

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

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

#### Standing Committee on Crown Corporations

**Clerk Assistant:** — Mr. Solomon, chair of the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations, presents the third report of the committee as follows:

Pursuant to an order of the Assembly dated May 4, 1993, your committee reports Bill No. 42, An Act respecting the Creation and Supervision of certain Crown Corporations, with amendment.

**Mr. Solomon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the end of my remarks I'll be moving the following:

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

Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations has completed clause-by-clause review of Bill 42, An Act respecting the Creation and Supervision of certain Crown Corporations. Referral of Bills by the legislature to our committee has only happened once or twice in our committee's 48-year history, so this has been somewhat of an historical event in the committee's history.

Our committee, Mr. Speaker, operated in process close to the process and procedures of the Committee of the Whole, with one distinction, and that distinction is that witnesses were invited by our committee to provide legal, financial, and technical information for our committee to consider during its deliberations of Bill 42.

Our deliberations focused on the Bill, its principles, its objectives, its content, and on other matters pertaining to the Crown sector and the government. Our committee encouraged and allowed any and all questions put by members and witnesses while trying to avoid as much as possible debates between non-elected witnesses. This procedure seemed to work well.

Our committee considered 26 different amendments and incorporated 13 of them into changes in Bill 42. We deliberated for about seven hours over a four-day period of meetings.

On behalf of my committee I'd like to extend our appreciation to the minister and his Crown Investments Corporation officials and our appreciation to the Provincial Auditor and his officials for their cooperation and input, also a personal thank you to the Clerk, Mr. Putz, the Law Clerk, Mr. Cosman, and to members of the committee for their cooperation and input.

I move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Idylwyld, that the third report of the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations be now concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, in your gallery there are a group of six students I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the members. They are members of the social studies class at Balfour Collegiate in Regina. They are accompanied here today by Mrs. Pauline MacDonald, their teacher. I understand that after the question period that they will be touring the building, and it will be my privilege to join them afterwards for a visit.

I would ask all the members to join with me to welcome them here today.

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

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the west gallery we have 37 grade 6 and 7 students from St. Mark School in my constituency in Saskatoon. They are accompanied today by their teachers, Mr. Hudy and Mr. Schurman. My colleague, the member from Saskatoon Idylwyld, will be meeting with the students after question period to answer their questions and to have a photograph taken. But I would like the members of the legislature to welcome these students from St. Mark School.

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

**Mr. Knezacek:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly, a class of 41 grade 5 students seated in the west gallery from the Langenburg High School, which is a school out of the Potashville School Division — one of the best divisions in the province, I might add. The students have come in this morning to make several visits in Regina, this being one of their stops.

I will be meeting with them for photos and for drinks following the question period, and to also answer some questions for them, hopefully. I would also particularly like to welcome their teachers, Mrs. Okrainetz and Mr. Haczekewicz, who are here, and also their bus driver, Mr. Severin, who is here with them.

I'd like you to welcome them and wish them a safe trip home after their journey to Regina.

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

**Hon. Ms. Simard:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to introduce to you and through you, approximately 26 grade 8 students from Argyle School in Regina who are seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, and who will be touring the building later on

today and having their picture taken and some drinks.

They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Wayne Wilson, and I would ask the members of the legislature to join me in welcoming them.

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

**Mr. Cline:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, representatives of the Saskatoon Fire Fighters Union Local 80 of the International Association of Fire Fighters. They've been here for a provincial fire-fighters' convention which concluded today.

They are Dave Rumpel, the president; Andy Sharpe, the vice-president; Dick Hildebrandt the trustee; and Leo Barrett, the secretary. And I've had the pleasure to work with these gentlemen over the course of the last 10 years on a number of concerns. And I want to say that their members provide us with protection of our lives and property on a daily basis.

And I know all members will want to join with me in welcoming them and wishing them a good journey home.

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

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Economic Summit

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Premier.

Mr. Premier, a couple of weeks ago, the Saskatchewan business community expressed some concerns with the direction your government has taken in regards to economic development and job creation. And even though they have felt that you've taken some wrong turns, they were quite willing to sit down and offer some proposals on how to get the Saskatchewan economy back on track.

Unfortunately, Mr. Premier, at the time you simply stood in your place and said that they didn't represent the business community in the province and you brushed them off. Well, Mr. Premier, that brush-off has resulted in the Saskatchewan business coalition having no choice but to start a public campaign today to express their views to the public because you would not listen to them.

Now, Mr. Premier, would you now consider sitting down and having a public meeting with the people of the business community of this province who are very concerned about the direction your province is taking? Would you do that, sir?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear to the hon. member opposite that we're always willing to sit down with business. I had the

opportunity on Tuesday night of this week to have dinner for a couple of hours with the new president of the chamber of commerce, Mr. Mel Watson, and it was an excellent meeting — positive — which, when we left each other, along with my deputy minister, there was agreement to work together and cooperate. And so at every opportunity we meet with business people, as well a government should.

I want to say to the members opposite though that while they continue to preach gloom and doom, Price Club, a national company, has announced the construction of a new facility here in Regina, which will employ 150 new employees. And I mean you can take the worst case scenario or you can work with the business community in trying to create a better atmosphere. But your continuous attempts to undermine partnership and cooperation, leads me only to believe that your questions are politically motivated as opposed to the best interest of the province.

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

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to address my question to the Premier again because what the business people of the province are saying is that they aren't having much success talking to the ministers of this government. What they want to talk to is the head man, the guy in charge, the guy that campaigned for the job, the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Premier, the business coalition is saying that your government needs to act on the stated commitment to create a positive regulatory and taxation environment which will create jobs. And they're afraid that your seemingly new agenda, this preoccupation with your labour agenda, in fact is chasing jobs and investment away from the province of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Premier, they cite the workmens' compensation legislation, the occupational health and safety legislation, your union preference in government contracting, increases to government employees, and other initiatives by your government, Mr. Premier, that are chasing jobs away.

And I think that is a very good question that they're asking you, Mr. Premier. How do any of these initiatives create jobs in the province of Saskatchewan? How do they do that, sir?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear to the member opposite that the removal of the provincial sales tax on 1-800 numbers was the very reason that Sears Canada moved to Saskatchewan with 900 jobs. And with that removal, other companies are looking at the province as a good place to do business.

I say clearly to the members opposite, in working with the business community on legislation before the House, we have had many opportunities to meet with

them. And one of the main reasons for meeting with the new president of the chamber of commerce was to discuss with him potential amendments that they would want to look at or propose to the government or to the opposition.

And we're willing to sit down and talk to them at any time, as we always do. The Premier and other ministers meet often with business people in Regina, Saskatoon, around the province, and we will intend to continue those kind of dialogues.

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

**Mr. Swenson:** — You see, Mr. Premier, it's your minister's attitude of don't worry, be happy, everything's fine, is the reason that people in the business community want to talk to you, sir.

Mr. Premier, from April 1, 1991 to April 1, 1993 we've lost 11,000 jobs in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Premier, that is equivalent to the entire population of Estevan that your government has put out of work.

Now, Mr. Premier, before any new measures take place, the business coalition is saying that we've got a problem here, a problem that has to be addressed. We've got to get some jobs created. We've got to stop driving jobs away, and that we have to have a true consultative process here, Mr. Premier. And they're saying you appear to be the only one that can drive that consultative process. Mr. Premier, won't you do that, sir?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the member opposite that the job numbers in Saskatchewan actually increased the number of people working — increased by 5,000 between March and April of this year — and he should be a little bit more careful in getting his numbers accurate.

But I want to say to you that in terms of working with business people, I say that the very reason that they were reduced to a rump of a political party in opposition was because business people were sick and tired of the huge deals, the megaprojects where hundreds of millions of dollars were pumped into special deals made with special friends. And that's the very reason you sit on the other side, is because business ganged up on you before the last election and turfed you out for your antics in dealing with business.

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

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's that very answer that has the business community in this province upset, Mr. Premier. Your minister just quoted a number that simply is erroneous. I have the very same sheet here, the labour force statistics. What he's talking about is the labour force size. Labour force includes both employed and unemployed.

What it says, Mr. Premier, is that there are 2,000 more

people unemployed than a year ago. Those are included in the numbers. Your minister is mixing and matching. That is why the business community are saying to you, before you impose changes, Mr. Premier, that will amount to \$200 million possibly in a payroll tax, that you will jeopardize the best workmens' comp system in Canada; that you need to sit down and talk to some people who want to create more jobs in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Premier, stand and tell me how an increase, a payroll tax that could go as high as \$200 million, tell me how that can increase the number of jobs in the province of Saskatchewan. Would you do that, sir?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite — if it weren't so sad it would be funny — in his use of statistics, I want to say to the member opposite that the only province near Saskatchewan that has a payroll tax is good old Tory Manitoba. And you know that full well.

And I want to say to you that obviously the reduction in the small business tax from 10 per cent announced to be down to 8 per cent next year, has increased the number of people looking at Saskatchewan as a good place to do business. In fact when Sears was making the decision as to whether to move to Winnipeg or to Regina, it was the tax structure and the work ethic and the lack of a payroll tax in Saskatchewan that enticed them to move to Saskatchewan.

So I want to make it clear to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the members opposite, that with housing starts up considerably in the province, with consumer spending up over last year, with the number of people working in the agricultural sector up by 5,000 this spring over last, there are many things to be optimistic about.

But if members opposite want to be consumed by gloom and doom, then they will be doomed to spending the rest of their lives on the benches of the opposition.

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

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Premier, I wonder if Sears asked this question. They're wondering how a sweeping, arbitrary and excessive regulatory power you're creating under Occupational Health & Safety that is going to create one of the most powerful bureaucracies in the history of this province, a bureaucracy with greater powers of search and seizure than the police force have, a bureaucracy with the power to arbitrarily shut down entire work sites, a bureaucracy that the business coalition says will not reduce accidents, will only promote confrontation . . . Did you tell Sears, Mr. Premier, that you were going to create that bureaucracy when they were going to move to the province of Saskatchewan — a bureaucracy that won't create any more jobs and won't improve safety on the job — did you tell them that, Mr. Premier?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the member opposite that if he believes that sacrificing the safety of workers is their strategy for job creation in this province, then it is no wonder that the people reject that party when it comes to looking at what will make people come to Saskatchewan.

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — The simple fact is, to the hon. member, that when people are looking at Saskatchewan as a place to build a company, the workers' safety is one of the big advantages that they see in Saskatchewan because it has been properly funded over the years.

So I say to you, Mr. Member, if you expect our government to base its economic development and new jobs on reducing safety levels for employees, that is not the way we're going to be moving in this province.

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

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Premier also told them that there would be a new, union-only tendering policy for all government contracts over \$150,000. Did you also tell them, Mr. Premier, in this time of fiscal restraint, how this new government policy is going to help the government maintain the bottom line?

I wonder, Mr. Premier, could you give us the figure that this additional cost to taxpayers is going to have on the entire cost of government for the next year? Could you tell us what this policy of government tendering over \$150,000 to union-only contracting, what is the extra cost to the Government of Saskatchewan? And you could maybe tell that to the business coalition while you're at it.

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, we are now back to where the member for Kindersley left off, and I'm not sure why the shuffle from the back bench to the front bench, but obviously trying to elevate an issue that was fading yesterday.

But I want to say that when all else fails in their questioning, they go back to: has your government got a union-only policy? I just say to you one more time: no, we don't. And in the last month SaskPower has awarded contracts in excess of \$4 million to non-union contractors.

So obviously we have a policy that is mixed, the same as your government had, the same as the government in the 1970s, that of course we are going to have union contractors doing business in the province. Is it your policy that you would have no unions and no union contracts? Of course not.

And so clearly to the member opposite, our policy is that there will be a mix, some non-union, some union,

and that is no change from what has gone on in the province in the past.

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

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, we now have a choice. We have a choice here in the province of Saskatchewan. The figures put forward by the chamber of commerce, the construction association, the home builders' association, the Retail Council of Canada, the implement manufacturers association, CFIB (Canadian Federation of Independent Business), and the association of petroleum producers says this could increase cost by at least 35 per cent.

Now can we believe all of the aforementioned folks, or do we just simply believe the captain of industry from Saskatoon Riversdale and his Minister of Economic Development. I'm afraid most people in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, would defer to the aforementioned list of individuals who've had a long practice at bidding government contracts, and not the two ministers who like to tell us one thing, but do another.

Now, Mr. Premier, please tell the House the total value of government contracts that will be awarded under a union-only policy so we can calculate for ourselves how much extra this policy is going to cost Saskatchewan taxpayers.

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well, we will certainly be able to tell you in Public Accounts how tenders were awarded, but to tell you today how we're going to award over the next 12 months and what the total will be, union and non-union, is ridiculous as the member well knows. That's not how it's done.

Obviously we will be working with contractors to see that the mix that we have had in Saskatchewan under your administration, under our previous administration, is continued and strengthened in the best interest of contractors, workers, and the taxpayers of the province.

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

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well before the last election when the Premier, the member from Riversdale, was opposition leader and he was having breakfast in Saskatoon on a regular basis with people in the business community, he said that — and this was the stated position of the member then — tendered government contracts should go to the lowest qualified bidder.

That seems like a fairly sound position, I guess, Mr. Speaker, when you're having breakfast with business people in Saskatoon on a regular basis. And I'm wondering, given that 80 per cent of the construction industry in this province is made up of small, non-union firms, that why all of a sudden now — and I pose this question to the Premier — why now that the

majority of these firms should be excluded from government contracts simply because they've made the decision not to unionize?

That's the question, Mr. Premier, that the business community that you courted so long and hard a short two years ago wants to know. Saskatchewan taxpayers want to know. Why are you changing that policy now, Mr. Premier, now that you are in government?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I want to indicate to the hon. member opposite that there has been no change. We have a policy that allows for union contractors to bid and non-union contractors to bid. Some will go to union contractors as they did under your administration. And I don't know how many times we're going to go over this, but obviously the real issues in Saskatchewan, like agriculture and some of the other issues that are obviously on the top of minds of people, simply fly by these people.

But I'll keep answering. Our policy is one that will allow for union contractors to work in the province, non-union contractors to work in the province. We believe that's best for working people, best for contractors, and best for the taxpayers in the long run.

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

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The reason we keep coming back to it, Mr. Speaker, is because people all around the province and the taxpayers of this province are asking us to. They're tired of the contradiction which we hear from the government all the time. When the Premier was asked the other day to explain this policy, he said that non-union contractors are not capable of doing the work on most large construction contracts. Well, Mr. Premier, the president of the Saskatchewan Construction Association says that's simply not true. That's why we have to ask these questions in here, sir.

So before you make sweeping statements like that, why don't you ask somebody that actually works in the industry before you make those statements. That's why once again I say to you, Mr. Premier, people in the business community are looking to have a meeting with you to sit down face to face to explain some of these situations that seem to be contradictions in every sense of the word.

Mr. Premier, once again: why don't you take the opportunity to sit down with people as you did in opposition and have a face-to-face meeting and discuss these issues to get our economy back on track? Do that, Mr. Premier.

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear to the hon. member opposite that the Premier has never turned down an offer to meet and has actually encouraged meetings. I say to the members

opposite though when it comes to union, non-union contracting, I don't know of any province in Saskatchewan . . . any province whether it's Conservative, Liberal, New Democrat, any province in Canada where they have a policy that excludes union contracting. I don't know of any province in Canada.

And if this is what you're advocating, then stand and say it. It certainly wasn't your policy when you were in government. If you've changed your mind on that, I challenge you, sir, to stand in the House and say the policy of the Conservative Party and caucus is to have only non-union doing contracts in the province. If that's the new policy, then let's spit it out and get on with it.

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

**Mr. Swenson:** — Mr. Premier, the policy for all political parties in this province should be that on government tendered contracts the lowest tender, the tender that is most acceptable to the taxpayer, should be the one that's accepted. That's the policy. That's the policy, Mr. Premier.

Mr. Premier . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. Order. I think the members ought to give the Leader of the Opposition the courtesy to ask his question.

Order, order. I'll ask the Premier to please come to order. Order.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, why don't you save the membership of nine business organizations thousands of money . . . thousands of dollars which they would rather put into job creation, hiring new employees, building new businesses, creating new wealth in this province, rather than having to take public advertisements out against your government, Mr. Premier. Why don't you simply save their membership, their employees, this money, and sit down in a face-to-face meeting and start to straighten our economy out instead of being always, always so high-handed, Mr. Premier.

I give you one last chance today, Mr. Premier, say it. Say it. Will you sit down face to face with these people and have a meaningful meeting, Mr. Premier?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — We see, Mr. Speaker . . . I want to say to the member opposite that the last chance at the OK corral which didn't work when the member from Kindersley threw it out, is now being offered up by the member from Thunder Creek.

I want to say to the member opposite that clearly, clearly the biggest single problem facing economic development in this province is the \$15 billion debt that was left by the previous government . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — They don't believe you any

more.

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well they do. Jeff Simpson from *The Globe and Mail* referred to your government as the worst government in the history of Canada. That's how they referred to your government.

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

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Now we are trying to manage our way out of that mess. It is not perfect; I can agree with you on that. But what I can say is that we are doing what is in the best interest of working people, business, and the taxpayers, and of that I am absolutely sure.

And for you to say that you are going to do a better job or somehow you have a licence that says you know how to do economic development flies in the face of all of the evidence that everyone now in Canada knows. And I would if I were you back off of this issue and maybe go back to some of the more important issues that people are asking.

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

### Ministerial Assistants' Salaries

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier. Mr. Premier, since elected you've raised every tax, every rate and fee that exists in this province. In some instance you've even done it two or three times . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker, he's already arrogant and I haven't even asked the question yet.

Each and every time you impose these increased costs on Saskatchewan people you state that we all have to tighten our belts. You say that we all have to make sacrifices. And we agree, Mr. Minister, Mr. Premier. And you'd never fail to mention that the province is broke and that now is the time for restraint.

If this is the case, Mr. Premier, why are the NDP (New Democratic Party) hacks receiving huge salary increases? How do you justify this double standard? Why should Saskatchewan people be asked to pay more taxes and receive less services just so that you can give big raises to your political hacks?

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

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd be pleased to respond to the member opposite who seems to be following in the same footsteps as the member from Kindersley and the member from Thunder Creek, and that is to misstate what the real facts are.

And, Mr. Speaker, the facts are this: that there have been no increases to any of the ministerial assistants in ministers' offices in existing positions. The only places in which ministerial assistants have received any increases in pay is if they have changed their responsibilities or moved into different positions from where they were before.

Now that is far different, Mr. Speaker, that is far different than what existed under the policies of the former government, where they did not have a system where people who worked in ministers' offices or the government worked in different classifications and therefore everybody understood where they were and where they should be paid from.

So for the member opposite to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that somehow there have been increases in salaries for people who worked for ministers and the Government of Saskatchewan is absolutely erroneous. Their only increase is if a person has moved into a new position, a position of higher pay.

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

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Speaker, another question to the Premier. It is evident that belt-tightening does not apply to members of many of your ministers' staff, and they are receiving pay raises. For example, as a matter of fact your hacks have received a sizeable increase and one of them is under the Minister of Education. Michele Wilde received a 2,000 hike in her salary.

And the other one — there's going to be a double question, Mr. Speaker, if I have your permission — and the other one is the Minister of Environment. Joanne Buhr, she received an OC (order in council) that give her another \$561 on her pay cheque. Some people only get \$500 total salary, total pay cheque in this province.

And the third one actually is Gail Russell under the minister responsible for Municipal Government. She's had a 46 per cent raise — \$12,000 a year. How do you get these double standards?

Don't sit there and be sanctimonious to us and then say, Mr. Minister, that . . . Mr. Speaker, don't say to us, Mr. Deputy Premier, that it's all right to cut back on everything that you promised you wouldn't do — right from the farmers to the hospitals to the nurses, everybody — and then have your double standards.

Can you do something about this and roll back these salaries, Mr. Deputy Premier, or Mr. Premier?

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

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Speaker, let me respond to the member from Arm River. Once again, I will use the example of one person who he has mentioned, Joanne Buhr, and it applies in the same way to each of the other individuals.

Here is an individual who is unable to defend herself, because she is not a member of this legislature, who the member tries to malign in the way that he does. What happened to Ms. Buhr, Ms. Buhr, is that she was promoted from a junior to an intermediate MA (ministerial assistant) because that position became vacant. So she was moved to a different position of employment.

But the point that also needs to be made, Mr. Speaker,

is that all of this is disclosed and is open and is made public and is put on the public record so that the public can know, far different than what happened under the former administration. For example, the member from Morse, who used to be a cabinet minister, Agricultural Credit Corporation, who the Provincial Auditor has reported in this special report, paid four people \$28,000 but did not know the services that these employees provided for the corporations.

Another example from the member from Morse: payments made to the people not working for their organizations, Department of Agriculture and Food, nine people, \$537,888. Now that is the difference between open and accountable government and what used to exist here prior to 1991.

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

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

**Mr. Solomon:** — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day I would like to ask permission to correct something in *Hansard*. Mr. Speaker, with leave I believe or with your permission or both, I would like to correct something I said during the presenting reports by standing, select and special committees — just a correction for *Hansard*, one very brief correction if I may.

Leave granted.

## BEFORE ORDERS OF THE DAY

**Mr. Solomon:** — Thank you very much, members, and Mr. Speaker. I had moved my motion, seconded by the member from Idylwyld. I meant to say the member from Wildwood. So I want that correction for *Hansard* if possible.

So my motion was moved, and seconded by the member from Wildwood. Thank you.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### SECOND READINGS

#### **Bill No. 79 — An Act to Provide for the Division of Saskatchewan into Constituencies for the Election of Members of the Legislative Assembly**

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to move second reading of The Constituency Boundaries Act, 1993.

During our period in office, Mr. Speaker, since the election in 1991, which is a period of slightly more than one and a half years, all of our ministers and members have heard over and over again from the Saskatchewan people that our government here in Saskatchewan is too large. They tell us that 66 members are too many considering the size of the province. We've heard this everywhere, from

individuals and groups representing every point on the political and economic spectrum of the province. We have all heard this point of view stated repeatedly, and the argument is made all the more compelling by the difficult fiscal situation in which we find ourselves.

The government has decided that it must respond and does so by presenting this Bill for the consideration of this Assembly.

We take this step now even though only one election has been held on the current electoral map. We believe, however, that we cannot wait before acting on the public's view that this province has too much government.

And it has, Mr. Speaker. Compared to other provinces, this Legislative Assembly is too large. There are now 66 of us representing 666,000 voters, an average constituency size of just in excess of 10,000. Just next door in Manitoba, with a population larger than ours, there are 57 members. They represent an average of 12,500 voters. Our other neighbour, Alberta, has 83 members who represent 1.55 million voters. Alberta's average constituency size is 18,685. And if you look further afield, Mr. Speaker, you find British Columbia with 75 members, each representing an average of 25,500 voters, while Ontario, with 130 members, each represent an average of 48,584 members.

Mr. Speaker, these numbers very eloquently support the argument made by Saskatchewan people that the Saskatchewan government is too big. And we have responded in this Bill that is before the Assembly today by reducing the size of this Assembly from 66 members to 58 members.

This is a significant reduction, Mr. Speaker. In percentage terms it is a reduction of 12 per cent. The cost savings to the government will be over \$1 million per year, each and every year, and that will be ongoing.

This reduction in the number of seats will increase the average size that we members represent from 9,975 to approximately 11,400, which is still a comfortable number for the members of this Assembly to effectively represent and which compares very favourably to the numbers represented by our colleagues in the other provinces that I mentioned.

It's interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that this is the first time since the Great Depression that the number of seats in the Legislative Assembly has been reduced and will result in the lowest number of members in this Assembly since 1964.

Mr. Speaker, if we are to reduce the number of seats as we are proposing to do, we obviously must have new boundaries. The drawing of new boundaries has always been an controversial subject. Historically it has been surrounded by a good deal of suspicion, suspicion that the government of the day may take advantage of its position as government to draw a map that will favour its chances of re-election.

Over 20 years ago the government of then Premier Allan Blakeney, in order to overcome this suspicion, introduced into this province the idea of an independent commission whose task it would be to produce a new electoral map.

To a greater or lesser degree, this idea has been followed in subsequent redistributions. That is very much the case with this Bill. The government has carefully considered all of the models that have been used in this province and elsewhere in this country, and in this Bill we propose a commission which will be truly independent of political influence and beyond reproach.

The boundaries commission will consist of three members. The chairperson will be nominated by the Chief Justice of Saskatchewan. The person he nominates may be a judge of the Court of Queen's Bench, a judge of the Court of Appeal, or if he wishes another resident of Saskatchewan.

Two additional members of the commission will be appointed following consultation between the government, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Leader of the Liberal Party.

I have already spoken with and written to the Leader of the Opposition and to the member from Saskatoon Greystone and asked them to submit potential nominees to the commission. And I am confident that we will be able to agree on these remaining two members, hopefully before this Bill has passed this legislature.

The first commission is to be struck within 30 days upon the proclamation of the Act. Thereafter, future commissions will be struck within 30 days following the receipt by the Clerk of the Executive Council of the official results of the five-year census. It is the duty of the commission to prepare both an interim and final report making recommendations respecting the province's constituency boundaries.

(1445)

The commission has been given the express legislative freedom to make its own rules to regulate its proceedings and conduct its business. This includes an ability to hold hearings at such times and places that the commission considers appropriate.

Mr. Speaker, the commission, once struck, will have three months after it has been established to prepare an interim report. This interim report will be filed with the Clerk of the Executive Council and published in the *Gazette* and one or more newspapers to ensure public input into the work of the commission.

Once again, the commission may hold such hearings as it deems necessary to hear presentations with respect to its interim report. Once hearings and representations with respect to the interim report have taken place, the commission shall, within a further three-month period, complete its final report and present that report to the Speaker, to you, Mr. Speaker,

for the adoption by this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, through a process whereby the commission is left to operate with a minimum of obstruction, this legislation will allow it to establish constituency boundaries in a manner which will deserve the full confidence of all the Saskatchewan people.

Also, Mr. Speaker, this Act has removed all legislative reference to a predetermined number of rural or urban constituencies. This government believes, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan is a single community of interests. Nothing is to be gained from making the distinction between rural and urban constituencies.

I believe it is true that the majority of Saskatchewan citizens come from a rural background where they or their parents were either born or raised on a farm or in a small town. Looking at our own caucus in this legislature, Mr. Speaker, 41 out of the 55 members on the government side of this Assembly come from rural and small-town backgrounds. I myself, Mr. Speaker, represent an urban constituency of Saskatoon Fairview but my roots are in a farm at Sturgis where I was born and raised. And so it is with many of our so-called urban members.

Rural and urban people share the same interests in this province, Mr. Speaker. We must all work together with a singularity of purpose. That is the Saskatchewan way. As I have said many times before, in these difficult times we're all in the same boat; we will sail together or we will sink together. This is no time to try to perpetuate the myth that there are fundamental issues dividing us, dividing rural from urban Saskatchewan. It has never been true in the past, and it is not true now.

The boundaries commission established by this Act will set boundaries based on the democratic principles of effective and equal representation. The acceptable variation from the constituency population quotient will be reduced to plus or minus five per cent from the last Act . . . compared to the last Act where the differential could be as much as plus or minus 25 per cent.

Any departure from the principle of equality may only occur due to special geographic considerations, such as the accessibility of the region, the size and shape of the region, or physical features within the region. However, the population of the constituency may vary no more than plus or minus five per cent from the constituency population quotient.

Over the past 20 years, Mr. Speaker, the concept of one person, one vote has suffered in Saskatchewan. In 1971, 69 per cent of the seats in the Assembly fell within the five per cent population variance that I've been talking about. However by 1987, only 24 per cent of the seats fell within the 5 per cent population variance.

It's interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that the 5 per cent population variance has been achieved in



Saskatchewan with respect to our 14 federal seats. Many federal ridings in Saskatchewan also contain a mixture of rural and urban voters. For example, Saskatoon Humboldt encompasses a portion of the city of Saskatoon and a significant rural area north and east of Saskatoon. There are many such seats — three in Regina, three in Saskatoon. And these mixed rural-urban seats seem to be working well, Mr. Speaker.

It's also interesting to note the situation in Manitoba, which as I mentioned has 57 seats. The population variance allowed under their legislation is plus or minus 10 per cent. Now they're not a lot different than Saskatchewan, with the large city of Winnipeg and the large city of Brandon, and a large rural area. With their guideline of plus or minus 10 per cent they were still able to achieve in their distribution an average variance of plus or minus 2 per cent. So we're confident that the 5 per cent figure can work in Saskatchewan and work well.

The Bill, Mr. Speaker, recognizes the special problems encountered in representing the vast northern constituencies — the constituencies of Athabasca and Cumberland. And the Bill proposes that we maintain the existing boundaries of these two constituencies. The voting population in these constituencies is smaller than in the rest of the province, but it's obvious that the North is a very special case. The population is thinly dispersed over a vast territory, containing in the two constituencies approximately half the land mass of the province. The majority of these communities are remote and they are difficult to reach. Transportation and communications are not as sophisticated as in the south of the province. Some of these communities can only be reached by air.

There's a limit, Mr. Speaker. There is a practical limit to what we can ask of the two members of this Legislative Assembly that represent these two constituents in terms of representing the people who live there.

Mr. Speaker, there's no question this Act will move the province closer to the principle of one person, one vote. And it's very important that we as a government and as a province, strive for voter equality.

One person, one vote is a fundamental principle of any democracy, Mr. Speaker. Why should a vote in one constituency be worth almost twice as much as the vote in another constituency. It's simply not fair, nor is it democratic.

It's instructive to look back through the history of the British parliamentary system upon which our system is based, to see how this principle of one person, one vote developed. The British, over a long history, over a very long history with the concept of democracy, have long wrestled with this concept.

Members will be familiar with the rotten boroughs that existed in England before the passage of the Reform Bill in 1832. The practice of creating boroughs

of insignificant voting strength in order to ensure the election of members who would support the policies of the Crown, appear to have arisen as far back as the reign of Edward VI in 1537, Mr. Speaker.

In 1793, 250 years later, it was estimated that 51 boroughs with a combined population of less than 1,500 electors were returning 100 members to the Commons at a time when there were 340 seats in the Commons — almost 30 per cent of the British House of Commons being elected by 1,500 electors in Britain.

And in the notorious borough of Old Sarum, made popular in the British novel *Sarum*, the classic rotten borough was found where two members of parliament were returned by seven voters. The constituency consisted of open fields, Mr. Speaker, and elections were held in these open fields because the constituency couldn't even provide a barn to shelter the returning officer.

The Reform Bill of 1832 was a milestone in British parliamentary history. It redistributed seats on a more equitable basis, increased county representation, extended the franchise, and reduced election expenses. But what it most obviously did, Mr. Speaker, was to place us, to place us who believe in democracy, on a process of reform which has led us slowly and inexorably to the point where voter equality — one person, one vote — will be the guiding and fundamental principle of a democracy.

Obviously, Mr. Speaker, we continue to make progress. True representation and true democracy is an evolving principle. And this Bill before the Assembly today takes us another step further down this road.

I will conclude my remarks, Mr. Speaker, by reminding members of the necessity for us to do what we are proposing in this Bill. We must reduce the size of this Assembly. In so doing, we will be making an important statement to the people of Saskatchewan that in the light of the fiscal situation in this province, we here are doing all we can to save money. We do this by cutting our numbers by 12 per cent, which is a significant saving indeed.

To accomplish this we will need new boundaries. This Bill sets up a mechanism to do this. It is a mechanism which is fair and a mechanism which is impartial.

May I say in closing, Mr. Speaker, that the principles underlying this Bill are consistent with the fundamental principles underlying the whole concept of democratic government.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act to Provide for the Division of Saskatchewan into Constituencies for the Election of Members of the Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I

think this Bill certainly demands some attention and demands that we take some time to address a number of the issues that have been raised by the minister responsible who's introduced the Bill.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, over the past number of months the government have talked about fairness, have talked about accountability. They have talked about deficit reduction. And a number of these issues, I believe the minister raised in his introductory speech to this Bill before us this afternoon.

However I would suggest that in some ways some of the comments don't quite address all of those facts. And when you look at fairness we tried to . . . a number of areas that will be addressed as we get into some of the debate is, is it fair that you have large rural ridings where members have extreme difficulty trying to touch base with all of their constituents versus the urban ridings?

We are going to be asking, Mr. Speaker, are we indeed going to achieve the effectiveness, the efficiency, and certainly is it going to be less costly, by some of the suggestions that the minister has raised today. Now you take a look at, the minister has suggested that by cutting down to 58 members from the 66, a reduction of 8 seats, Mr. Speaker, that there's going to be a cost effectiveness. And yet in a number of areas the only cost reduction will be in the salaries of members.

The fact is the travel of the rural members will increase as the boundaries are extended. And the communication, there is areas that some of those funds will become even greater, Mr. Speaker. So we have to question whether or not there will be that significant a decrease.

However, Mr. Speaker, the fact that there has been a reduction of members and the minister knows we've had a discussion in this area, there isn't anyone in the province, even on the opposition side, who hasn't suggested that a reduction in members in this province isn't appropriate. And there won't be an elector, a voter in Saskatchewan who will not indicate that as well.

It would seem to me that another area that one has to question whether it is going to be cost-efficient is the fact that we're going to have this commission now meet every five years rather than the 10 years. And that in itself is going to become costly to ask a commission to meet and to review the boundaries and look at the boundaries and the constituents of the constituencies across the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, before I adjourn debate I just want to make one comment about a number of suggestions put forward by my colleague, the Leader of the Opposition, yesterday when he suggested that we ask the minister — and I trust the minister will take some consideration and give some consideration to these proposals — that we look at the parameters of the federal ridings, and for a couple reasons, Mr. Speaker.

Number one, by redrawing the provincial boundaries

on the basis of the federal boundary changes, Mr. Speaker, after every 10-year census we will be tying into a program that's already in place and actually is probably saving the taxpayers some money by not getting into a further review and our own review, a separate review.

As well, Mr. Speaker, my colleague suggested that we take a serious look at having four Saskatchewan MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly) for every federal riding. And what that does, Mr. Speaker, is allows four provincial MLAs to be dealing in the same electoral boundary of the federal riding. That allows for a greater and easier access and the debate to take place between federal and rural members, so that it's easier for the local electorate or the provincial electorate to kind of determine where the boundaries are and who they're talking to.

(1500)

Another thing, Mr. Speaker, by doing that as well we further reduce the number of seats from 58 to 56. I think as we see in the paper today, and I believe all three papers . . . or the number of articles that were raised mention the fact that the proposals put forward by my colleague, the Leader of the Opposition, indeed look to be fair and they look to be less political and less costly.

And, Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated earlier, I trust that if indeed we're going to look at fairness, if we're going to look at trying to take the political motivation out of this, I trust the government will take a serious look at some of the suggestions that we've put forward so that at the end of the day there is a process that we can all agree with that would just be ongoing that takes it out of the political realms.

There are a number of other areas that I could get into, but at this time, Mr. Speaker, I think that we should take a little more time to review the statements and review the Bill. Therefore I move adjournment of debate.

Debate adjourned.

# **Bill No. 87 — An Act to amend The Mental Health Services Act**

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give second reading of The Mental Health Services Amendment Act, 1993. Mr. Speaker, the current Mental Health Services Act has served our province very well to date, providing a sound legislative framework for the delivery of effective services to people who experience mental disorder and distress. The current Act, Mr. Speaker, in fact has served as a model in other parts of Canada and internationally.

Mr. Speaker, the current Mental Health Services Act provides for people to receive mental health services on their own request and upon their own consent. Most services thus are provided on a voluntary basis.

However, certain severe forms of mental disorder affect people's judgement, with the result that they may not be aware of their need for treatment. They may in fact be harming themselves or others, or be at risk of harm.

The current Mental Health Services Act, therefore, contains a number of provisions that make it possible for such persons to be examined and admitted to psychiatric in-patient facilities without their consent. Much of the Act, the current Act, is concerned with setting out the special circumstances that need to exist before this can be done.

The Act also establishes various safeguards for individuals deprived of some of their rights including a patient advocacy system, a system of appeals to an independent review panel, and further rights of appeal to the Court of Queen's Bench. However, Mr. Speaker, several developments have taken place since 1986 that now make it necessary to amend the legislation at this time.

Mr. Speaker, in May of 1991 the Supreme Court of Canada struck down a provision in the Criminal Code that allowed those found unfit to stand trial or not guilty by reason of insanity, to be detained indefinitely. The Criminal Code was subsequently amended, and provisions for indefinite detention were eliminated.

Some people who no longer can be held under the provisions of the Criminal Code may still pose a danger to themselves or to others, requiring treatment or care and supervision. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, some of the amendments before the House now deal with this issue.

Mr. Speaker, further, a small group of people with long-term, disabling mental disorders fail in the community only because they refuse to follow prescribed treatment. They suffer needlessly, causing their families and other care-givers considerable grief. Often they are in conflict with the law and frequently have to be rehospitalized and usually on an involuntary basis. And so, Mr. Speaker, they end up in what is described as a revolving door.

We are therefore proposing in this legislation to introduce community treatment orders in an effort to make it possible to maintain more people for longer periods in community settings.

Mr. Speaker, we need to ensure that mental health is accorded an important place in health reform. And therefore we are seeking also to create a more integrated health system that will see district boards take responsibility for a broad range of services, including some mental health services currently being provided by the department. And so again, there are amendments in this Bill to facilitate this change.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to the foregoing, there are some minor problems in the administration and interpretation of the legislation that have been identified in the last few years, and these also are

being addressed.

Mr. Speaker, in preparing these amendments we have been guided by three major considerations. Point no. 1: the dignity, rights, and freedoms of all citizens should be protected and should not be limited solely because of mental disorder. Programs should promote equality of opportunity, assist people to exercise their autonomy and rights, and empower and assist people who are victimized or vulnerable under the power and control of others. Any curtailment of rights and freedoms which is necessary to provide care and treatment, must be governed by strict legal requirements and subject to stringent standards.

Point no. 2: the rights and interests of others also need to be promoted and protected. Family members, personal friends, co-workers, care-givers, and others who are involved with persons whose behaviour is unpredictable because of a mental disorder have also a right: a right to be assisted, supported, and protected from harm.

And point no. 3, Mr. Speaker: professionals who are professionals who are called upon to provide services should have the authority and means to exercise their responsibilities effectively. At the same time, any exercise of special powers needs to be within strict legal limits and subject to effective controls.

It is therefore, Mr. Speaker, of the utmost importance that our mental health legislation strike an appropriate balance among three competing interests — the rights of the individual, the protection of society, and the provision of mental health services. Mr. Speaker, I believe that the amendments we are proposing here today will maintain and in fact improve the existing balance.

Mr. Speaker, in preparing these amendments we have consulted with some 35 different organizations that have an interest in mental health including those representing consumers, family members, professional service providers, other interested public groups, governmental and non-governmental service agencies. Playing a key role in the consultation process were the Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan and the Canadian Mental Health Association and mental health professionals.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to report that in most matters consensus was achieved. While there was not unanimous agreement, there was nevertheless an acceptance of the proposals as a reasonable compromise that achieves an acceptable balance between competing interests.

These changes will permit the mental health system to make the most efficient use of existing resources where community treatment is provided in place of hospitalization. They will permit individuals to receive services in the least restrictive setting. And they will ensure that individual rights are respected in circumstances where it becomes necessary for a time to limit these rights in the best interests of the individual and in the interests of others in society.

And so, Mr. Speaker, in summary, I am confident that these amendments will keep Saskatchewan in the forefront as far as mental health legislation in Canada is concerned. And more importantly, they will enable us to maintain an appropriate balance between competing interests while better addressing the needs of persons with mental disorders and those of the larger community. The amendments, Mr. Speaker, are consistent with and will contribute to the overall goals of health reform.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of The Mental Health Services Amendment Act, 1993.

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

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it would sound to me that there are a number of technical areas in this Bill that we certainly should take a bit of time to review.

One of the major concerns that we would have — and the minister endeavoured to relieve some of the fears we may have — and that's regarding the rights of individuals and the fact that a member could be . . . or an individual could be sent to a psychiatric ward without his or her consent.

And I think I can understand where the minister is coming from in addressing some of the concerns we have. And in view of the factors that our society faces at times and some of the stress levels that individuals face and the fact that the safety of individuals that it comes into view, and it would appear to me that there are a few things we should be very careful that in trying to protect society that we're not infringing on or taking away individual rights and freedoms.

And I hear the minister and I heard him responding, making some of the comments, trying to alleviate some of the fears we may have here, but I think we should take a little more time to review the Bill, exactly where we're going. And therefore at this time I move adjournment of debate.

Debate adjourned.

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill No. 20

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Shillington that **Bill No. 20 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Superannuation Act** be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole at the next sitting.

#### Bill No. 81

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Lautermilch that **Bill No. 81 — An Act to amend The Alcohol Control Act and to make certain Consequential amendments to certain Acts as a result of the enactment of this Act** be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole at the next sitting.

#### Bill No. 85

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Calvert that **Bill No. 85 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Medical Care Insurance Act** be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole at the next sitting.

#### Bill No. 86

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Calvert that **Bill No. 86 — An Act to amend Certain Health Statutes and to repeal Certain Other Health Statutes** be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole at the next sitting.

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

### Bill No. 83 — An Act respecting Registered Psychiatric Nurses

**The Chair:** — Order. I will recognize the Associate Minister of Health and ask him to introduce his officials to the committee.

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. With me today from the Department of Health, Maureen Yeske, to my right, who is executive director of health planning and policy development; and to my left, Drew Johnston, senior health professions analyst.

#### Clause 1

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, just a few, straightforward questions, I believe. I think some of the concerns were addressed in my colleague's comments in second reading. But question number one, who was consulted in preparing this Bill?

(1515)

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chairman, in answer to the member's question, of course the psychiatric nurses were consulted since it has a direct application to their work and profession.

In addition, the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses Association, the SRNA, was consulted; mental health services branch of Saskatchewan Health was consulted; the Public Service Commission was involved in consultations, Saskatchewan Justice was involved in the consultation, and the nursing assistants association were also consulted.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Minister, I take it that each and every one of these groups are quite in favour of the changes being brought forward and proposed by the Bill?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chairman, yes, all of the mentioned are supportive of the provisions of the Bill.

**Mr. Toth:** — Mr. Chairman, to the minister, in clause 8 of the printed Bill it is written that the Lieutenant Governor in Council may appoint persons to the association's council. Will these individuals appointed be departmental people?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — No, Mr. Chairman, the answer in this regard is that they would be members of the general public, appointed from the general public, not employees of the department.

**Mr. Toth:** — And, Mr. Minister, why is it necessary for appointments to be made to the council? What's the purpose and reasoning for this council to be set up?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Essentially the goal, Mr. Chairman, is to in fact involve some public input and some openness and public accountability to the operations. And there would also therefore be public input in terms of the disciplinary procedures and so on. So it's an effort to bring more public input into the operation of the profession, and this is being asked for and being welcomed by the psychiatric nurses.

**Mr. Toth:** — Also, Mr. Chairman, to the minister, clause 14 of the printed Bill deals with the association's by-laws and my question is, are all the by-laws to be approved by the minister?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chairman, only those by-laws which would have potential impact on the public, and this is consistent with some other professional legislation. Ministerial approval would only be needed for by-laws that have potential impact on the public generally.

**Mr. Toth:** — And in response to that question, what by-laws would you consider to have impact on the general public?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, if the member has a copy of the Act in front of him, he would refer to sections 15(1) and 15(2). Those would be the by-laws; those described there would be the by-laws that we see as having potential impact on the public. So that would be the by-laws which would need . . . for change, would need ministerial approval.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 52 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — I would simply like to extend my thanks to the member of the opposition who posed the questions today, and also to the two officials from the Department of Health, Maureen Yeske and Drew Johnston, for their help in our committee proceedings.

**Mr. Toth:** — Mr. Chairman, I, too, would like to thank the officials for taking the time to come in to address the concerns raised this afternoon, and to the minister for his promptness in responding with answers. Thank you.

### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 83 — An Act respecting Registered Psychiatric Nurses

**Hon. Mrs. Teichrob:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that the Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

### COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

#### General Revenue Fund Public Service Commission Vote 33

**The Chair:** — I will recognize the Minister of Justice and ask him to introduce his officials who are with us in the committee today.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Seated beside me is Shiela Bailey who is the chair of the Public Service Commission. Behind Ms. Bailey is Ron Wight who is the executive director of staffing and development. And behind me is Mr. Hank Dorsch who is the assistant to the chair.

#### Item 1

**The Chair:** — The question before the committee is item no. 1, administration. Is that agreed? Carried. Oh I'm sorry, I didn't . . . I thought that was a bit odd. I didn't see the member for Arm River.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad you noticed me. I know I'm a small little fellow and I can hide behind somebody quite easily.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I guess you thought you were getting away pretty easy there. I thought I was going to have to stand up in the chair here and wave.

Mr. Minister, a year ago when we started this here business of giving . . . questions handed to us prior to the estimates, that happened with the minister that I was dealing with last year, the minister that had Public Service Commission, and we got off to kind of a bad

start because he didn't have all of these things. And we're the ones that made the agreement. And then we asked, to speed things up, we asked all ministers to bring this information prior — the global estimate, staff, and what not, from your departments.

And I'd just like to suggest to you that I suggested to the Minister of Social Services the other night, that perhaps it would be better if we got these even a day or two ahead of time, whenever they're prepared. It's too late now for this one, Mr. Minister, but maybe you could advise your other ministers that as soon as it's prepared, to have it sent to the critic. Because there's no way I can go through this information. It leaves me in kind of a bad situation.

So what I'm going to do is have this . . . while I'm asking other questions, I'm going to have it taken back to my office and have the researcher just go through to make sure that everything's all right. I just want to . . . you can comment on that, Mr. Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Well I must say that thought had crossed my mind too. I was simply told what the process was, and I must say I had nothing to do with negotiating the arrangements or anything like that, but I think the member makes a good point.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Minister, thank you. I had the page take them, deliver them to my office so they can scan through it just in case there's questions we want to ask arising from that report.

Mr. Minister, could you provide me some answers regarding employees terminated from the Public Service Commission in 1992, and I'll break it down — the questions that we want. First, the number and names of employees let go; and the salaries and titles held with PSC (Public Service Commission); and c) severance details, names of replacement employees as well as what the vote and salaries of the replacement employees falls under.

Now maybe I give too much there at once; maybe we should just start out with the first one, and that's to pick it up. The first is the number and names of employees let go in 1992.

(1530)

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Chairman, and to the member, there were no . . . None of the people employed by the Public Service Commission were terminated in '92-93, as far as the commission itself is concerned. And I assume that's what the member's asking about.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, my question was 1992.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Well that was the answer, Mr. Chairman. There have been nobody terminated from the Public Service Commission in that period.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, is that . . . would just be in the commission itself, Public

Service Commission, not in the entire government?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — That's right. None of the commission staff were terminated.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Now do you have a list of all the people in the entire government that's under the Public Service Commission that were let go in 1992? You should have that without any problem.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — We don't have that kind of global information. I think that that question has been asked and answered with respect to each individual department, but we've never sat down and added them up, so I don't have that information. We're here today to discuss the budget of the commission and we never anticipated a question about the whole of government to emerge from that. And I just am not able to answer the member's question today.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Minister, that's a question that you should have expected we'd be asking. The Public Service Commission hires the biggest bulk of the people that work for government. You should know that we want that. I asked it last year under estimates, and we only got the answer up to the year end, and we didn't get it for totally of '92. So it must be a question that can . . . that for sure you must be able to answer that question, and you should have, I believe, had that information here.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Speaker and to the hon. member, our understanding of the arrangement was that each department was going to report on its own situation, so we made no effort to gather all this information together. So it's coming to you in different packages sent across the House, as I've sent across the information with respect to the Public Service Commission. But I have to tell the member we've made no effort to bring all that information together into one summary report which is what you're asking for. And I regret we just don't have it.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, that's the main objective of the Public Service Commission is interviewing people and hiring them, so it must be information that you can, somebody could, before we're through this estimates, that could lay their hands on and get me that figure because I want to know maybe well . . . How long would it take you to get that information? Somebody should know the . . . have a list of all that. I mean those are the kind of questions you used to ask us when you were over here, and if we didn't have it, you were very upset.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — It's not a big job to get the information. You have to take all of the information from each of the departments which we can do — and with respect, which your staff could also do because it's the same information we'd be working from — and we could get that information without any appreciable delay at all. It would just be a matter of making some phone calls, and we could collect it all and give it to you.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister,

why I want it, because when the Public Service Commission is hiring and firing people, or whatever, and they all work through the Public Service Commission, you go and ask the departments and they just throw it back to the Public Service Commission. If they're responsible, if the Public Service Commission is responsible for hiring X amount of people and interviewing them, and then I think we're entitled to have that question from the Public Service Commission.

So while we're going on to other questions, could you have one of your people put that together, or would it take longer than that?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — It would take longer than that because we don't carry that information around with us. We would have to work it on the telephone. We could get it in probably a couple of days and we could . . . glad to send it to you; it's no problem.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — All right, Mr. Minister, that'll be fine then. If you haven't got it, you haven't got it; we're not going to delay things for that.

So I'll give you the three items that we want so you can . . . because if you haven't got that, you won't have the answers to my next two questions. So it'll be on *Hansard* for them to see tomorrow, and as long as you send it to us when you have it, I'll be satisfied with that.

The first — that was the number and names of employees let go; then the salaries and titles held within PSC; and then severance details, names of replacement employees as well as what vote the salaries of the replacement employees falls under. So if you didn't quite get that from me, you'll be able to get it out of *Hansard* tomorrow, if that's . . . You can do it that way, Mr. Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Yes, as I understand the member's question, Mr. Chairman, what we will do is to . . . We can get copies of the individual departments' reports which include the information that the member refers to. And you want us to collate it all and give a total number for the entire operations of government, the entire departments and agencies that are included in the *Estimates*, and give you the information that you ask for grouped together from all of these departments and agencies. We can do that within a couple of days.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Minister, as long as we got it very clear that it don't just come back with numbers. Because if we're going to move off this, I want it . . . I'd like you to repeat what I'm asking here. I want to do the first one, so we don't have no mistakes about it. I want the number of . . . number and names of employees let go.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Yes, Mr. Chairman, all of that information is included in the packages from the individual departments. And we'll get that together and we'll respond to the member's question in the terms that he asked it.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — And then the next was the salaries and titles held within PSC — you'll be able to read this out of *Hansard* — severance details, names of replacement employees, as well as what vote the salaries of the replacement employees falls under.

So we can get off that if you will commit that all those three items I've asked for, that that's what I'll get.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Right. No problem. And the member must understand that so far as the Public Service Commission is concerned, the answer is zero. But I think he knows that. He's asking a broader question.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Minister, we'll move on to another question. With regard to the conflict of interest policy of the government — we're even going to have a new Bill, conflict of interest, and you've always said that you'd be very careful here — and I want to ask you a question. It's not a question we'd like to ask but you used to do that to us.

I know . . . I understand that your brother was working for the Environment department for a while after the NDP formed government. Is this true?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — No. Not that I'm aware of.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — You're saying, Mr. Minister, that you never had or have now, since October 1981 you never had a brother working for government?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — No, Mr. Speaker. I have one brother whose name is Derek who lives in Saskatoon. And he has never been employed by the Government of Saskatchewan at any time. And I'm certain I'd be aware of it if that was the case. I just can't imagine it, so I would . . . that I would not know it. So I think I can be unequivocal about it. My brother does not and has never worked for the Government of Saskatchewan.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I accept that. Naturally you'd know. And it's a good thing to correct something like that, if that rumour floats around Saskatchewan. And that's why I wanted to correct it. And I thank you for your honesty and I believe you.

But we'll go on a little further. I'd like to know if you presently or over the past year and a half since '91 had any relatives of yours employed by the government or any of its agencies or Crown corporations. Any relatives of yours working for government, period — for a Crown corporation, agency, or department of government — any relative of yours?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker. My daughter Shannon has a temporary contract with the Department of Environment. I think the member knows that I was not aware of that until some days after it had happened, when my daughter called at my home and informed me of this fact. But I was not aware of it in advance; it took me by surprise and I actually know practically nothing about the hiring

except it is in the Department of Environment.

I also have a sister who is . . . similarly got a temporary contract with the New Careers Corporation. Her name is Judy, and again that was a hiring that I was not aware of and had nothing to do with. I was informed about it after it had happened.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, that's very easy for a minister to stand up and say that a person that believes in no political patronage — you've said that since before the election, after the election, you've made it here many times — no political patronage, and any time that you have a daughter and a sister hired after 1991, she didn't . . . apparently wasn't able to get a job before '91, or before October, '91. How come she's conveniently . . . can get one afterwards? It has to be political patronage because her father and her brother, in both cases, would be the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Well no, of course the member knows very well it doesn't have to be political patronage. I mean, I just have no idea of the circumstances surrounding my sister's hiring. The member will know that my sister is a qualified social worker with her bachelor's degree in social work and I believe the member knows that. She is also a . . . has been for many, many years a real estate person, a licensed real estate — whatever they call those people — brokers, yes.

And you know, the patronage involved would be if I had anything at all to do with the employment of my sister Judy, or my daughter Shannon, both of whom are adult people, all grown up, who have lives and careers of their own. And I . . . and the member knows I do not lie. I had absolutely nothing to do with the hiring of either of those people. I would not do such a thing. I think the member also knows that. I never will.

But they are adult people with careers and they move about. My sister Judy has been in the real estate business for many years; away back after her graduation from university she was a social worker with the government of Saskatchewan. She has lived for some years in Alberta, I think three or four years, and returned to Saskatchewan — I'm reaching here — I think in 1992, came to Regina and apparently got this job with the New Careers Corporation. But I repeat again — and the member knows I do not lie — I had absolutely nothing to do with either of those engagements and I was not even aware of them until after the fact.

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

(1545)

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, of course I believe the minister. I didn't say that you had anything to do with getting them the job. But it's a sure thing that it's political patronage. You can't stand up and say that somebody else in your government didn't hire them. I mean you can't get up and smoke and mirrors that way, Mr. Minister.

I do believe you, and I believe you wouldn't lie. I mean you don't need to even insinuate to me, Mr. Minister, while we're having this debate here that I would think you would. But don't try to get the pretty people out there to believe that the minister would have nothing to do with hiring her daughter in government and nothing to do with the sister.

The fact is they are working for government and you're an NDP and whoever does the hiring and firing would make sure that your daughter and your sister got a job. So don't try to say that . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well you can stand up here and say that. We don't need any . . . we don't, Mr. Chairman, we don't need any insults from the member from Humboldt. Because I had to sit over here and listen to your stuff all the time when you . . . and this is nothing wrong with this at all.

Because, Mr. Minister, the reason why I bring this to your attention, why did your government then, if you can hire your people . . . I'm going to get into many more of your colleagues that have hired their own relatives to work. I'm not saying there's anything wrong with it. I'm not saying it's wrong, but you said you wouldn't do it. You said you would never do it.

But why did in . . . I'll take you back to 1982, Mr. Minister, when we formed government. Allan Blakeney's daughter was working for government. We never said goodbye. The Speaker of this legislature's daughter was working for government, and his daughter was working in a summer camp at North Battleford. And the student's job . . . they were going to place one of my students up in North Battleford camp. When I heard that she had to be gone to get my student, I stopped it. Because I would have nothing to do with that kind of stuff.

Politics should never affect children, should never affect distant families and what not . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Chairman, it would be a lot nicer for me to talk if the member from Humboldt would just keep his mouth shut. It would be a lot easier. He's got a big mouth and he knows how to use it. And if he wants to talk, he can get up and ask questions. I'm doing the talking.

**The Chair:** — Order, order. Order. I'll ask the members of the Assembly to come to order. I'll ask members to allow the hon. member for Arm River to put his question. And I'll ask as well that the hon. member for Arm River direct his question through the Chair.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason why I bring this to your attention, that this government fired Graham Taylor, all right? And he knew would, he likely knew he would be fired. He lost his position. He was an MLA and a cabinet minister for years and he had an appointment out of country, and he knew he would.

But the question I asked is that why did this government, your government, in almost the same



week that they fired him, see that his daughter lost a job, his daughter-in-law, who was working for government long before she ever met the Taylors, they lost their jobs. What's wrong with you that you . . . this government would do such a thing when we didn't do it to you? I mean, if you want to take it out on Graham Taylor, don't go after his family. Now if you want to know a hurt family, is going to Wolseley and talk to the Taylors. Take it out on them, but not their family.

You may not know anything about this, Mr. Minister, but if you would I'd like you to check into the particulars, and if I'm wrong on exact members of the family . . . I know one was working for Environment — just where your daughter is working for Environment now — and worked for Sask Housing for a while; they moved around in government. And they're up and just fired. And I don't think this is right.

I got another individual that lives in my son's home, no relation to us whatsoever. He has no parents, or he hasn't got his father and his mother's not well. And we've always said, this is home for you when you got no place else to go. I don't even know the boy's politics. He worked for SaskTel for years, year after year, and soon as you formed government, his bosses said, you live in the Muirhead home, goodbye.

So you can understand, the member from Humboldt wanted to know about my frustration . . . (inaudible) . . . these things have to happen.

**The Chair:** — Order, order. Order. I'll remind the hon. member for Humboldt that the rules of Assembly do not allow us to refer to other members or ourselves by our proper names, and I don't think he did that intentionally. I just bring that to your attention.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Chairman, I'm not even understanding your ruling what I said was wrong. Could you explain that again, what I said was wrong?

**The Chair:** — You referred to yourself by your proper name and I just bring that to your attention.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Chairman, I never mentioned my home. I mentioned my son's home, Ken Muirhead — if I did mention Ken Muirhead. It's not in my own home. It was my son's home, and that's where this boy has made his . . . his name is Kevin Williams. And I'm very, very disappointed that this boy cannot find a job and he loses his job because his boss in SaskTel said, I'm sorry, they've told me from above, goodbye because you're on that Muirhead home.

And I want to make it very clear that it wasn't his . . . it was his boss that when he was fired told him that, but the orders came from above. And I'd like that checked into because whether it's through the Public Service Commission or whatever, I just don't think it . . . I think we should be above and beyond these kind of things, that the Taylor children and somebody in my home that's just living there and worked for several years — five or six years — for SaskTel, did good work and was coming into . . . did summer work, usually eight to ten months. Sometime he would be through in January.

And I think it's very unfair that he's sitting there with nothing to do and can't find a job, and he was trained for his position.

So I just ask you, Mr. Minister, if you would check into the Taylor family. I'll give you the proper names at a different time and see why these people were just out coldly blank fired. Mr. Taylor says, that's fine; fire me. Mr. Andrew, says fire me or whatever. But we don't want that to happen to children of children of any of our families. I wouldn't do it to you, and you wouldn't do it to mine.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Chairman, to the member, I have no knowledge at all of any of the cases that you've mentioned, but we will look into them and see what we can learn. In the case of SaskTel, I'll ask the minister for a report on the situation that you mention, and we'll try and find out what that was all about.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, yes I appreciate that because I know you quite well, and I know that . . . I don't know anybody over there that would personally want to do this to . . . and the person that lives in my son's home, his name was Kevin Williams; he was an employee of SaskTel for a long time. I just appreciate that is . . . because I don't think that this ever . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, I'll have to get you those names. I'll see that you get those names this evening, Mr. Minister.

Now the last question I have to ask you on this, Mr. Minister, and I don't like to have to do these things, but I think it's good that we're getting some of these straightened out. Have you got it straightened out about your brother because it's not right that we have to hear it on the street. I have heard it, and we've heard it floating around. Does your brother work for government? And for your sake and for everybody's sake . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm glad to hear it because I didn't think you would do such a thing.

The other question I have, do you have any other relatives acting as an agent for a third party doing business with government or any of its agencies or Crown corporations?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — No, not that I can think of. No.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — That's fine; I accept that, Mr. Minister.

Do you have any relatives supplying any goods or service to the government or any of its agencies or Crown corporations.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — No.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Thank you. Now this is a question that it would be impossible for you to answer and I'll just wait for your response on it. I'm just asking that you can put the information together.

The question I'd like answered, and it's relatives of government MLAs working for any department,

Crown, or agency of government. But when I term the word relatives, we better use like they do in the Board of Internal Economy, what you call close relatives, like mother, father, brother, sister, spouses, and children and things like that. When you get down the line we shouldn't even get into that at all.

And I'm not saying it's even wrong. I just want to know the number. Because we were always told that this would never happen under this here government. And maybe these things aren't true. Maybe what's floating around Saskatchewan that this government is doing the same thing as we did when we were over there, hire some of our families and what not, and people don't . . . they seem to call it a conflict. And okay, if you're going to be clean, let's see how clean you are. Can you undertake to do that, Mr. Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Yes, Mr. Chairman, we'll wait for *Hansard* to come for the exact information that the member wants and do our best to provide it.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I'd like to deal now with reclassifications. What are the terms in which an employee, and specifically a ministerial assistant, are given a reclassification?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Chairman, the Public Service Commission doesn't have anything to do with the order in council appointments and the classifications of the people who are appointed to ministers' offices. That is done I think in Executive Council, but it is not done by the Public Service Commission.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Okay then, Mr. Minister, we'll just go to your particular office then for the Public Service Commission. I guess it'll be in the information that I have down in my office now being looked at. What staff do you have in your office that has any connection with Public Service Commission or paid by Public Service Commission?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — I think I have the right information. I have a staff of three assistants and three secretaries for all of the things that I do — Justice, Indian and Metis Affairs, Public Service Commission, and all of the other assignments that I have that have been published in . . . wherever these things are published, anyway the order in council.

It would seem from the information I have here that three of the staff are carried on the Public Service Commission payroll. And did the member want their names? No? There's one assistant and two secretaries. I can send this across if you like . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Okay, yes.

One of my assistants, Marian Morrison, and two of my secretaries. There are actually three secretary names here, but one of them was working and is away on maternity leave and has been replaced by a temporary employee and both their names are on here. So one assistant and two secretaries are carried on the commission's budget.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, that information is probably . . . those names and what not would be in the package I've already got so we don't need it.

But did I understand you straight, Mr. Minister, when you said that three of your staff was paid for by the Public Service Commission? Did I understand that right or did I hear you right?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Yes, three. One of my secretaries and two . . . pardon me, one of my assistants and two of my secretaries.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Okay. When I asked you before, when I said I'd like to deal with the reclassification, what are the terms in which an employee and specifically ministerial assistants are given a reclassification. And you got up and you answered me that Public Service Commission has nothing whatsoever to do with Executive Council or OCs. Well then you turn around and you say, well three of my staff are paid from the Public Service Commission.

I think, Mr. Minister, that if you go to every department in government . . . I mean, every minister's office, they probably have somebody being paid from the department that's hired by the Public Service Commission.

Can you give me a breakdown on who's hired directly, where a minister brings someone in and bypasses the Public Service Commission.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — The staff is not hired by the Public Service Commission. They're hired by Executive Council or hired through Executive Council. The order in council is raised by Executive Council and it's just the Public Service Commission has the privilege of paying the bill, of paying the wages. But these are not jobs within the classification system administered by the Public Service Commission.

(1600)

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Minister, I thought that's what you'd come back and say. I knew you were going to get that straight pretty soon.

Have you anyone else in your department or in your office, Mr. Minister, that is paid from any other department . . . I mean, with a connection to the Public Service Commission?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — None with a connection to the Public Service Commission. I have two other assistants and a secretary and they're paid by one of the other agencies. As I stand here I don't know which ones, but none that have a connection to the Public Service Commission.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Can you tell me, Mr. Minister, whether there's any of your colleagues that are ministers or anyone in Executive Council that are being paid by a department, not the Public Service

Commission but a department — they would probably be hired by the Public Service Commission and not the department — and seconded to the minister's office? Do you have a list of those?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Chairman, we don't know of anybody working in any minister's office that is there seconded from another department or there as a result of any action by the Public Service Commission. I think they're probably all order in council appointments, at least as far as I know.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, would you undertake — you said, as far as you knew — so would you undertake to get me that answer, exactly the facts, whether there is anybody seconded. And I better clarify that, Mr. Minister — someone that was hired by the Public Service Commission working for any department, Crown corporation, or agency of government and then been seconded to any minister's office. Can you get me that information?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Yes we can check that out. We'll check that out and let the member know.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — In your own, Mr. Minister, in your own office you have the three employees that are paid by Public Service Commission. Just so I've got this straight. Who decides, the Public Service Commission or Executive Council, what their salary is to be?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — It's Executive Council.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Okay, they're being paid by the Public Service Commission. Executive Council decides what their salaries are going to be. Somebody must make the decision on reclassification then. Who decides if they're going to be reclassified?

Like what I talked about in question period today, we had . . . All you've got to do is move . . . in this government you just move from office to office and you can get reclassified. You go from Environment to Municipal, you get classified with more wages. And somebody moves back and up goes their money.

Now if you can just comment on that, Mr. Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — All those decisions are made in Executive Council and an order in council is passed that brings them into effect. The commission is asked to comment on the ranges to see that they're not inappropriate, having regard to the structure of wages generally. But we play no part in the decision, nor are we asked to make any judgement or offer any advice with respect to the system other than in the limited way that I've indicated.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — So what you're saying, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, what you're saying is that any staff working for any minister, there could be many more paid by the Public Service Commission. Is it just your department that have three staff? No other ministers are paid by the Public Service Commission?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — That is right. And it only

happens to me because I'm the minister responsible for the Public Service Commission and there's a fair work flow in connection with that. But no other ministers would have anyone working in their office whose salary is paid by the Public Service Commission.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — But, Mr. Minister, you're not saying that there isn't . . . You're not saying, Mr. Minister, for sure that somebody hired by the Public Service Commission, working for a department — because we're not sure of that — and seconded to a department, that they're being paid by . . . You have to find out; you're not real sure of that, are you?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — We are not aware of any such situations. I think it's fair to say we'd be surprised if there were any. But I've undertaken to the minister that we will check that out and inform you of the results of our check.

**The Chair:** — Order, order. I'll ask members on both sides of the House to allow the hon. member for Arm River to . . . to allow the hon. member for Arm River to put his questions.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Chairman, thank you. Mr. Minister, it's a little difficult . . . I want to run this by you anyway, whether it's under the Public Service Commission or not, what I was talking about in question period today because you're minister . . . and how this can happen.

As you know in question period, I run out of time, and I had a full three questions together there. But I want to just bring them to your attention, and you can comment on them or not. The one question I was asking was going to be to the Minister of Education, and it was one of her employees had received a sizeable increase. Michelle Wilde, she received a \$2,000 hike in her salary.

And then there was the Minister of Environment; Joanne Buhr, she received 20 per cent increase, \$561 a month in a pay cheque. And there was the minister responsible for Municipal Government; a Gail Russell was initially hired as a political assistant to the Minister of Environment. And we haven't got a problem with that, Mr. Minister, but we feel . . . However in October of '92 Ms. Russell was moved to the Municipal Government office and then got this 46 per cent increase, and I don't know who's responsible for this. I mean these are outrageous for a time of restraint.

I don't know whether it was the Public Service Commission or the cabinet or whatever, but you're a high-profile minister, and I think somebody should be answering why we have to have 52 hospitals cut back. We have to have several hundred nurses that have lost their jobs in the last short, few weeks. We've had cut-backs to . . . there's very hardly any assistance to farmers.

We met with some truckers this morning, and they are very upset about a Bill in this here legislature, the

labour Bill that's going to affect them and break them and move them out of province probably. We suggested to them that they come and meet with the minister and the Premier and get their frustration . . . They've been writing to all of you. You've all had a letter; every minister has had a letter. Because they . . . we were told this morning the letter that was sent to every minister, and some of them have answered. But they're frustrated people. Then when they see these here increases . . . so we talk about restraint and we have . . . every utility is increased and increased. And we're in terrible problems out there. And I don't know who's to blame here.

This Public Service Commission is hiring people and paying too much, or increasing them, or whether it's the cabinet and OCs. And if it's OCs and cabinet that's worse yet. Because why would you be the ones, the ones that are increasing these here salaries here. It just don't sound right to me, Mr. Minister, that you've been preaching restraint every day out there. The Premier preaches restraint. And here we have these here large increases.

I mean we did that when we were in government. I know that some people jumped fairly quickly as your call for qualifications, they moved in, and they were qualified and they moved in. But you people say we're in restraint and we're not going to allow that. So the people that have no job at all today — somebody listening here right now that has no job whatsoever — doesn't want to see somebody else get \$1,000 a month increase. It's just not right.

So whether it's the Public Service Commission involved in this or not, or it's your cabinet or whatever, I'd like your comment on it, Mr. Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — The first thing I'd like to say is that the Public Service Commission doesn't have anything to do with the matters that the member has raised, so I can't pretend to answer.

I heard the exchange in question period. And my understanding of the Deputy Premier's answer was that these were people who had moved from one position to another. So it was not a question of a person in a position receiving a raise in that position, but a matter of them moving from one position to another position with greater responsibilities to which a different price tag or salary schedule applied. Now that's all I heard in question period. And I must say beyond that I don't have any knowledge.

But the member would have a chance I think to ask those questions of the minister responsible for Executive Council, the Premier, when his estimates come to the floor.

But I should not pretend to be able to answer for the details of that at all.

**The Chair:** — Why is the member on his feet?

**Mr. Koenker:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. With permission to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Koenker:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly here this afternoon, a constituent and the secretary of the Metis Society of Saskatchewan, Bernice Hammersmith. And I'd like to ask all members to give her a welcome.

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

## COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

### General Revenue Fund Public Service Commission Vote 33

#### Item 1

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, the budget came out, there was approximately 4 or 500 people just blankly fired and they're going to be heavily involved with the Public Service Commission. Maybe all of them were.

Could you tell me how many of those were involved with the Public Service Commission? Of all the firings, the mass firing that you had at budget time when they had all those pink slips given out, how many of those people were under the Public Service Commission?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — With respect to the Public Service Commission itself as an organization, there were no lay-offs such as the member refers to. Is that what the member was asking, or did you want me to report on a broader basis than simply the commission itself?

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, let's ask the question this way. In 1993, and that's going to take in up till today, there's X amount of people have had a pink slip and how many of those numbers — I don't need names — I just want to know what the numbers are that were involved under the Public Service Commission?

(1615)

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Chairman, I'm happy to be able to tell the member that I can answer this question. When all the dust had settled, there were 289 employees who were affected by job abolition, who were in jobs that were abolished; and there were 89 positions that were vacant that were abolished. So that total figure is 378, as I add those two numbers together — 289 plus 89.

Now I've got a breakdown of that between the out-of-scope employees and the in-scope employees, if that's of any interest to the member. On the out-of-scope side, there were — we're talking about classified and unclassified out-of-scope, but I'll lump those together because it's a technical matter that isn't

involved in your question — the vacant out-of-scope positions that were eliminated total 36 and the out-of-scope employees who were in jobs that were abolished was 132.

In the in-scope categories, there were 51 vacancies where the position was abolished — there was nobody working in those jobs — and there were 126 encumbered positions that were abolished in the in-scope side. In addition there were in what we call the labour service area, there were two vacancies abolished and 31 encumbered positions abolished. And that gives the total that I gave earlier to the member, 89 vacancies and 289 people.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Have you got a copy of that or do we just get that out of . . . can I have that sent over, please, Mr. Minister?

You're saying, Mr. Minister, that when all the smoke cleared there was 289 people without jobs. Is that correct?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — That is a very complex question and I'll begin the answer, but feel free to stop me at any point. Because the in-scope people have bumping rights under the agreement and they get sorted out in various categories as they go along. And with the out-of-scope people, some of those could bump . . . were eligible to bump back into the bargaining unit. So here we go.

I'll start with the out-of-scope positions. Of the out-of-scope job abolitions that I mentioned to the member, 24 elected what we call restricted retirement; 7 elected regular retirement; 14 elected to bump back into the bargaining unit. Now I'll just spare the member the detail after that because some of those bumps worked out and some didn't, but there were 14 anyway who went that route. Sixteen resigned and received severance; nine employees were redeployed within their own department under reorganizations; eight were employed or redeployed in other departments other than the ones that they were in before the abolitions; one successfully competed for an advertised position in the public service; and 46 employees still had to make a decision.

As of my reporting date, which is last Friday — I haven't updated it since last Friday — but as of last Friday that was the situation with them. So that's the out-of-scope side.

Now on the in-scope side it really gets complex. The number 86 that I gave to the member, 24 of those elected restricted retirement; one elected regular retirement; three were on a leave of absence — they continue on the leave of absence — two were on initial probation and had no bumping rights under the agreement; and 56 elected to bump.

Now of those 56 who elected to bump, I get into too much detail then. There's all kinds of possibilities. And that process is still going on, still working itself out.

I'm advised that the bumping process should be done by the middle of June. There really is a lot of detail about that but I'd be glad to give it to the hon. member if you wish. But it gets into probably areas where the member's question was not intended to go.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Well when I first asked the question, Mr. Minister, I asked how many were . . . when the smoke cleared how many was out of jobs, period. And you said 289. Is that still the figure that . . . there are 289 less positions? But don't count the ones that you just didn't . . . that were vacant. I just want to know . . . my question is really how many positions that are gone and didn't get fulfilled?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Yes, those positions are gone. They're finished. The people that are in them have gone various routes and we think . . . I was just advised that by the middle of June I think we will discover that none of the permanent employees, in-scope employees, are actually out of a job. Some may have retired and that sort of thing, but they'll still be employed. But the member is right. Those are jobs, those are positions that are abolished and gone.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — All right, thank you, Mr. Minister. I'd just like to ask a question about to understand the bumping rights. I have talked to several, and I know, I'm thinking of one individual. They were in a class 3 classification and he got bumped about a month after the main pink slips went out. And then he bumped somebody else and went into a class 2 with the same wages, but has got a job. Can they be bumped again? How does this bumping . . . I don't understand this. But if the Public Service Commission are involved in this . . . can you, how many times can you be bumped before it all settles down and you know you're secure?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — The bumping is done on the basis of seniority with the senior employees having a right to bump junior employees. And if you as a senior employee have exercised your bumping rights into a position, we don't expect there would ever be anybody behind you with bumping rights who would bump you in that same transaction. You could do the bumping and move into that position secure that no one would be bumping you.

Now you know, the bumping language is all contained in the collective agreement. And I suppose that no scenario is impossible. But on a practical basis, in the kind of exercise we've just come through, then the person you're talking about could be secure knowing that there would be nobody bumping them from this pool of people who were affected by the job abolitions.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Minister, if I understand it right then, you're saying that it's not likely, if you get bumped once, you're not likely to get a phone call that you've been bumped again. That's not liable to happen. I understand that right, Mr. Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Yes that's correct, not within that bumping exercise. Now you know, next year if there are more abolitions, the situation may get into

turmoil again; nothing's for ever. But for this round, it would work as the member said.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Well I don't expect that to happen, Mr. Minister. This government's making such moves to get everything going on the right track, I'm sure that by next spring they'll be hiring people back, and this here province will just be booming. I don't think anybody has to worry about losing their job, for sure. I am so confident, but I say that with a forked tongue, Mr. Minister.

Okay another question I'd like to ask you. You said there was 16 people that resigned and took a severance package. Can you supply those names and what the severance package was?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — We can get that information. These are people from across the whole service. But there are only 16 of them, so we'll be able to answer the member's question. I'll just write you a letter setting it out, if I may.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Could tell me, after the smoke's all cleared, somebody must have figured out in Finance, there had to be . . . over the restraints of why we had to do this and lay people off. That's what you said. So how much money was saved by handing out these here 289 pink slips or whatever the figure? How much money was saved to this government?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — I just simply can't answer that question. The Public Service Commission had some responsibilities in connection with this, like the oversight of the bumping process and that kind of thing. But I don't have the numbers the member is asking for. Other ministers would; I suppose the Minister of Finance or whatever. But I certainly don't.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Now, Mr. Minister, if there's 289 employees less hired by the Public Service Commission, one of your officials here should be able to just tell you instantly how much money, or why go through the process? If you laid off 289 people, individuals without jobs, and you don't know how many dollars and cents it costs, why did you do it? I'm sure that your officials should be able to give you approximate dollars and cents saving.

I see you're talking to your officials so I'll let you go ahead.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — We have people involved here all the way from assistant deputy ministers down to the lowest rank in the clerical staff. So those numbers would vary wildly, or greatly I should say — greatly. And I don't know how we'd even hazard a guess. You know, you can pick a number as an average salary, and I don't know what that is, and then multiply by 289 and you'd get a number. But we can't guesstimate the average salary.

We do know though that there were some very highly ranked jobs that were abolished and some relatively low paid jobs that were abolished. And each

department would know that and the Treasury Board would know it in a global sense. But none of that information was shared with Public Service Commission, so we just don't know how to answer your question here today as we sit here.

(1630)

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Minister, 289 people or 290 people, whatever, lose their job for restraint, and the Public Service Commission doesn't know what salary they were all getting? You don't have that on a computer? Why wouldn't they know? Because they would be hiring those people. They're maybe working for a department or whatever, but they're responsible. They fired them; they must have known when they were laid off, got the pink slip, they must have known exactly what wages they were getting.

So I think we're just getting away too easy here, Mr. Minister. So I think we're going to have to stop right here until you can answer that question. Because we're going to have 289 people in this province lose their jobs, and the government cannot tell me, the Public Service Commission cannot tell me, or you, Mr. Minister, what the cost saving to this province was.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Chairman, my officials tell me that they could figure that out. We can gather the information together and answer that question. We can't do it here as we sit; we'd just be guessing. But it's capable, as the member suggests, of being figured out and the question can be answered.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, when would I get that information? How long will it take? When you say figuring it out, does that mean they're going to figure it out while we're sitting here or is it going to take some time?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — No, we can't do it that quickly because it's a complex question. But we can chase down these 289 jobs, find out what salary is attached to the jobs, and total them up. And it would take us probably two or three working days. We could have it early next week for the member.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Okay, Mr. Minister. We'll take your word for that. As long as you can give us that information.

Now, Mr. Minister, we're talking about these 289 positions that's gone. Was there more pink slips given out than that and then some rehired to come down to 289, or was it 289 when the smoke cleared? Is that the final? Was there more pink slips given out than the 289?

Because I understand talking to many of these people that got the pink slips, talking about people in their department, they've seen people around them, they lost their jobs, went home crying, and then in a few days they're back working again in some other job or some . . . And some of them even lost their jobs and they've got contracts with government now. In one

department — for the sake of this individual, I'm not even going to mention the department — but it's happening.

And the Public Service Commission should know if there's more than one or not. When an individual bumps somebody else . . . this individual I was talking about before bumped from a 3 down to a 2, and then the person that he very reluctantly had to bump to have a job just went to a contract that's still working there for, I understand, it's six months to a year.

How many times is this happening, that these people got other jobs? The Public Service Commission should know about that.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — The member has I think a clear grasp of what happened here. There were 289 positions abolished. When you translate that into individuals, true, many of them are still around. As I said earlier, we don't expect any permanent employees to be put out on the street, because with the bumping rights and other avenues they might take, hopefully they're still around. That pleases us that there are no . . . these permanent employees out on the street. So I'm not surprised that there are circumstances where employees who have been bumped show up somewhere else.

I don't know about the contracts. I would look into any situation that I learned about where things didn't seem to be proper but certainly there have been . . . There's a lot of turmoil in some of these workplaces where there've been significant job abolitions and nobody knows who's . . . where they're at or who's bumping who or whether they'll be bumped or what their options are.

And as I indicated, 46 out 129 people still haven't made a decision about what option they're going to take, as of last Friday. So there's still a good deal of turmoil and the situation won't really settle down until the middle of June.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Yes I know all about the turmoil. There's been so much turmoil I'm sure this government wishes they hadn't of made that move because it causes you a lot of problems and a lot of enemies out there.

There has to be a better way, Mr. Minister, than laying off people. I think the policy of the past government was much better. We cut it down by thousands of people in nine years; just didn't replace . . . went for early retirement and then didn't replace when somebody retired on their own. And here you've gone out with mass firings. And I know what you're doing, you're trying to save money and I see the NDP are doing it all over. They did it . . . talking about 50,000 in Ontario this morning. I mean it's not the way to go. When you have somebody going to be eventually on unemployment insurance is not the way to create wealth in a province.

I'm just saying you've gone the wrong way and you're going to regret it some day because I'm old enough to

know what happened . . . I can remember my parents talk about it at the end of the '30s, what the governments did in those days, and that was a Liberal government then, and a progressive . . . they called the progressives. Decided to not spend any more money, and they fired everybody, and everybody quit spending money, and they had a recession. I think the recession we're in in Saskatchewan, Mr. Minister, right now is the same as pretty well all over North America. But you're going to add to it by cutting down on jobs.

People got to have jobs. They got to work, so I'm sure that the orders you give the . . . the cabinet gave to the Public Service Commission to pick out the people they could lay off. My question now, Mr. Minister, is: how many new jobs were created? You said 289 jobs were left vacant. How many new jobs were created?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — There have been no creation of new jobs in any real sense. Generally the downsizing has been pretty general right across the piece and there have been some mergers in reorganization that have resulted in lay offs or the reduction in the number of jobs.

In the Department of Justice I'm aware of a situation where there were quite a large number of corrections workers working on a temporary basis and we converted a lot of those to permanent positions. But they're just job for job and there's no net gain. It's just a question of rather than being a temporary employee, the employee assumes a permanent position. They were working full time anyway so it was a natural change and you would not classify that as a new job, as you've just defined it.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Minister, my notes had down here: I didn't understand your answer when I asked if there were more people, or why this individual that got bumped from a class 2 and out and then all of sudden was back to work the next day with a six-months or a year contract. How many more of those and why did that happen?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Chairman, to the member, we are aware of one situation in the government, and I suspect it's the one that the member is referring to, although he hasn't given me a name or a department. He may not want to. Fair enough. Or he may want to do it privately. Fair enough. We do not know what that contract is all about or why the situation is as the member has described, why this situation is as it is.

But it's the only one that we're aware of in the government. But I think the member said earlier he's reluctant to give the name so he may not want to discuss it further or he may want to do it in private. I'll leave it up to him.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Minister, no. It's not necessary to further it because I'm happy the man's got a job. I'm not trying . . . I just wondered. If there's only one, there must be some reason for it. And I'm not worried about it then. The individual that bumped this person is so happy that the guy is working again because nobody

feels good about bumping anybody. No, I wouldn't want to bring the name or the department for the sake of the individuals involved. And if there's only one, we won't further that.

Where does Crop Insurance . . . any employees of Crop Insurance, they got pink slips the same day. Do the employees of Crop Insurance come under the Public Service Commission too?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — No, Mr. Chairman. Crop Insurance is a Crown, a Crown corporation and they do their own thing. And we're just not aware of what's happening there.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Mr. Minister, I was quite sure that's the way it would be with all the Crowns. And I expect that . . . this one here I don't know, and I don't know why I don't know. I know nurses are paid out of the Department of Health, and they're hired in their local communities and all around. Is the Public Service got anything to do with nurses?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — We have nurses employed in the Department of Health — public health nurses — and they're appointed by the Public Service Commission, or pursuant to that process. There are also nurses in the hospitals at North Battleford and Moose Jaw. So there are nurses employed in the public service. I think that's the extent of your question.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Yes, thank you, Mr. Minister. So did some of the nurses that were on staff . . . nurses and staff laid off at Weyburn at the hospital there and in Saskatoon, and some in Regina, just lately — were any of them involved with the Public Service Commission?

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — No, they were not. They were not employed by the government.

**Mr. Muirhead:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. The member from Morse is going to ask a question.

(1645)

**Mr. Martens:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I have a number of questions that I think deserve an answer. I raised a question or two in regard to some of the ads that I've seen in . . . I'll give you examples. And one was the student employment '93 which said the individuals who were aboriginal or disabled would get preferential treatment.

The second one that caught my eye was for one of the departments that you're responsible for — Indian and Metis Affairs. And it said there, only an aboriginal woman need apply. Now, Mr. Minister, at the bottom of one of your other ads: we are committed to employment equity.

Now what has defining who you're going to hire got to do with employment equity? Employment equity means that equal opportunity for male, female, black, white, red, yellow, whatever colour, whatever ethnic

origin. And I find that very, very disturbing that the Minister of Justice, responsible for the Public Service Commission, responsible even for some Bills that we're discussing in this Assembly, would have the lack of foresight of putting that kind of advertising in the paper.

Now you can decide on the basis of a decision-making process that you want employment equity as it relates to various races in the province. What you fail to understand, Mr. Minister, we probably have less Chinese and Japanese and Vietnamese people in the province of Saskatchewan working than Indians, if you want to use them as an example. And we need to have employment equity because they're a minority.

And then we go the whole gamut. Why not allow an opportunity for individuals to be taken into the public service on the basis of their capacity to deliver a service to the community that is, number one, the best that you can get; and number two, for the lowest price you can get? And that, Mr. Minister, should be some of the fundamentals that you deal with.

And I think it's disgusting. I had a gentleman who applied for a grant under the student employment and wrote a letter in *The Southwest Booster*. And I read it in the Assembly as a part of the discussion in my throne speech address. And I really believe, Mr. Minister, that that's wrong.

That doesn't have . . . In a Canadian society where we have free opportunities for individuals and you put that sort of thing down, I think it's disgusting. And I don't believe it has a place coming from a Public Service Commission, coming from an area of justice. You're supposed to represent people equally and fairly, and I don't see where that does that.

And I am speaking on behalf of other minorities who are just as important to this province as the ones that you single out. And I don't think that that's fair, Mr. Minister, and I don't think it's right. And that is not because I'm white, that's because there are other people who are of Chinese ancestry and Japanese ancestry, and what you are doing is you're discriminating against them. And I don't believe that that's right and I don't believe that that's fair.

I think people should have the dignity of having the respect of themselves as individuals in relation to their race, their colour, their ethnic origin, their sex. It doesn't matter, Mr. Minister. And I say that what you have done is you have tarnished your responsibility as a Minister of Justice in determining the value and the contribution you make to society. And that, sir, is wrong, and I believe it's wrong.

And I think the people of the province of Saskatchewan would agree with me that it's wrong. Equal opportunity on the basis of employment equity means equal opportunity, not a bias one way or the other. And I think that you misrepresented the opportunities that you presented. And I would say that that is entirely wrong, sir.



**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Chairman, that is an extraordinary question, and the answer to which the member is just not going to like at all. And here is the answer, Mr. Member. All of the things that you mention, the advertising and the various qualifications, and all of the things that you mentioned, were done. They were done pursuant to an affirmative action plan that had been filed by the Government of Saskatchewan for approval with the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission and approved by — just listen to me — and approved by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission. And that action plan was filed and approved in 1986. And everything that we did that the member has referred to has been done pursuant to that plan.

Now as of April 1, 1993 — the member shakes his head but this is a fact — as of April 1, 1993, visible minorities have been added to the three categories that the previous government had included in the affirmative action plan. The categories covered in the 1986 plan were aboriginal people, women, and persons suffering from disability.

So that's why I find your question to be so extraordinary — so extraordinary. Even without the affirmative action program of the previous government, it would be an extraordinary question. But in light of the fact that it's your plan that we're operating under, I find the question to be, as I said, extraordinary.

**Mr. Martens:** — Well, Mr. Minister, I'd like to have you point out to the Assembly one time where the government where I was involved with did what you did in providing that aboriginal women need only apply. I'd like you to prove that to me that we did that. And I'll bet you that you couldn't do that.

Number two, in the policy of opportunities delivered to individuals, that is equal across Canada, and I will stand for that on the basis of anywhere. If I, sir, did what you did, I would be held before the Human Rights Commission and I would be charged. Yes, Mr. Minister, I would. And you tell me when we ever did that — you tell me. And I'll bet you, you can't.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, it was the previous government that proposed an affirmative action program for hiring to the public service of Saskatchewan. All that has been done by your government during the period from 1986 to 1991 and by our government since the late fall of 1991 having to do with special hiring arrangements for aboriginals, for women, and for disabled, have been done under the umbrella of and in accordance with the terms of the affirmative action plan.

Now what are we getting cranky about here? I mean you thought it was a good idea; we think it's a good idea; the whole world — at least all of Canada — thinks it's a good idea. Let's keep doing it.

Now we don't have enough aboriginals employed in the Government of Saskatchewan, by any test you

want to use, whether as a percentage of the population, whether as a . . . you know, choose your yardstick. It's not enough. We don't have enough women in management positions in the government. This is a position that your government had; it's a position that our government has. It is the correct position.

If we combine those two together and say in this particular senior position in the Indian and Metis Affairs Secretariat we want an aboriginal woman, that falls precisely within the definition of the affirmative action plan and is a good idea. It solves two problems at once — representation of Indian people and representation of women in senior management positions. What's the problem?

**Mr. Martens:** — Mr. Minister, you didn't answer the question that I asked you. Would you show to this Assembly and to the people of the province of Saskatchewan one instance where we advertised for the public that only certain individuals need apply for the qualification of that job. I don't believe you can.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — No, and I didn't say that. But I do say that what we did in that case of that ADM and what we're doing falls exactly within the four corners of the approved affirmative action plan. Now maybe it's the wrong plan. I mean if that's what you're saying and we go back and take a look at it and say, did those Tories know what they were doing in 1986 when they made that application for approval of an affirmative action plan.

But we like the plan. We think we've improved upon it by dealing with visible minorities, and you mentioned a couple of nationalities where that would probably qualify under the heading "visible minorities." But we're satisfied with the way it works.

Now if you think it's not fair and want us to go back and take a look at your plan, we'll do that. But I say with respect to the member, I don't think that you really want us to do that. I think that you were serious when you proposed the plan in the first place and I think it was a good plan, and you're to be commended for it. And you shouldn't cut the ground out from underneath your own government with what everybody thinks is a good idea.

**Mr. Martens:** — Well, Mr. Minister, I believe it's wrong to advertise for those kinds of positions in that kind of a context. I believe it's wrong. In fact I've spoken with individuals who are handicapped, physically handicapped, and they would agree with me, that they don't want to be treated different than any other individual. They have dignity within themselves, and that is what they want to have.

And that, sir, causes me equal concern to what you're just stating. And if you go to the point of having in various kinds of ways . . . It disqualifies certain individuals and especially teenagers who are looking for work in student employment; it is disturbing to young men and women, and I'll use the word loosely as white people in the province of Saskatchewan. It is

disturbing to children who are teenagers who want to have a job and who are disqualified from an opportunity within the framework of this government because you say that there are two qualifications, two qualifications, and they are irritated by it. And I know they are because they have told me that.

And that sir, is why I raise it today because people don't believe that that is fair. In all of the constitutional debate, Mr. Minister, there is one thing that struck me over and over and over again, is the people — and I voted for the constitution as it was presented, sir — people who said they did not believe that there should be special privileges for certain groups and individuals across this country. I believe that is the undercurrent and belief that individuals had.

Now I think this equally flies in the face of that, and I think it's disturbing to say the least. And I say don't put it in. What you have in the bottom line of this one — we are committed to employment equity, period — says a lot more to me about the dignity of the human being than to say so-and-so need not apply, so-and-so need not apply because that, sir, is discrimination. And discrimination in my book has always been wrong, and so I just want to make you aware of that because I don't think it's the right thing to do.

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — In light of the time, I won't launch into a spirited defence of affirmative action programs, but the member will know that they are called into existence because of a generally accepted belief that there are groups in our society that are under-represented, chronically under-represented in employment. And the whole idea of an affirmative action plan is to speed up the situation so that they will become properly represented, so that there will be an equity in the sense that the working population in a plant . . . And it may be your plant. You as an employer can apply for an approved affirmative action program with the Human Rights Commission. It's not just restricted to government. Anybody can do it.

And you would then have to commit yourself. The whole idea would be that you would want to commit yourself towards changing the mix of your employees so that these chronically under-represented groups could be properly represented in your workforce. And that's the whole idea.

Now I don't want to get into a spirited defence about it. The member has made his position clear and I hope I in a short way made mine clear.

Item 2 agreed to.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.