by the federal government through the provincial programs.

Now who's paying this, Madam Minister? You say there's no change, no additional cost, but somebody's putting up the money.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, I'm not aware of the specific example that the member raises, and there is federal funding for provincial . . . for the delivery of French language programs. That's acknowledged. We spend it . . . the school board spends it and it's fully reimbursable by the federal government.

But normally that's program funds, and how the transportation is arranged for is the responsibility of the school board and couldn't be said to be directly a transportation subsidy by the federal government — never.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Madam Minister, that's a little strange. The person is getting approximately 24 cents a kilometre to take his children from one town in a division to another town in a different division. That's a subsidy. If he is being paid to take his children to a different school — a school of his choice, which he's entitled to attend — somebody is paying the cost. His children could walk across the street, and that's where the school is from his home.

So he is being subsidized to transport those children to the school of his choice, whereas the other people in the community do not have that choice. Some of them would like to send their children to other schools, but they are restricted from doing so. So I don't know how you could not call that a subsidy.

The federal government may indeed be paying it, or they may be paying it into the provincial government, who in turn pays it back out — I'm not sure how the program works and perhaps you can elaborate on how this funding is moved around within the system — but there is a subsidy there and somebody is paying it, so who is it?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, I can't comment or elaborate on the arrangements that school boards make with each other. And there are a lot of instances . . . Well let's face it, I mean every school bus mile that's travelled is a subsidized mile because there's no mileage charged. It doesn't matter what kind of a school it's to or from. And the arrangements for transportation are entirely

the responsibility of the local boards. And I'm sure that they try to work out the arrangements to serve the people and the students within their various jurisdictions in the most economical way.

And I can't comment on any of those arrangements, but I do know that in the funding . . . for the federal funding for the francophone component, or the French immersion, that there is not a component for transportation.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Madam Minister, if there isn't a component — federal money for transportation — then the provincial government must be supplying this subsidy. Because that is an additional cost to those school divisions that have students being transported from one division to another division.

When I talk to the school division, they tell me they're being compensated for that. So if the federal government isn't compensating them, then the provincial government must be compensating them. So what's the answer?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, there is a component in the foundation formula — the third-party funding that's provided by the provincial government to each respective school division in the province — there is a component for transportation that is based on the formula and would have been shown in the answers that we provided with respect to every school division.

And how the school division arranges its transportation system within those parameters is their responsibility. As long as they meet the criteria and we are aware of the factors that go into the funding formula, the portion that is for transportation, every school division gets that. Then they make their own arrangements. If they have sharing agreements with other divisions to increase the access to programs or schools, that is entirely the responsibility and within the purview of the unit boards and not the responsibility of the federal government or the province. It's part of the global funding.

Mr. D'Autremont: — So what you're saying, Madam Minister, is that when the school division applies for their grants, the transportation is all part of that. If they ask for or they submit, within their grant applications, that they are transporting students from division A to division B for the French programs then the provincial government includes that in their foundation grants, in their grant structure, and so then the provincial government pays that. Is that correct?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Well, Mr. Chairman, in response to the question, it's based upon mileage, and as I said, the unit board is responsible for the configuration of the system. And it wouldn't matter whether it's students from within the division or whether they're going from one division to another for perhaps . . . whether it's French or whether it's industrial arts or whether it's home economics or some other program that's not available within one division, they go to another division. And it's all part of the system. And it's throughout the province.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Okay. Thank you, Madam Minister. In our discussion on June 8 when we were talking about school governance, the French school

governance, you stated then that there would be no additional costs to the province by implementing these schools or the third school system.

And yet now you're admitting that because of the differences in the transportation, when those school divisions implement . . . or request that funding from you, they will include that additional transportation cost. And therefore there is actually additional transportation costs to the school divisions, therefore to the government, for the implementation of the third school boards. Is that correct?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, I can't agree with this interpretation. All of the students that are in Saskatchewan now without a francophone governance school component, which legislation has not been passed to accommodate and which has not been set up, all the students of school age in Saskatchewan are attending school now and being transported somewhere now.

What we did say with respect to the francophone governance component, if it were to be legislated and implemented, is that if there were any incremental costs, any costs over and above those that are in the system now, that the federal government would pick that up — in terms of the setting up of the schools, the requirement for a different type of teacher training, different kinds of class-room resources for a different style of language instruction, that that would be picked up by the federal government.

And that is what I meant by incremental costs — any costs, per pupil costs for that component that are over and above what is being experienced now.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Madam Minister, I believe that was all part of the agreement that was signed by the previous government and the federal government concerning the French chapter 13 students . . . charter 23, sorry. But those incremental costs are one-time costs. But with this transportation, those are not going to be simply incremental costs. They're going to be ongoing costs.

When you train a teacher, I would hope that you would only have to train that teacher once to be able to function properly in a French school. There may be upgrading, but that's normal with all the teacher training. But those transportation costs, those additional transportation costs are going to be ongoing. And the current program that you've mentioned, the federal agreement is only good for another five years.

If you can negotiate longer, well then that will increase. But at the present time it's only five years. So after that five-year term runs out, Madam Minister, then the province will indeed be bearing those additional costs. And I'm not disagreeing with the idea of having the third school board. It's just who is going to pay. And that's the question here.

(1615)

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, as I said before, that incremental costs are those that are described as

being over and above those that are taking place now. And the member is referring to costs that are already in the system. Those are not incremental, they're already there.

Then what we're saying is that it's not a five-year agreement. It was a 10-year agreement starting in 1988 which was reached and which was reneged upon by the then provincial administration, so that their richest years, the more heavily loaded to the federal contribution years, are gone. And we're in the position where we're trying to renegotiate that. There's not five years left in the current agreement; there's six years left.

And we believe that once the system is in place and all those teachers are trained and all those one-time costs are done, that there will not be any further incremental costs. That all of those students that are in the system are there now or would be there anyway and would be 100 per cent provincial responsibility.

However if it's seen that there is a need or there is a possibility that there could be a continuing federal contribution, we would certainly try to renegotiate that.

It's one component of really not just an agreement between Saskatchewan and the federal government, but a protocol between the federal government and all of the provinces in the country with respect to language instruction.

So this is the basis that we're committed to move on it, is that the federal government has to have a commitment to pick up the incremental costs.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Madam Minister, I'm a farmer. I live on . . . my section of land next to town has a railroad track running through it. I haul my grain to town; it's three miles. So I have a cost of transporting my grain. But what happened was they took the rail line out. I now have to transport my grain 17 miles rather than three to get it to the rail line.

Using that analogy with your students, if I'm transporting the students three miles and for some reason it changes and I'm now transporting them 17 miles, there's an additional cost. You can say that you were paying to transport the students the three miles, but it costs more to transport those students 17 miles than it does three miles. So there is an additional cost there. You just can't say, well we're already carrying it or carrying those students.

Well I was already loading that grain on my truck, but it cost me a lot more to haul it 17 miles than it does to haul it three miles. So there's an additional cost there. That additional cost has to be picked up by somebody. If it's the province, there's an additional cost to the province. If it's the federal government, then it's not a cost to the province.

But that agreement you say is six years. Fine. So that additional cost may be picked up for six years. But what happens after that point? The province, in other words, has to pick up that additional cost. So there will indeed be an additional cost to the province.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Well, Mr. Chairman, the number

of students and the number of school locations will be very small. There are a number of students that are being transported now that might not have to be transported under the new scheme. So I think that the net result, if the federal government picks up the incremental costs . . . and it's hard to predict because we don't know. A rural school division right now, looking at the demographics in their school division, is finding it very hard to predict.

And as the population changes, I think that the uncertainty with respect to the transportation of students to the francophone component is probably much, much smaller than the uncertainty in the transportation of students in the public school system in rural Saskatchewan.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Madam Minister, while there may be schools closing in rural Saskatchewan, that will indeed put an additional cost on transporting those students to some other location. But I look at my own constituency. I fully expect the school at Bellegarde will continue to operate as a totally French school, as it should. But as the opportunities become available, more and more students from around the entire area now wish to participate in that school. And that's fine. They should have that opportunity. But there will indeed be a greater cost involved in that. And I wish you would admit that.

I already have talked to parents . . . I haven't talked to them, but I have talked to the school board who has been approached by the parents to transport students now 35, 40 miles to attend that school. So they will be receiving the additional funding. In this particular case, it just works out that they will still be within the same school division, but there will be an additional cost. Somebody will be paid to transport those students from A to Bellegarde. So the additional cost is there.

And, Madam Minister, will you please admit that there will indeed be an additional cost under a third school division?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, the member opposite is referring to the situation as it is right now and saying that there is additional cost because of the choices that parents and schools are making; that this is causing an additional cost in transportation.

Well there is a limitation on the number of section 23 parents and students. It will really be a very small amount. And so I say that we may as well get the federal contribution. We're not getting a federal contribution now.

If we institute the French governance component we'll be getting twenty-seven and a half million dollars into the provincial education system that we're not getting now. So people are exercising their choices now. There's an additional cost now that the province and the local taxpayer is paying completely without a federal contribution.

So I think that the members opposite should support us in adding that federal contribution into the Saskatchewan system that we otherwise wouldn't have access to.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Madam Minister, are you saying that the provincial government should be making an investment to access federal funds?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, in response to the member, I'm saying entirely the opposite. I'm saying that we are making an investment now in terms of the per pupil cost of every student that is in every public system in the province of Saskatchewan. I'm saying that if there is an opportunity to accommodate a different style for a small number of people and have the difference in what we're paying now and what it costs to deliver the other style totally picked up by the federal government, then we should do it.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Madam Minister, if you implement a third school board, there won't necessarily be school buildings, facilities, plants available in those locations which would qualify. So if an area was to apply and qualify to receive funding for a third . . . a plant for a third school board, additional funds would have to be provided by the Department of Education to build those facilities. So that would be an investment, would it not, by the Department of Education into those plants to facilitate a third school board.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, there is a component in the current agreement and in the one that we are trying to enhance or restore, the forfeit of the portion of for capital construction. There will not be provincial dollars allocated to construction to capital costs for this component of education.

Mr. D'Autremont: — If a third school board is implemented, will there be then any funds going into it from the province?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, the way the proposal is designed and the way the agreement with the federal government is designed, is the province would continue to pay the per pupil costs as they do now for every school pupil in the province. Any additional costs related to that particular style of education would be paid for by the federal government. So there would not be an additional cost to the provincial taxpayer.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, Madam Minister, we seem to be going in circles in this one and not going any place, so I will move on to another topic.

Madam Minister, you stated that there were 41 permanent employees that were terminated or let go for whatever reasons within the department, and six of those were non-permanent people that were terminated. One of those employees was terminated involuntarily. Who was that person?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, just checking the list here because there were some elimination of positions as a result of the budget that were budget-driven. Other than that, there was only one which probably couldn't be completely described as voluntary, and that was the separation of the deputy minister of the department.

Mr. D'Autremont: — And who was that deputy minister,

Madam Minister?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — The deputy minister at the time that the administration changed was Dr. Eleanor Rourke.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Madam Minister, what were Ms. Rourke's qualifications and why was she terminated?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, I certainly found no fault with Dr. Rourke's professional qualifications. She had a doctorate and she was a very well-experienced educational professional with a long record of service in the education community.

However it was a matter of not competence but philosophy. As the member opposite is aware, we're doing a wide range of reviews within the education system. We want to look at some new directions and a reorganization of the department. And I felt that a new style of leadership was required in order to establish that new direction.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Madam Minister, was that position refilled?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, the position was filled by the incumbent that sits at my left today, Arleen Hynd, who is now the deputy minister, and comes to the position very well qualified, with long and responsible experience in the public service provincially and in the public service for the federal government.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Madam Minister, what are Ms. Hynd's qualifications? What fields has she experience in?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, I'm pleased to respond. I don't have a written resumé before me but Ms. Hynd comes to us with more than 20 years in the public service — provincial and federal. She has a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of Saskatchewan. She has worked in finance at the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, and came to us directly from a very responsible position with the federal department of Indian and northern affairs.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Madam Minister, does your deputy minister have any experience in the education field?

(1630)

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, she has extensive experience in the education field, having been a student herself and being the mother of three current students.

But I think that it's very important, when you're trying to establish a new direction, that leadership is very important. And the Department of Education is staffed with many, many competent professional educators with specialties in a variety of fields. So the competence in education and the professional credentials are very well covered-off in the department.

And what was required for a new direction for the department and for a forward look into the changes that we're going to have to make in the education system, was a person with experience in working with people in the

public service, who could provide the leadership to the professional people in the department and to those leaders in the education community that the department has to interface with, like the trustees' association, the League of Educational Administrators, the business officials, and the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation.

So what we needed, in my estimation, was not so much professional credentials specific to the education field, which we already have a great deal of within the department, but a person with good communications skills, who could work with the department and with all of those people in the education community to chart a new direction for education in this province.

And while I had complete confidence in the professional qualifications of the previous deputy minister and a reasonable relationship with her, I didn't see those qualities, and I certainly do see them in the current leadership in the department. And we are moving and making considerable progress in those directions that we charted for ourselves at the beginning of the term.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Madam Minister. I'm sure that Ms. Hynd will do a good job, has the proper qualifications in the areas that you have mentioned. But I also . . . You talked of philosophy. Well perhaps in the case of philosophy it's a matter of what membership card you hold.

I'm surprised that there was no one in the Department of Education or in the education field who would not have also qualified for this type of a position. What type of search did you do before hiring Ms. Hynd?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, I certainly did an exhaustive search of résumés. As the member might imagine, there's a huge number of résumés submitted for consideration by the government and in the public service for employment at all levels.

And one of the criteria, as I said, that I used in my search for leadership for the Department of Education, was not professional credentials in the education field because the department is fully staffed with people with excellent professional credentials, and what we needed was leadership.

For example, one of the projects that I wanted the department to be committed to very early on was the project that we were calling the integrated school model, where the Departments of Health, Social Services, Justice, and Education will work together to deliver an integrated service to children in the elementary and high school system of which there are so many now that arrive in the class-room with their physical and emotional needs not met. And these can't necessarily be met — nor should they be — by the class-room teacher.

Now in the traditional sense of the Department of Education, and those other line departments I might add, there hasn't been a tradition or a history of the departments working together. And so what we needed was not someone who would look at the department in a professional manner, but someone who would look at the department and help the people, the educational

professionals there, to bridge those gaps between the Department of Education and the other departments to achieve an integrated delivery.

And that's just one example of where there's more need for communication skills and administrative, straight administrative experience than professional expertise in a specialized field.

Mr. Swenson: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Minister, I'm going to be referring to a number of questions that you were submitted in writing by the critic, but I would make an observation, seeing as we are discussing qualifications and that type of thing. And I would say to you that my experience as the minister responsible for aboriginal affairs in this province over a number of months brought me in contact with a lot of people that had dealt with the federal Department of Indian and Native Affairs. And I would say to you in all sincerity, Madam Minister, that a lot of our aboriginal people find that one of the most patronizing . . . Colonization was one of the words that they always used to me in describing the federal Department of Indian and Native Affairs.

And I would hope that your deputy minister's experience in that department isn't in that area, because a lot of the aboriginal community in our province have a great deal of difficulty with the attitude of that federal department. And I'm only passing on to you comments that were made to me over and over again about that.

Now, Madam Minister, back to the questions that were provided. And I remind you that the Associate Minister of Finance last night commended the opposition on developing this line of questioning. It made it much easier for himself and his department to handle many of the questions. In fact, SPMC (Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation), PSC (Public Service Commission), and Justice have all gone through these and pretty well answered everything there was to answer.

And yet, Madam Minister, your document comes back with most of the major areas, either information can't be provided or don't care. It's not a kind of response that we had hoped for to wrap up your estimates. And I refer you to 1(b), and I think you have that there, which asks for lists of persons, whether they were fired, terminated, that type of thing, the categories. The minister beside you provided all of that information just tickety-boo and there was no problems. Your response says information can't be provided.

I then go to 2(c) where it talks about rental arrangements and operating costs administered by SPMC. Well the minister told us last night in the House that SPMC expects each of the departments to do those responses on their own.

Justice has already done it, and they've only been in here in estimates for a few hours. Justice already has provided that information. And your response is that that should all come out of SPMC. And that's not acceptable, Madam Minister.

Another one is question 7 and that's about in-province

travel by your department. Your response to us is: note that detailed information on in-province travel is not available.

The other departments came forward with that no problem at all, Madam Minister. And I don't know why your in-province travel would be a big issue.

Another one that I found interesting, Madam Minister, it's on the business of travel agencies. And your response to us is, the department does business with Travel directors . . . or Directions and Goliger's Travel. We asked you the question of how you did your selections. Other departments were very forthcoming about it. Nothing from you.

Another question, 27 to 28, asked about all the various commissions, groups, that the Department of Education is involved in and the costs associated with those. I mean, are you to have us believe that you can't account for the costs of the various commissions dealing with Education in this province? Your response to us: information on costs is not available. Well, Madam Minister, that's simply not acceptable. That's the whole idea of estimates, is to find out those types of things.

On the question of manuals. Now we know that in the Department of Education there are more manuals than the human resources one. I mean there's probably two dozen at least. And I can remember well the critic, former Education critic in the legislature prior to 1991, asking the minister about all the various manuals. And the minister had to recite, go through the whole list of all the various manuals that the Department of Education had to satisfy the member from Broadway.

And why you would come back to us and say that that's all there is, you know. So, Madam Minister, seeing as your seat mate there has commended us on our approach and has seen fit to answer all of these questions in some detail, I would think it's incumbent, if we're going to pass your estimates, that we have another look at this — and particularly section 1, because that's the type of information that every department is expected to provide and does so. And we've certainly received it from every department that's been in here prior to.

So I want to bring it to your awareness, Madam Minister, get it on the record before 5 o'clock, because I understand there are more questions by the critic. And I'm sure that we would be pleased to visit with you or your officials on solving some of these problems so we can get on with your estimates.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, in response to the member from Thunder Creek, I do have to say that I will not accept . . . and I have to correct him on his, you know, sort of casual and offhand remark that we answered in such terms as "don't care." You will not find that expression on these pages.

It's what the situation really is, is that we received this list of questions, three, or a maximum of four working days, would be last Wednesday or Thursday. And with respect to a colleague and the other departments that have come before, our department has many, many, many more

employees and is much more complex than the departments that you've referred to that have given you the full information earlier.

We certainly undertake to provide complete information, but we do have more employees, and where you're asking, for instance, on the past employment record of every one of our hundreds of employees, this is impossible to provide in three days.

There is an in-province travel. The departments with respect that you have the estimates for so far may not have the kind of in-province travel. We have people from our regional offices and our special education consultants and so forth in the shared services that travel constantly. And so it will take more time than three days to give you an open, honest, definitive, correct answer in that respect. We're not refusing to, but it will certainly take more time than that.

But we certainly undertake to provide those things, the replies, in detail if you really . . . Actually the list that we were working off was the one that was originally prepared for the Public Service Commission. And to be truthful, some of the questions as they relate to our department are not really in a very accurate context. So we did the best we could within the context of the list, to respond in the detail that we thought that you would want. But we'll be happy to elaborate on it, but it certainly will take more time.

Mr. Swenson: — Well, Madam Minister, the list of questions which you got last week, I personally brought into the House with a note to every minister so that they would all be the same, so that no one would feel that they were being treated differently. They were all updated versions. The Associate Minister of Finance worked off of that. Justice has worked off of that, so there's no discrepancies.

Madam Minister, the question — and you know it well — is only dealing with people since November 1 in that question, and I don't think anybody's terminated more people than the Associate Minister of Finance in SPMC and some other areas, and yet he had no problem coming up with that. And we've given you the out on the employment history, Madam Minister. It's clearly outlined in the questions that if the employee refuses to give that, then we accept that. That if the employee says, no I don't want that employment history put into the estimates of the Department of Education, that's fine.

(1645)

But I think it is right and proper for you to ask. And we give them the choice. We're not saying that you have to do that. If the employee doesn't want it, fair ball, Madam Minister.

So I don't think, especially covering all the parts of 1(b) that it is that onerous a task, unless you have dismissed a lot more people than what I think you have and hired a lot more. And you tell us you that haven't hired any. Then that should be a fairly straightforward question to answer along with the employment histories. It's just a matter of saying yes or no to the employee. The employee can

refuse.

So I don't exactly accept your response, Madam Minister, that it is all that difficult to put together.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I can only repeat my undertaking to attempt to review the list again. We certainly have no intent to be evasive; we just want to be realistic. Perhaps we may have to communicate with the member opposite in terms of how some of the questions are framed to make sure that we understand exactly what it is they want, because we have tried to respond in as an accountable a way as possible.

Mr. Swenson: — One other short question, Madam Minister. Question 8, we asked you to account for monies that were either left over in your previous budget or now spent. And I'm wondering why the 4,267,684.10 that was in the '91-92 budget was not expended, given the extreme situation that certain schools have in this province. And I've outlined my particular problem in Mortlach to you, and I know other members have raised similar concerns.

You obviously had that amount of money that was not spent in your departmental estimates for '91-92, and I'm wondering if your estimates for '92-93 were reduced by a corresponding amount or if in effect there was some debt sort of off-loaded back into the previous budget year that didn't necessarily need to.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, in response to the indication that there was some \$4 million of the budget remaining unspent, and some creative ways to use that so-called surplus in a fiscal situation where there's a \$14 billion deficit, that amount was in the student aid area. It was an estimate, a shortfall in the estimate that would have been required for student loans because of the change in the criteria. So that was the area it was in, rather than in some other line of the estimates.

And indeed an adjustment was made in the current budget. It's not only a change in the criteria, but also as the program matures and a better ability to forecast what repayments will be and what the net draw on the student aid fund will have on the consolidated revenue fund and what the real requirement will be.

Mr. Swenson: — What was that adjustment, Madam Minister?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, the student aid fund allocation has decreased in last year's budget from \$36.257 million; that was '91-92. This year it's 30.566 million-odd. So that represents about 6 million. So that would be the 4 million that wasn't used in last year's budget — 36 million was allocated; 32 million would have been used. And so there was a decrease of approximately 2 million between the actual last year and the budgeted this year. And again, that reflects not less money available, but a better forecast of what the repayments will be as the program matures.

Mr. Martens: — Madam Minister, I have an individual who wrote me a letter asking me to raise a question with you. And I won't use her last name, but she has written in

correspondence with you. She's had a great deal of difficulty in . . . Her first name is Anita and she's written you a letter asking you to look into why her marks were not supplied to have her qualify to go to nurses' training. And what I would like you to do is to take a look at the correspondence she has sent to you and come back with a reply.

I know you won't be able to do that for me today, but this lady is from Neidpath, and that's probably enough information that you have. She wrote me a letter asking me about it and I'm inquiring of it on her behalf. I could probably get this faxed and give it to you but I think that's sufficient evidence to give you an opportunity to take a look at it. But if you need more, then I can get it for you too.

I have a question that relates to the university. This past year I had a lot of people in my constituency who were very concerned about the registration process at the University of Saskatchewan. The university registration process caused a great deal of concern in the fact that there were some people that got an opportunity to qualify for classes, and in a very restrictive time and a very restrictive placement of seats in various classes there was a significant problem raised when people, for example, received an invitation to come and register — I believe it was on a Wednesday — and the majority of people even in Saskatoon only got notice of the registration process on Friday, and some even on the Monday after. And I raised this with the president of the university. I know that there were quite a few concerns.

But I wanted to raise it with you, because what really happened and really concerned me is the further you got from Saskatoon in registering for these classes, the more you were excluded from an opportunity in some of them.

And I had an individual who contacted me. She's a student of education and she had a lot of difficulty. In fact her classes may extend her time that she has to be in university to five years, rather than four, in order to complete the classes she needs to become a teacher.

So I wonder if you will respond to that for us, please.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, we have been made aware of this problem since the registrations for the upcoming term began at the universities in Saskatchewan. And it's unfortunate that all of the students are not able to have access — and access to the courses of their choice.

But funding restraints don't help any. And the member from Morse will be aware of the reasons for that.

But we also have in Saskatchewan the highest proportion of our population seeking access to post-secondary spaces in both the universities and the technical side of education. We have the highest proportion of any province in Canada, which is very positive in one way — that our citizens do want to increase their knowledge and their training and their skills. But it is a real challenge for our institutions to respond to those needs in light of the fiscal problems that we face.

This year there were some particular problems with the procedures that were used for people that were able to actually physically attend versus those who applied for their courses by mail. And we have become aware of that and we've asked the university administrations and the registrars' offices to try to refine those to make sure that there really is equal opportunity for students in Saskatchewan no matter where they live which, as the member knows, is the objective of our education system throughout not only from K to 12, but in the post-secondary system.

And so we do want to make improvements at the level that he raises to improve that equality, because we acknowledge that deficiency this year.

Mr. Martens: — I want to point that out, because I also raised with the president the role of the deputy minister of Education and I believe of Finance are going to be on the board of governors. And I'm not sure that they were particularly happy with that move. And I'm not sure that they're necessarily pleased with the looking-over-your-shoulder kind of an attitude I think that it is anticipated to be. However being as it is that, the deputy minister is definitely going to have an opportunity to influence the decision on the registration.

It's significant, I believe, in a number of other ways. I want to point out one thing. I'll ask the question first of all. How many students are at the University of Saskatchewan and at Regina who are over 60 years old? Have you got an idea or have you got a breakdown of the level of participation in universities by those who we would call at the top end of the age that would be participating in an education in university? Have you got numbers on those?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: — Mr. Chairman, I wouldn't have those numbers. I'm not even sure what kind of demographical information on their student population the universities have, but I can certainly check with them and see whether I can provide that information.

I would like to make a comment on the member's observation about the composition of the boards of governors. And I'm quite aware of the reaction of the respective presidents. And as I explained to them, that we are putting into place the universities review panel which has been announced and the terms of reference for which they're aware and that we wanted to have representation from Education and Finance on the boards of governors while those reviews were taking place.

The other reason was that we're in a unique situation for the first time in history in Saskatchewan, that all of the positions on the board of governors that we're responsible to nominate or appoint, all expired at the same time because of appointments . . . because of some actions that were taken three years ago.

And we want to re-establish a progression so that there is some continuity. And you can't very well go out into the community and find nice, good citizens to put on the board and say, well I'm going to appoint you for a three-year term, which is what the universities Act specifies, but I'm going to ask you to resign in a year so that I can create a progression. But with the people from

the Finance and Education, the deputy ministers on the boards, if it's deemed that we want to have some different representation and we want to establish a progression again, we have the liberty of asking him to step down at any time.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:01 p.m.