

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**May 17, 1995**

The Assembly met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS**

**Clerk:** — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed, and pursuant to rule 12(7) they are hereby read and received.

Of citizens of the province petitioning the Assembly to allocate adequate funding toward the double-laning of Highway No. 1.

And of citizens of the province petitioning the Assembly to oppose changes to federal legislation regarding firearm ownership.

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure today, Mr. Speaker, to introduce to you and through you to my colleagues in the legislature, 63 grade 6 and 7 students from St. Marguerite School in Saskatoon. They are accompanied today by their teachers, Craig Van Parys and Terri Krochek, and chaperon Mr. Sellar.

They'll be sitting here through the end of question period, Mr. Speaker, after which they're having a tour of the legislature and then they'll meet with me — or if I can't get there because of things I have going in the House — one of my colleagues will meet them for drinks and for questions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a honour for me today to introduce two guests seated in your gallery: Mr. Frank Gribbon, who members of this House may know through his work with the Saskatchewan Council on Compulsive Gambling, and who has now taken on a new role as the Liberal candidate in Regina Sherwood. And accompanying him today is Merv Henwood. Please welcome these gentlemen to our Assembly today.

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

**Ms. Murray:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great pleasure for me today to introduce to you and through you to my colleagues in the Assembly on behalf of my colleague, the MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) for Rosetown-Elrose, 42 grade 8 students who are seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker.

They are from Rosetown. They are from the Rosetown Central High School. They are accompanied by their teachers, Norm Cline and Carroll Dyck, and by their chaperons, Sandra

Mathison and Lawrence Klemmer.

They have had a tour already. They'll be with us during question period and I'm looking forward to meeting with them, on behalf of my colleague, later on for questions and drinks.

So I would ask all of my colleagues to join me in giving them a warm welcome.

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

**Mr. Cline:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to join with the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden and on behalf of the member from Rosetown welcoming the students and teachers and chaperons from Rosetown, because my cousin, Norman Cline, is one of their teachers. And I want to welcome Norman and his colleagues and students here today.

I'm sure the members can appreciate, Mr. Speaker, that since I became a lawyer and a politician, you can imagine how proud the family is that Norman is a teacher. So welcome to the legislature.

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

**Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to, if I could, introduce to you and through you to the other members of the Assembly on behalf of the MLA from Indian Head-Wolseley, 17 grade 3 and 4 students in your speaker . . . in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, from Windthorst School in Windthorst, Saskatchewan.

They have with them today their teachers, Robyn Roy-Hampton and Jill Taylor, and chaperon Brenda Lynn Pusch.

And I would like all members to welcome them here today. I'm not sure if I'm meeting with them or not because I just was told that I'm introducing them. So anyway, if I could have everyone please join with me in welcoming them here today.

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

**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

**Children First Infant Day Care Centre**

**Mr. Sonntag:** — Caught me off guard, Mr. Speaker. On Monday I had the pleasure of taking part in the grand opening ceremonies of the Children First Infant Care Centre attached to the Carpenter High School in Meadow Lake. This facility involves a partnership between the Indian and Metis friendship centre; the Department of Social Services; Education, Training and Employment; and Health.

The collaboration of these departments has resulted in an opportunity for young mothers to stay in school. Children get quality care, and their parents get an opportunity to continue their education.

Mr. Speaker, letters from some of the parents demonstrate the success of this infant care centre. One teenage mom writes: "Without this day care, myself and other teen moms wouldn't have been able to graduate this year."

And another one writes: "If it wasn't for this centre, I probably would not be in school at all."

Not only is the centre providing quality care, there is also a locally developed credit course approved by the Department of Education that assists young people with their parenting skills. With this day care, young mothers can rest assured their child is in a warm and caring environment while they pursue the completion of their high school education in their own community.

I would like to congratulate all of the agencies and individuals involved for their hard work in pursuing new ideas and methods of sharing, caring, and working together. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Prince Albert's Women of Distinction Awards**

**Mr. Kowalsky:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier we've had statements about the YWCA women of distinction awards in Saskatoon and Regina. Today it's my pleasure to recognize the Prince Albert women of distinction who were named and honoured last night at their annual awards banquet.

This year women were named in five categories. Gloria Lennox, the principal of Queen Mary Community School, was given the business and professional woman of distinction award. She has been involved in Prince Albert education for a number of years and was instrumental in the development of our ground-breaking West Flat project.

Elsie Livingston was recognized in the community enhancement category for her lifelong work in literacy for children and adults.

Marilyn Robson was recognized for her contribution to health, fitness, and sports, because of her efforts to provide recreation opportunities to the mentally and physically challenged.

Roberta Burns is the woman of distinction in arts and culture and the director of the Indian Metis Friendship Centre.

Finally, Kim Ziobrowski was the young woman of distinction and the winner of the \$1,000 SaskPower scholarship named after astronaut Roberta Bondar. Kim is a grade 12 student involved in science, drama, music, and in student government.

Prince Albert is very proud of these women and I ask members to join me in recognizing them here today.

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

#### **Cookout for Literacy**

**Ms. Stanger:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not one who usually minces words, but in this case you'll have to excuse me. There was a function in my riding on Saturday which offered more food for thought, if you will pardon the expression.

Superior Propane and country 108 CKSA radio organized a Cookout for Literacy. Being a former teacher, I laud this fund-raising event. This event raises money for local literacy programs.

Cookout for Literacy originated through Superior Propane in 1993 and involves their offices throughout the country. In 1994, the celebrity chef program was initiated and turned out to be a huge success. Local personalities helped raise dollars locally and that was part of the 96,000 that was raised across the country. Maidstone had the distinction as being one of the top fund-raisers, Superior Propane offices, in Canada.

I am pleased to report that the Maidstone office and its branch in Meadow Lake raised approximately \$2,000 for literacy. I would like to thank the staff of Lloydminster . . . propane offices in Maidstone, Lloydminster, and Meadow Lake, and the country 108 CKSA radio for their hard work in this successful fund-raiser.

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

#### **United World Colleges Scholarship**

**Mr. Koenker:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I wish to pay tribute to a constituent, Ryan Bazylak, who is a recipient of the United World College Scholarship.

The aim of the United World Colleges is to promote peace and international understanding through education. There are seven such colleges in the world, and only one scholarship is given in each province, making Ryan's achievement all the much more amazing.

I understand the scholarship is funded through both private and public sources and is worth about \$40,000 over a two-year period. The Department of Education provides 12,000 of this. The department also assists in coordinating the selection each year.

Ryan is an avid sports participant and an accomplished musician. When applying for the scholarship, he noted how he wished to use his writing talents in the field of journalism to make a meaningful contribution to the world around him.

Mr. Speaker, Ryan will be using his scholarship to attend Lester B. Pearson College in Victoria, B.C. (British Columbia). This fall he will begin a two-year international baccalaureate program. So at this time I wish to congratulate Ryan on his outstanding achievement and, on behalf of all members of this House, to wish him the very best of luck in his studies. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Cathedral Village Arts Festival

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy once again to announce that the Cathedral Village Arts Festival, May 22 to 27, is once again just around the bend. It begins on the Queen's birthday observed and carries through to the Queen's birthday actual, but it has nothing to do with either.

What it does have to do with is local people and local artists having fun, demonstrating their talents, and generally kicking off the spring in a fashion that particularly belongs to the people of Cathedral district.

This year, as always, there will be a craft fair on 13th Avenue with 75 booths offering a veritable garden of affordable delights. And the arts will be widely represented.

Regina poet Dave Margoshes, the poet laureate of the festival, will travel throughout the festival, commemorating it in verse for the ages. And throughout the week there's many concerts, performances, and a community art show.

And on the final Saturday night, to close the festival down, there'll be a street dance featuring Off-Kicker, a Celtic band; and Blue Beard, a non-Celtic band. Throughout the festival, Noele Hall and the Stinky Sneaker Band will be singing for their supper to the children of all ages at the festival.

These, plus literary postcards from the neighbourhood, which I made sure included at least one postcard from the legislature, will be on display, along with pancake breakfasts and a parade.

And I understand that both Liberal and New Democratic representatives will be present at the dunk tank.

So I invite all members to travel down to the 13th Avenue for an exciting and friendly time.

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

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### 1991 Election Campaign

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions this afternoon are for the Premier. Mr. Premier, right at the beginning of the 1991 election campaign you held a news conference. At that time you made a fairly bold statement. You said, and I quote: we will make no promises we cannot keep. We will make no promises we cannot keep. That's what you said, Mr. Premier.

Then you went out and made all kinds of campaign promises, got yourself elected, and then set about to break just about every one of them.

Mr. Premier, how do you expect the people of Saskatchewan to

vote for you in the upcoming election and believe you this time around, after going back on each and every single promise you made?

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, when it is election time, of course the people at that time will choose the members of the Assembly in their wisdom, and I have confidence in the public of Saskatchewan.

The basic assumption of course behind the Leader of the Opposition's question is breach of electoral promise. And the fundamental promise of the government or the party as it went into the government on that election was one of opening up the books, making sure that we found out the true fiscal situation in the province, and cleaning up the fiscal picture, which I'm pleased to report, Mr. Speaker, we have done for the first time in over 12 years in this province, and for the first time anywhere by any government, provincially or federally, in Canada in over five years.

I think that this is a positive signature around the government, and the people of Saskatchewan accept it as such.

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

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier would like everyone to forget all of the promises he made in the last election. Let me refresh your memory, Mr. Premier. The night of the leaders' debate, during the closing statement, you said, and I quote: the PST (provincial sales tax) is not going to be around after October 21 if we're in power.

I know you naturally would like to say that you're just talking about the expanded PST, but that's not what you said, sir. That's not what you said. You said the PST is not going to be around after October 21. That's what you said on province-wide TV to thousands of Saskatchewan voters.

Mr. Premier, not only is the PST still here, it's now at 9 per cent instead of 7. Mr. Premier, why did you make that promise to Saskatchewan people, a promise you knew you couldn't keep?

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, may I offer just a little bit of word of advice to the new MLA — and I don't say this facetiously — the new Leader of the Opposition. And the word of advice that I give to him is that the easiest way to blow any chance of a political comeback on your part, sir, your party's part, is to get into an argument which lacks total credibility.

The member knows that the debate with respect to the PST concerned itself about the harmonization of the GST (goods and services tax) and the PST and the repeal of harmonization, and that was exactly what those words intended to say and spoke to — and spoke to.

And I tell you, if it was otherwise, the predecessor — his predecessor, not the immediate predecessor but the premier of the day — would have jumped on me and said, well, Mr. Romanow, or Mr. Leader of the Opposition, if you're going to

repeal the PST, where are you going to get the \$720 million from? He could have made that as some sort of rebuttal or response issue. He never did. He never did.

**An Hon. Member:** — It was in the closing comments; there was no opportunity.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — The member says, the closing comments. There were 10 days to go before the vote. Ten days to go before the vote; the member raised the issue once. And the member knows it opposite, and everybody, everybody in Saskatchewan knows about it. Stick to something that you're credible on.

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

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, you like to give advice to everyone in this province. Well let me give you a little advice from the people of this province. They believe when you make a promise to the people of this province, they expect you to keep it, sir. And you haven't done that.

Let me refresh your memory on another promise you made that night. We'll ease the tax burden for ordinary families. That's what you said, Mr. Premier. The Associate Minister of Finance said and promised, the NDP won't raise personal taxes for four years. That was his promise during the election campaign.

Do you remember any of that, Mr. Premier, or does your selective memory not take into account those kinds of commitments you gave to the people of this province?

How do you square that by saying we will make no promises we cannot keep? You raised income tax, you raised gas taxes, you raised utility rates. The only thing that's gone down in this province is the trust in the people within your government, Mr. Premier.

How do you expect the voters of this province to believe anything you say in an election campaign after you've broke all of the promises you made in the last election campaign?

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

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I would say to the Leader of the Opposition that he is wrong. The only thing that has gone down has been voter support for the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party in the last little while. Everything else in Saskatchewan is looking up. The economic situation is looking up. For the first time, people are feeling optimistic.

The reality is — I've said this before in question period — this is the same old line that the Leader of the Opposition is trying to advocate. I've indicated that in general terms there have been \$220 million of tax reductions — I think that's correct; I'm looking at the Minister of Finance — since 1991.

Roughly broken down, \$110 million saving when we

unharmonized the harmonization — that was the PST issue that you talked about — 50, 60 million roughly for personal income taxes, and 50, 60 million, roughly speaking, for corporate small-business people, which is the result of our economic activity.

So there's been a reduction in the income tax, in the tax rates, just as we promised we would do.

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

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well if that is the case, Mr. Premier, then why did the Minister of Finance here a few short weeks ago say to us in the legislature in Finance estimates that taxation has gone up \$225 million net since your government has taken over?

Here's another one of those little promises that you made to the people of Saskatchewan. I'm quoting from the *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix* — in quote, Mr. Speaker: Roy Romanow capped off the NDP annual convention pledging to eliminate poverty in his first term of office.

Eliminate poverty, Mr. Premier, that's what you said. You haven't eliminated poverty. In fact you haven't even reduced poverty in this province, Mr. Speaker . . . Mr. Premier. Welfare numbers have sky-rocketed to 80,000 people in this province today. Child hunger and poverty have gotten worse under your administration. Just one more broken promise to the people of this province, Mr. Premier.

Mr. Premier, what happened to your solemn vow to end poverty in your first term of office?

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, this question is about as accurate as the previous two questions. I have here in front of me, Mr. Speaker, the absolute platform of the NDP (New Democratic Party) in 1991 and it's called: "Let's do it . . . The Saskatchewan Way". It says: "First Things First — Common Sense Financial Management". I'll spare you the details.

Next thing is: "New Directions, New Priorities." First bullet under the platform says this:

A commitment to save 7,500 jobs threatened by the expanded 7% PST. We will repeal this unfair tax.

Now that's the black and white of the words. But you see the construction that is put on the words by the Leader of the Opposition.

Look, there are many objectives which we have to continue to work for; many problems in our society which have not been solved. There's no doubt about that. But I'll say, in the three years and some several months of this administration, what we have done in turning the corner on the books of this province and restoring economic health in this province, has been nothing short of phenomenal. There is no other province which has the same record as we do. And I don't take credit for that; I

give the credit to the people of Saskatchewan for that.

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

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact in Saskatchewan we have less jobs, more taxes, and more broken promises from you and your administration. Mr. Premier, pretty soon, pretty soon we expect we're going to have an election, and the voters of this province are going to have to decide — the NDP who has broken virtually every promise it made in the last election campaign, or a party who guarantees we will keep our election commitments or we will resign. That will be the choice, Mr. Premier.

Mr. Premier, you started the election by saying we will make no promises we cannot keep — the 1991 election campaign. And then you made all sorts of promises you couldn't keep or wouldn't keep. Why should the people of this province believe you, sir? What guarantee are you willing to provide the people of this province with this election that you won't do the same as you did in the last election campaign and break every promise you made?

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

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, the voters of Saskatchewan have long ago rejected and bypassed gimmicky election or other political tricks as the current Leader of the Liberal Party and Leader of the Opposition advances. We experienced in, 1989 was it? — no I guess it was 1987 — the signature of the then minister of Finance under the previous administration. I guarantee, was the words used. I, PC (Progressive Conservative) MLA, guarantee that health care is going to be absolutely secure and safe — and I guarantee. And he signed it and distributed it all over the place.

Look, I say to the Leader of the Opposition, the name of restoring credibility to government is doing the very best that you can do on the major issues which face you. And the way you're doing it, which is to go back to the old days of the old minister of Finance, the old administration, with some signature — as if that's a guarantee — isn't going to buy you an ounce of credibility. What you have to do is make sure that you're in the position of making legitimate statements about legitimate issues. And I say the people of Saskatchewan say that we have done a very good job under very difficult circumstances. That's what I say they say.

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

#### **Government Advertising**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Provincial Secretary. Mr. Minister, prior to the last election, the NDP promised to cut government spending by 80 per cent. And of course that never happened. And now the government is advertising like crazy just before the provincial election. And we can't even get a straight answer about how much money is being spent.

Mr. Minister, one of the very few, actual responsibilities that you have in return for your big salary and your big fat pension is overseeing government advertising. Yet you won't give us any straight answers on the amount of taxpayers' money that you're spending.

Mr. Minister, what is this year's overall advertising budget? How much have you already spent this year in the run-up to the election? And how does this square with your promise to cut government advertising by 80 per cent?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Speaker, the last time I checked, there has been no election called. And there may be an election sometime this spring. There may be an election sometime later this year. There may be an election in 1996. So that's a fact, Mr. Speaker.

The other thing that's a fact, Mr. Speaker — and I want to remind the member opposite if he would check the budget and the budgets of the years since 1991 — that the operating expenditures of the government in the year 1995-1996 is \$267 million less than the operating expenditures of the government of 1990-1991 when they were in power.

We said we would reduce the expenditures of government. We said we would do it with compassion and sensitivity. We have delivered on that promise, and we're prepared to be judged on that record and that performance whenever that election is called. It may be this spring. It may be this fall. It may be in 1996, but we're ready to be judged.

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

#### **SaskEnergy Contract**

**Mr. McPherson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there has been some labour unrest in the northern part of Regina during the past few days. It seems that SaskEnergy tendered out a contract to a Saskatchewan company who in turn subcontracted to an out-of-province firm to haul pipe to various communities around the province. This project seems to be plagued with problems, and the NDP's union friends are not happy with this decision either. My question to the Premier: what criteria was used in tendering this Crown project?

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I want to say in the outset I really am pleased to see at least one of the Liberal members stand up and at least purport to speak on behalf of working people in this province after his leader's been kicking the dickens out of them in this legislature for the past weeks.

Let me say this. The process that was used to select the contractor in this instance was an open tender process, and it was based on low bid. The selected company was M & M Transport of Saskatoon which was much lower than other bids that were submitted.

I want to say that there was a subcontract let which is not

unusual in many instances. They were asked to move . . . the moving of the pipe out of the Shaw Pipe's storage compound. Because of the size and the magnitude of the expansion of this pipeline, they didn't have room to store it, so a subcontract was let.

I am told that the M & M will be having their people working, they expect, by Monday and Tuesday. I want to say as well that the contract was based on lowest price, it was based on technical merit, and it was based on Saskatchewan content.

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

**Mr. McPherson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the minister stated, a Saskatoon-based company by the name of M & M Transport did receive the original contract. And I would like to table a copy of the tendering proposals setting the parameters required to complete this successful bid.

Industry reps have stated that M & M Transport does not have all the required equipment or they would not have subcontracted a company from out of the province.

My question again to the Premier: why did a company receive this multi-million dollar contract when they did not have the equipment available to even qualify for the project?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, let me say the member doesn't listen.

I indicated to him that they were asked to move the timing of the moving of this pipe up because of the magnitude of the contract, because of the fact that Shaw Pipe indicated they didn't have adequate storage. They then subcontracted for a short period of time so that this pipe could be moved out so that Shaw Pipe didn't have to lay off their workers and shut down their plant because they had no more storage room.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that if the member from Shaunavon has problems with an open tendering process and if he has problems with the selection of low bids and if he has problems with the fact that on occasion there will be non-union companies contracted, then I'm afraid there's nothing we can do on this side of the House to satisfy them.

Because on one day they're accusing us of being union-only and on the other day they come in here and they're upset as all get out because we happen to, on low bid, select a non-union contractor. I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, he can't be satisfied.

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

**Mr. McPherson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Minister, we're not opposed to low bids. In fact we're not opposed to the open tendering process. But, Mr. Speaker, there have been numerous inquiries to our office suggesting the Premier is related to the owners of M & M Transport who

received this million dollar contract.

My question to the Premier: are you related in any way to the owners of M & M Transport — Mr. Morris Gabrush or Ms. Mary Gabrush?

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I can say categorically I am not related to the owners of M & M Transport and I very much regret that the Liberal Party has stooped to this.

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

#### **SGI President's Contract**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Order. Will the members please come to order. The member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster, please come to order.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister responsible for SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance). Mr. Minister, when we asked you for the contract signed between your government and SGI president, John Wright, you said it was available through the Clerk of the Executive Council. All we had to do was ask.

Well, Mr. Minister, we have asked, but all we got was a letter from John Wright claiming that his salary was \$142,920 and a brief mention of a few of his benefits.

Mr. Minister, I will ask you again: where is John Wright's employment contract?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Speaker, the information, if the member has read it, provides all of the information as it pertains to the contract. And that is now available. It is within the range.

I might add that the salary that the president of SGI is getting is probably 150 to \$200,000 less than they would get paid in the private sector in a similar kind of corporation in the insurance business.

All the information the member wants, it's there. All he had to do is go and ask for it. He did, when I reminded him that he could do that. And if he wants any further information he should ask.

The contract itself will also be filed. If he's asked for the contract, I think he knows that he can get that as well.

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, we asked for a contract, and we got a letter back. And that's simply not good enough, although it's indicative of your recent initiative.

Your Crown employment contract is very explicit. Section 5

says, and I quote: "Every permanent head . . . shall file with the Clerk of the Executive Council a true copy of his or her Crown employment contract." Not a vague letter outlining some arbitrary terms and conditions, but a true contract of the Crown employment contract — true copy.

Mr. Minister, it seems that you're hiding the actual contract in contravention of your own legislation. Can you tell us if one exists, or are you trying to find another loophole to allow you to break another election promise?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't know what more I can say. The contract is available; the member is able to have access to it. He has all the information. We've provided for him in summary form, so he doesn't have to spend too much time looking at it. He says he's got that. He clearly understands it.

All of the terms and conditions of that contract are there. It's in line with the policies of the government. It's a good agreement. It's a good contract. It's an exceptionally good president, and we're happy that he is able to continue in the employment of the government in such an important position on behalf of the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have a letter, not a contract. And it appears you're following the same strategy that you employed with your other NDP buddy, Jack Messer. You said at the time that all you had was a verbal contract with Jack. A verbal contract, Mr. Minister, isn't worth the paper it's written on.

And you know full well that a verbal contract can be changed at the drop of a hat. You could go to John Wright or Jack Messer with a wink and a nod and double their salaries with little or no public knowledge. That's not accountability, Mr. Minister; that's smoke and mirrors. And you violated your own laws.

Will you compel John Wright and Jack Messer to provide written contracts immediately, or will you void their verbal contracts as is provided under the Crown employment legislation?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Speaker, for the third time, for the benefit of the member. He knows that he has all the information about Mr. Wright's contract, the president of SGI. He knows it's all there. Having asked the question originally, hoping that he would find something there that was out of line, he now has the information, finds nothing out of line, and so he goes on some kind of a fishing trip to find some other issues surrounding this.

The contract that Mr. Wright has is in line with the policies of the government as it applies to any other employee of a Crown corporation or any other employee in the public sector in management positions. It's a good contract, it's a good president, and it's a good service to the taxpayers of

Saskatchewan.

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

### Provincial Sales Tax

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question's to the Minister of Finance. Madam Minister, the people that you ducked out on in North Battleford a few weeks ago have had the opportunity, I understand, to finally corner you and have some discussions on the 9 per cent sales tax which you're charging this province, a sales tax which your Premier guaranteed the people of the province he would not impose upon them after the last election.

I'm wondering if you could tell the Assembly today what those discussions entailed, and were you prepared to listen to the reasonable arguments that people are making, saying that that 9 per cent is wreaking havoc in the province of Saskatchewan and preventing the employment numbers from coming true that the Premier promised in the last election campaign.

**Hon. Ms. MacKinnon:** — Mr. Speaker, yes, I'd be most pleased to answer that question. We had a very positive and constructive meeting. First of all, they clarified the fact that they had never wanted politicians at their first meeting. They had wanted to meet with me after.

And what we did was we set in place a process whereby they could bring forward their ideas and their suggestions about how to deal with the E&H (education and health) issue. So I think the meeting was very constructive. We have agreed to have an ongoing dialogue. They have reassured the government that they have no partisan purposes here, but they want to look for solutions.

And unlike the opposition, they don't just say, by the way we'd like to have some tax cuts. They say, before we talk about any tax cuts, we have to look for offsets. And so as I say, we have welcomed their ideas and we have set in place a process whereby their ideas will come forward and we will have an opportunity to look at them. So it was a very positive meeting.

Thank you for the question.

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

**Mr. Swenson:** — Well, Madam Minister, they naturally would ask you for offsets, because it was your party that promised that you could make do with less in the last election campaign. And instead, you haven't cut the size of government at all. They clearly understand that, Madam Minister.

It's just like the way that you've handled the PST issue with natives in this province. One side says they're doing something; you say no they're not; it just goes back and forth. These people don't believe you, Madam Minister. That's why they invited you out, because they've got to pin you down because you always want to be on both sides of the fence.

Madam Minister, you promised in the election campaign in '91 to remove the PST; instead, it went to 9 per cent. Madam Minister, what have you got to say to the families of this province that are paying \$4,500 more each — \$225 million net tax increase? What do you say to them, Madam Minister, when people say: please take off the PST?

**Hon. Ms. MacKinnon:** — Mr. Speaker, first of all on the spending side, you don't have to believe us in terms of what we've done to cut spending. What you should believe though is Ian Russell from the Investment Dealers Association of Canada who said this about the government and the people of Saskatchewan:

The deficit attack by Saskatchewan's NDP government is the most advanced in the country. They cut program spending by 3 per cent over the last two years, which compares to 6 per cent increases on average in the three years that preceded that. That's a hell of a turnaround. That's more than any other government has done in that period.

And what I say to the people of Saskatchewan again and again is, with your help and cooperation we made the necessary decisions so that we could turn around the finances of this province, provide the first balanced budget in over 12 years, and guarantee your children the kind of future that they deserve.

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

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

**Mr. Lyons:** — Leave to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

Leave granted.

#### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Lyons:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure today to introduce to you and to all members of the Assembly through you, the Member of Parliament for Burnaby-Kingsway, who needs really no introduction, I don't believe, to this House or to the people of Canada, Mr. Speaker. The member is sitting behind your rail, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to say that in an occupation where timidity often blankets principle, this member has exhibited a great amount of courage in standing up for the things that he believes in, even though they may be controversial, even though they may not be well accepted by some people. But he's been able to win the respect of all sections of this House, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure; in fact of a great many people all across the country. I would like to introduce Mr. Svend Robinson, the member for Burnaby-Kingsway, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**Mr. Cline:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to beg leave to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

**Mr. Cline:** — Mr. Speaker, seated in the west gallery are 29 students from Mayfair School which is located in my constituency in Saskatoon. And they're accompanied by teachers Barbaro Gallo and Ann Fofonoff, who actually are no strangers to this Assembly by now because they organize this trip every year, which is a really good day for the students. And good to see you here again.

And I'm sure they've done some interesting things already, and now they've been in here. And they will be touring the building, we'll be having a visit, we'll be having our picture taken, we'll be having drinks, and we'll be having Dixie Cups. And I'm looking forward to meeting with the students and I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming them here today. Thank you.

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

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

##### Enhanced 9-1-1 Initiative

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm truly proud, on this World Telecommunications Day, to announce two major steps to be undertaken by this government to launch the introduction of an enhanced province-wide 9-1-1 system beginning in 1996.

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

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — The introduction of an enhanced 9-1-1 initiative is good news for everyone in Saskatchewan. This initiative will allow Saskatchewan to position itself among many other areas throughout the world which recognizes 9-1-1 as a foremost method to receive emergency, ambulance, police, and fire help.

Those who live in cities like Regina and Saskatoon have come to take this critical service for granted for almost 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, that's not good enough. This government is committed to the principle of universality and recognizes that our rural areas need and deserve the right to access help through 9-1-1 as soon as we can begin such a linkage.

This announcement represents a culmination of months of consultation and discussions with numerous groups which have identified common access to 9-1-1 as an integral process to improving emergency and protective service delivery. The enhanced 9-1-1 initiative is made possible as a result of SaskTel's already available computerized digital network.



SaskTel estimates the cost of developing the communication portion of an enhanced 9-1-1 system will be approximately \$5.6 million, to be invested over the next three to five years.

SaskTel has committed to operating the communication portion of the 9-1-1 system on a break-even basis and will begin activating communities on a gradual basis.

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

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — Mr. Speaker, simultaneously 1.6 million of VLT (video lottery terminal) revenues will be made available so local communities can participate in a province-wide computerized electronic mapping system, which is a critical element to the delivery of emergency and protective services.

Previously the cost of this mapping system, called Sask GIS, geographical information system, has limited some communities from participating in improving their database. Now many will be able to begin their mapping services for the first time.

Further, Mr. Speaker, we will also establish a joint strategic planning committee to look at the recommendations coming out of the ongoing protective services review, to recommend enhancements in delivery of all emergency and protective services in Saskatchewan. This will complement the 9-1-1 initiative.

The strategic committee will include representatives from SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association), SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities), and SAHO (Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations). And ultimately we are seeking recommendations for a multi-year plan to address the integration, coordination, and delivery of all emergency and protective services in Saskatchewan.

(1415)

Mr. Speaker, reviewing these services on an integrated basis will build upon recent improvements to emergency and protective services, such as a first responders, emergency health communication pilot, and shared service agreements between municipalities. In addition, there are considerable savings in costs and efficiencies by managing enhanced 9-1-1 as a provincial initiative rather than seeing it develop on a community-by-community basis.

Funding for enhanced emergency response services continues to be discussed with SUMA, SARM, and SAHO. This discussion includes the 10 per cent of the net VLT revenues which the province has set aside for the benefit of local communities and represents one example of a very tangible and responsible use of a portion of VLT revenues to the benefit of Saskatchewan communities and individuals.

The process that we are establishing recognizes the actual coordination and delivery of services requires input from all

stakeholders. It is our Saskatchewan way. Mr. Speaker, this represents the ideal combination: provincial coordination with local input and control.

Through this announcement, our government strongly believes old and young alike, anywhere in this province, deserves and will benefit from a common way to access emergency and protective services. Mr. Speaker, this demonstrates our commitment to the safety and well-being of all Saskatchewan beings.

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

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for sending across her statement, but that's all I will thank her for. I mean this is absolutely unconscionable, Mr. Speaker, just before a provincial election that they throw this bone out to rural Saskatchewan and hope that they're going to lap it up.

I mean the party of medicare, after they gut health care in rural Saskatchewan . . . You know, there's people out there that are a hundred miles away from any kind of a medical facility now, and Madam Minister's going to give them the opportunity to get on the phone and phone what? I mean there's places out there, Madam Minister, where there isn't a ambulance within 50 miles of a lot of these people because you took their health care away.

And now they can get on the phone, and they can phone up and say, I'm having a heart attack. It's a good thing the Minister of Health had his little medical emergency in the emergency room in Prince Albert because if he'd been in Mankota or some place else, he might have died. That's what's going on out there, Madam Minister.

And now you say, I'm going to take some of my ill-gotten gambling revenue, which I've taken out of your communities with no say, and I'm going to feed it back to you just before an election campaign with 9-1-1.

Well, Madam Minister, if this is the answer, maybe we should do it in some other areas too. Hey they can just phone up 9-1-1 and get rid of some of the tax base, or maybe they can phone up 9-1-1 . . .

SaskTel made \$88 million last year. You can't run it on a break-even basis. Why should you run this on a break-even basis, Madam Minister? The simple fact is this is nothing but pure, ugly politics from the party of medicare which is trying to cover their tracks before they go into an election campaign. And it's a shame. It's a shame you'd bring this before the Assembly today.

**The Speaker:** — Order, order. I might also mention to the Government House Leader, if he wishes the Speaker to get involved, that the ministerial statements in the future ought to be brief and to the point and not as lengthy as this one was.

The Government House Leader is constantly interfering with the process in the House, and I wish he would know the rules.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### Bill No. 76 — An Act to amend The Tabling of Documents Act, 1991

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move first reading of a Bill, An Act to amend The Tabling of Documents Act, 1991.

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

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

## SECOND READINGS

### Bill No. 69 — An Act respecting the Interpretation of Enactments and prescribing Rules Governing Enactments /Projet de loi no. 69 — Loi concernant l'interprétation des textes et édictant les règles les régissant

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to move second reading of The Interpretation Act, 1995. This Bill is being presented to this Assembly in English and French. The Government of Saskatchewan has made a commitment to a modest program of French translations of existing Acts, and this is the first translation to be presented.

Under the terms of the federal-provincial agreement signed in 1988, 75 per cent of the costs associated with the translation are being paid by the federal government.

As the title of the Bill indicates, The Interpretation Act contains various rules respecting how Acts are to be interpreted by the courts. The rules set out in the Bill will also apply to orders, regulations, forms, rules, and by-laws made pursuant to a power conferred by an Act.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill is essentially identical to the Act passed by this Assembly in 1993. The 1993 Act, in turn, is largely based on the model Interpretation Act proposed by the Uniform Law Conference of Canada. Several new provisions have been added to deal with interpretation issues associated with writing laws in the French language.

In addition, the Bill provides definitions in French for words and phrases commonly used in legislation. The Bill will provide a complete set of rules for interpreting and using both the existing bilingual Acts, such as The Language Act and The Traffic Safety Court of Saskatchewan Act, 1988, and any new bilingual Acts.

Because of this Bill's central importance to interpreting legislation it is fitting that it be the first bilingual Bill to be introduced this session.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act respecting the

Interpretation of Enactments and prescribing Rules Governing Enactments.

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

### Bill No. 66 — An Act respecting Changes of Name/Projet de loi no. 66 — Loi concernant les changements de nom

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to move second reading of The Change of Name Act, 1995. This is one of a number of Bills being presented to this Assembly in English and French.

Like the other Bills translated and presented in both English and French today, Mr. Speaker, this was one of the Acts identified by the Saskatchewan francophone community as a high priority for translation.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act respecting Changes of Name.

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

### Bill No. 67 — An Act respecting the keeping of Vital Statistics/Projet de loi no. 67 — Loi concernant les services de l'état civil

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to move second reading of The Vital Statistics Act, 1995. This is one of a number of Bills being presented to this Assembly in English and in French.

Like the other Bills translated and presented in both English and French today, Mr. Speaker, this was one of the Acts identified by the Saskatchewan francophone community as a high priority for translation.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act respecting the keeping of Vital Statistics.

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

### Bill No. 68 — An Act respecting Regulations /Projet de loi no. 68 — Loi concernant les règlements

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to move second reading of The Regulations Act, 1995. This Bill is also presented to this Assembly in English and French.

The Bill is essentially identical to the existing 1989 Act. It contains rules requiring the filing and publication of regulations. Because regulations are made under many Acts, including bilingual Acts, it is important that the rules respecting regulations also be in English and French. This Bill will be an essential part of the laws governing English and French regulations.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act respecting Regulations.

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

**Bill No. 70 — An Act respecting the Solemnization of Marriage/Projet de loi no. 70 — Loi concernant la célébration du mariage**

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to move second reading of The Marriage Act, 1995. This Bill is being presented to this Assembly in French and in English.

As the title indicates, this Bill deals with matters respecting the solemnization of marriage in Saskatchewan. The Bill does not change the existing law; however, to facilitate the translation of the law into French, the drafters took the opportunity to modernize the wording of the English version. The result, I believe, is a Bill that will be easier to understand and to use.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act respecting the Solemnization of Marriage.

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

**Bill No. 71 — An Act respecting Victims of Crime /Projet de loi no. 71 — Loi sur les victimes d'actes criminels**

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to move second reading of The Victims of Crime Act, 1995. This Bill is also being presented to this Assembly in French and in English.

As the title indicates, this Bill deals with matters respecting persons who are victims of crime in Saskatchewan. The Bill does not change the existing law.

To facilitate the translation of the law into French, the provisions have been renumbered and the structure of a few provisions has been changed. There are, however, no substantive changes between the existing Act and this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act respecting Victims of Crime.

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

**Bill No. 73 — An Act respecting Elementary, Secondary and Post-secondary Education in Saskatchewan /Projet de loi no. 73 — Loi concernant l'enseignement élémentaire, secondaire et postsecondaire en Saskatchewan**

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to move second reading of The Education Act, 1995. This Bill is being presented to this Assembly in English and in French.

As the title indicates, this Bill deals with matters respecting education in Saskatchewan. The Bill does not make any substantive changes to the existing law. However, to facilitate the translation into French, the provisions have been renumbered, and the structure of a few provisions has been changed. It also contains technical drafting changes that improve readability and makes the language gender neutral.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act respecting Elementary, Secondary and Post-secondary Education in Saskatchewan.

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

**Bill No. 74 — An Act respecting Non-profit Corporations /Projet de loi no. 74 -- Loi concernant les sociétés sans but lucratif**

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Speaker, because that Bill is just being distributed now, I must ask the Assembly for leave to have second reading of that Bill today.

Leave granted.

(1430)

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of The Non-profit Corporations Act, 1995. This is one of a number of Bills that are being presented to this Assembly in English and in French.

The Non-profit Corporations Act, 1995 deals with the incorporation, governance, and dissolution of non-profit corporations in Saskatchewan. This Bill does not change the existing law. It contains technical drafting changes that improve readability, and it makes use of gender-neutral language.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act respecting Non-profit Corporations.

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

**Bill No. 75 — An Act to amend The Provincial Court Act**

**Hon. Mr. Mitchell:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to move second reading of The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 1995.

The amendments proposed in this Bill deal with two issues. The first set of amendments address the age of retirement for Provincial Court judges. When The Provincial Court Act was passed in 1978, the age of retirement was set at 65. Any judges who were appointed prior to that date were allowed to retain their age of retirement at age 70.

These amendments recognize that there is value in having some flexibility to retain judges appointed under the new Act beyond

the age of 65. Where judges wish to stay in office beyond that age, the amendments I am proposing today will make it possible for the public to be able to draw on the expertise of these seasoned decision makers for a longer period of time.

The model proposed is based on provisions in the Ontario legislation. After canvassing legislation across Canada on this issue, it was determined that the Ontario provisions provide the most innovative model. The decision as to whether one of these judges remains in office after age 65 will be made by the chief judge of the Provincial Court.

That decision will be made in accordance with criteria that are developed by the chief judge with the approval of the Judicial Council. These amendments were proposed by two judges of the Provincial Court who are approaching retirement age. Two other senior and highly respected members of the court have supported the concept.

The second set of amendments will change the term of office for the chief judge and any associate chief judge, from seven years to five years.

The Provincial Court judges association has suggested that this shorter term is a more reasonable period of time to expect judges to take on this demanding role. It is timely to make a change to the term of office now as the current chief judge has tendered his resignation effective on the appointment of a new chief judge.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act to amend The Provincial Court Act.

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

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill No. 62

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. MacKinnon that **Bill No. 62 — An Act to Maintain Financial Stability and Integrity in the Administration of the Finances of the Province of Saskatchewan** be now read a second time.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I stood to deliver a second reading speech on balanced budget legislation, the official opposition's Bill, Bill No. 11. Today, Mr. Speaker, I'm responding to Bill No. 62, the Bill that, brought forward by the NDP members opposite, that's supposed to address the issue of balanced budgets and accountability to taxpayers.

Unfortunately there is little in Bill 62 to accomplish any of these goals. It's disheartening for Saskatchewan taxpayers to see Progressive Conservative governments to the east and to the

west implementing real balanced budget legislation while taxpayers in this province are still waiting to be heard.

Saskatchewan taxpayers have spoken clearly on this issue; in fact people voted 80 per cent in favour of balanced budget legislation on the plebiscite question back in 1991. The Saskatchewan taxpayers association says, and I quote: "The Romanow government is showing contempt for voters by continuing to ignore the strongest democratic mandate in our history." That was from a news release, April 26, 1995 — just a few short days ago, Mr. Speaker.

Come to think of it, the NDP promised balanced budget legislation in their reform package released previous to the last provincial election. It's too bad they decided not to come through for the people of this province. But then again the Premier promised no new taxes, and that the NDP would make no promises it couldn't keep.

And we all know how both of these promises made turned out for the people of this province. Each family of four is paying \$4,800 more than they were in 1991 because of the NDP increases into provincial taxes, premiums, and utility fees. That's exactly the reason Saskatchewan taxpayers must be given the right to vote on whether taxes should be increased. Bill 62 doesn't provide for that, Mr. Speaker. On the other hand, Bill No. 11 does.

Just a couple of weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba citizens voted in a government that committed to outlaw deficits, penalize politicians who break the law, eliminate the debt over 30 years, and not raise taxes unless approved by the people in a democratic reform vote. That's from a news release, April 26, 1995. Sounds a bit familiar, doesn't it, Mr. Speaker? Manitoba's legislation sounds quite a bit like Bill No. 11, our introduction that we . . . on balanced budget legislation, the only true balanced budget legislation to be introduced into this Assembly.

One of the most significant features of Manitoba's legislation is the taxpayer protection clause which states that any increase in sales tax, income, or corporate payroll taxes would have to be approved by voters in a referendum. This is a clause which is a refreshing show of democracy and one that is enshrined within Bill No. 11, Mr. Speaker.

As well, in Alberta when a government fails to balance the provincial budget, there are penalties. They have had balanced budget legislation which was passed into law prior to the calling of the election in May of 1993 entitled the Deficit Elimination Act.

The plan was based on reducing spending and reorganization of the way government does its business. The Klein government promised to balance the budget by the fiscal year 1995-96 without raising or introducing any additional taxes. Not only have they accomplished their goal, Mr. Speaker, more recently introduced legislation that will force the government to pay down its accumulated debt.

Of course the NDP in Saskatchewan promised to balance the budget too. However they didn't say they're going to do it by raising taxes on a family in this province by \$4,800, each and every family across this province. But that's exactly what happened, Mr. Speaker, in this province.

And the worst part, Mr. Speaker, is that Saskatchewan taxpayers have no vote on the issue. They can't say no to tax increases because the NDP government in this province refuses to allow them the democratic privilege of a vote.

So when the general public takes a look at the legislation before us today, Mr. Speaker, the NDP should understand their disappointment, their cynicism. And they are disappointed, Mr. Speaker. People don't want a band-aid solution to this severe problem. And this government has failed miserably on this piece of legislation.

After reviewing Bill 62, the taxpayers' association stated, and I quote:

This legislation is obviously a weak, a very weak political solution to a serious fiscal issue, and it doesn't measure up to the true principles of taxpayer protection. The proposed legislation gives no genuine guarantee that politicians will be forced to live within taxpayers' means.

They're right, Mr. Speaker. They also stated that, and I quote:

Our province is falling way behind on these critical reforms. A balanced budget without the proper use of accounting, without proper protection from tax hikes, without penalties for politicians who break the law, and without a debt elimination plan, is worth little more than the paper it is written on.

End quote, Mr. Speaker. That comes from a news release, April 26, 1995.

Bill No. 11, Mr. Speaker, our balanced budget legislation, provides more accountability, more input from the people of this province, and forces a balanced budget on an annual basis.

It also requires that the provincial budget account for all government revenues and expenditures including those of Crown corporations. It also requires the Minister of Finance to table summary financial statements quarterly to ensure that the budget targets are being met throughout the year.

It also requires that any balanced budget or any budget surpluses should be applied to reduce the accumulated debt, and any surpluses achieved after the debt is eliminated must be used to reduce taxes even further in this province.

It also requires that if a government failed to balance the budget, the Premier, the cabinet, and every member of the government caucus would have to have their salary reduced by 25 per cent.

As I said yesterday, Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 11 is the only, the only balanced budget, real balanced budget, legislation that has been introduced into this legislature for the people of this province. And if Bill 62 is any indication of the kind of balanced budget legislation Saskatchewan people can expect from the NDP, our Bill will remain the only true balanced budget legislation in this Assembly.

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

(1445)

## **COMMITTEE OF FINANCE**

### **General Revenue Fund Saskatchewan Research Council Vote 35**

Item 1 agreed to.

Vote 35 agreed to.

### **General Revenue Fund Loans, Advances and Investments Saskatchewan Power Corporation Vote 152**

Item 1 — authorized by law.

### **General Revenue Fund Loans, Advances and Investments SaskEnergy Incorporated Vote 150**

Item 1 — authorized by law.

### **General Revenue Fund Saskatchewan Water Corporation Vote 50**

Item 1 agreed to.

## **Item 2**

**Mr. Swenson:** — I wonder if the minister could give us a quick update. Because of all the flooding in eastern Saskatchewan, there's the east Langenburg project which has run up against environmental lobbyists from Manitoba and some local opposition.

And I am told . . . and I've been there and toured that entire area and the people are really getting upset with the red tape and the monkeying around that's occurred out there. And I wonder if the minister could update us on this before we agree to his budget request.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just briefly for the member from Thunder Creek . . . as he will know, a proposal was put forward by a group, the C&D (conservation and development) group from the Langenburg area. And one of the initiatives that certainly they would want

to achieve, from their perspective, is a reasonable system of drainage and water control. As you will know, we've had a 1 in 25 year moisture problem in that area, and it certainly has created some problems for farms and for communities in the area.

The Department of Environment had a look at the proposal and had indicated that there was need for an environmental impact study. As you will know, the Government of Manitoba's Department of Environment has also indicated that they would want to approve any project that might go forth there. So those two departments, as I understand it, are in the process of determining how that will happen.

I would want to say with respect to Saskatchewan Water Corporation, it's our role and it's our mandate to assist areas in flood areas and for water management. We act as facilitators, and when we are requested we will deliver technical advice to residents in an area where they're having a concern.

So I guess just to condense and finalize my answer, it would be to say that right now it's in the . . . it will be a matter of environmental study. And I would assume before the project would proceed the environmental impact assessment would have to have taken place before approval of a project would be given.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Mr. Minister, I understand that, but this situation didn't occur this year. This has been going on for years and years and years. And after touring that project, there isn't a ditch there deeper than 3 feet. My goodness, the Tisdale area in northern Saskatchewan and my area down here in the Regina plains, there's ditches all over the place that you can hide a Euc truck in and nobody complains at all about them.

And yet these guys want to have a 3-foot ditch; it's a piddling little operation compared to most drainage projects in this province, and yet there seems to be the grand stall being put on by your colleague, the Minister of Environment. And I don't understand it. I mean common sense some place has to take over here. This is not Rafferty-Alameda.

So what I want from you, sir, is that you give a commitment that this very important project on the east side of our province is going to get some attention from people that understand what it's like to be flooded out year after year after year. And I would think you would want to give that, even though there might be opposition from within your own government, to get on with doing the job.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, let me say to the member from Thunder Creek, it's not certainly the intention of the Saskatchewan Water Corporation to stall any proposals that get the green light after environmental concerns have been addressed.

I would remind the member from Thunder Creek that it is not only the Saskatchewan Department of the Environment that is looking at this project, it is the Manitoba government and their

Department of the Environment as well.

As you will know, this drainage area flows across the Saskatchewan-Manitoba border. I can say to you that we at the Water Corporation are available in terms of technical expertise, water management, to assist with all of the technical things that are involved in that kind of a project.

And our approach is, quite clearly, that once the environmental concerns and requirements have been addressed by both the Manitoba and Saskatchewan governments, if there is a determination for that project to go ahead, we will facilitate — as is part of our mandate, part of the Water Corporation's mandate, as you will know — we will facilitate that project if we are requested.

There are some processes that need to take place. I understand the concerns of the farmers in that area. I'm familiar with the size of the drainage that is already there.

I'm told many of the facilities, the drainage facilities, that are there were done on an ad hoc basis and over a period of 10 and 20 and 30 years. And you're right — it's not a problem that's existed only for the last 3, 4, 5 years. This has been a problem for a long time.

And we will do what we can to facilitate the resolve to the water drainage problems there once the two departments of Environment, both Manitoba and Saskatchewan, are convinced that the proposal makes environmental sense, as well as economic sense from the perspective of the farmers and the communities in that area.

Item 2 agreed to.

Item 3 agreed to.

Vote 50 agreed to.

**General Revenue Fund  
Loans, Advances and Investments  
Saskatchewan Water Corporation  
Vote 140**

Item 1 — authorized by law.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Chairman, if I could I'd like to thank the member from Thunder Creek for his questions.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank the minister for coming in today and answering a few questions.

**General Revenue Fund  
Legislation  
Vote 21**

**Ombudsman**

Item 7 agreed to.

**Freedom of Information and Privacy Commissioner**

Item 8 agreed to.

**Conflict of Interest Commissioner**

Item 9 agreed to.

Vote 21 agreed to.

(1500)

**General Revenue Fund  
Provincial Secretary  
Vote 30**

**The Chair:** — Before we proceed to item 1, I would ask the Provincial Secretary, please introduce the officials who have joined us here today.

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm pleased to introduce my officials who are here in the immediate vicinity of my desk; Mr. Greg Marchildon, who is the deputy provincial secretary to my right, and someone who I introduced last evening, Cathy Dermody, who is the director of administration in the Department of Provincial Secretary.

**Item 1**

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate, Minister, that you've sent over the global questions. Haven't had time to go through it so I may end up going over some things. And if it's in there, just point out it to me, and we'll let it go.

Have you, in your written responses to us, have you detailed all changes in staff including any changes in title or pay range and also any detail on pay raises for staff and the reasons for those raises? Is that in there.

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Yes, as I'm looking through them, Mr. Chairman, the answer to the question by the member from Thunder Creek is yes, all of the information that he has requested is provided for the information of the opposition and for the record. And if there are questions surrounding that, I'd be pleased to answer them.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Okay, thank you, Minister. We'll quickly look through some of these things to make sure what we want is there.

I wonder if you could explain, because you're sort of the ministry of patronage, I'm wondering if you could explain, given MAs (ministerial assistant) automatic 4.1 per cent pay increases every July 1 . . . Would you not think this is a little bit excessive given the fact that most people in this province are either staying the same or taking roll-backs? And our understanding is that is the case. So how do you justify that?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that — Mr. Chairman — I'm not sure that the question of the

remuneration from ministerial assistants is the responsibility of the Provincial Secretary's department, but I will to this extent respond. And that is that the level of pay for people in minister's offices, where in fact there is a limit to the number of people any minister can employ, which is six secretarial staff . . . three secretarial staff and three assistants — a junior, an intermediate, and a senior. They have pay ranges, they have increments, and when increments come, just as it is in the case of the public service, or for teachers who get their increments, they qualify for them.

But there have been no increases for MAs. Beyond that there has been no increases beyond anything that people in the public service have received. I can't speak for individual MAs or for that, Mr. Speaker, because that is not a responsibility of the Provincial Secretary's department. But that's to the extent that I can answer that question, Mr. Speaker. Other than my assistants in my office, that's the answer.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I'm just quickly looking here, and you're the minister in charge of polling. And what you have shown us is very, very little here. Surely to goodness you wouldn't have this Assembly or the province believe that you're only responsible for one CanWest survey in September of '94.

I mean it's under your auspices that most of the government polling and the splitting of the polls is done so that you ask your publicly funded questions on one side and your political questions on the other, which I presume your party should pay for. We're not absolutely sure of that. But you're the minister in charge of those things, and this isn't enough detail.

I'd like to know from you, sir, how much you have expended on polling over the last year as a government, and I think you've probably got as much access to that as anybody; and which companies you have used, and a financial breakdown, by company, of the polling that you've expended in the last year.

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to point out in response to the member from Thunder Creek that the information that has been provided with regard to CanWest is the extent to which the Provincial Secretary has been involved in the polling.

Maybe it wasn't well enough explained, but the whole responsibility for communications and polling last April was transferred — a year ago was transferred to the Executive Council. So that I think those estimates are being considered later today and maybe tomorrow. And I would recommend to the member from Thunder Creek that he would be able to get his answers at that time. But that transfer was made a year ago, and therefore the Provincial Secretary does not have further ongoing responsibility for it.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Well, Mr. Minister, you're just talking yourself out of a pay cheque because if you don't do that, what purpose do you serve?

I mean at least we were giving the Provincial Secretary his due because he was the political minister, the Deputy Premier, the guy in charge of polling. And that is a fairly onerous job because you have to keep up with things. But my goodness, if you don't even do that any more, I'm really wondering why you really need that big salary and that big pension. Because, wow, to carry around the provincial seal is not an onerous job, Mr. Minister.

Well if you don't do polling any more, I guess we'll have to ask the Premier those questions, and I suspect he'll be very evasive. He'll ask us — and he'll repeat the words of the Finance minister — when there's so many bigger things to talk about, why would you want to talk about polling? Or something to that effect.

Can you explain to me, Minister, what the \$85,000 increase to the protocol office entailed?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — I might have to ask the member to clarify his question because I have the estimates here for 1995-1996. And in 1994-95 protocol office had a budget of 457,000 and in 1995-96 it's 811,000.

And the reason for the bulk of that, I think — probably for all of it — is that that is where the budget for the 90th anniversary for the province of Saskatchewan, that's where the budget is provided for. And therefore that is the reason for the difference between the two numbers between 1994 and 1995-96.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Well, Minister, would it be normal to lump protocol in with that type of an expenditure? That's only a . . . that's a once in a, we hope a least, a decade occurrence. Would it be normal to have protocol be part of that operation?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Yes, Mr. Chairman. There's nothing unusual about that. The member from Thunder Creek is correct. It's a temporary allocation. This year is the end of the anniversary, and you will find that in next year's budget it'll come back to more or less the original number that we had for 1994-1995. There's nothing unusual about that. And rather than create some category which is for temporary purposes, it's located in this particular subvote.

The Provincial Secretary's department is not a huge department from the point of view of personnel or staffing. And we have to utilize whatever staff is there to administer any new initiative that we have, all in the interests of efficient government and cost saving. And that's why it's located there.

**Mr. Swenson:** — So what you're saying is that come next year that that will be ratcheted back again and there will not be any of those expenditures associated with that office or any of the other ones that you've involved in this operation.

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Yes. In a general sense that's probably true. Now maybe there will be some other need that may arise, for which there have to be some allocation of budget. So I wouldn't want to say that the number will exactly be the

same, but for the purposes of the 90th anniversary, yes, it will be scaled back because the anniversary will have ended by then.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Because I can tell you, Minister, that there's been a lot of people around the province write in to our "Mr. Premier, I want to know" initiative, complaining about this expenditure. And they don't see it as a wise move on the government's part.

Now I'll read you a couple of them to give you a flavour of the issues out there that people write in about. I have a question here that comes from Eve Cross from Yorkton, Saskatchewan. And Eve says:

I want to know why you're wasting money on a 90th birthday party for the province. Maybe for a hundred years when the province will hopefully still be around, but 90 years is stupid when money is tight. Think before you spend. And this is only one example of wasted money.

Another one by . . . similar questions were asked by Greg Nein of Regina, Mr. Diehl of Moosomin, Mr. McAuley of Moosomin, Mr. Nichol from Saskatoon, and Mr. McCullough from Yorkton, and Mr. Lawrence from Tisdale, and Mr. Matsalla from Saskatoon — people all over the province with the same kind of comments, Minister.

They don't understand the need for this expenditure when we have seen the average family in this province paying 45, \$4,600 more in taxes over three years. We have a net tax increase in this province, on families, of \$225 million in three and a half years. And they find it offensive, I guess, that you would be spending this kind of money on something that only seems to coincide with your need to have an election and not much else.

So all of these people, I think, Mr. Minister — and I'd be happy to send across their names — I think would like a response from you as to why you've spent their money on this particular project.

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Chairman, I would very much appreciate the opportunity to respond to the citizens who have written to the member for Thunder Creek. I have been doing that all along for people who have written to me. And I explain why it is important that we recognize the 90th anniversary of the province. And there are a number of reasons.

The amount of money that is being spent that is actually new money is not a great deal of money, considering what the return will be. It's been reported to me, Mr. Chairman, that already, as of today, there are 811 communities and organizations who have set up an event to commemorate the 90th anniversary.

Many of these would not have done this . . . And there's no provincial taxpayers' money involved in this, the government doesn't provide any grants. They do it on their own. And they're doing it partly because they are seeing the whole province



getting involved in the excitement of the anniversary, in the excitement of the Grey Cup. They recognize the tourism value and the contribution that it can make to the economy.

Eight hundred and eleven communities and organizations putting on an event, homecomings bringing family and friends back from wherever they may be living today, out of the province or out of the country, I think can make a very significant contribution to the economy of the province and the economy of those communities.

I remember anniversary celebrations that I was involved in in 1980, I believe it was about then. And I can remember going to communities of population of 150, and 1,000 to 1,500 people came for a weekend celebration. That's a big boost to the economy. And that's what's happening here today.

(1515)

All that we're doing, from the provincial government's point of view, is acting as a facilitator, like a promoter of tourism. If you can show people who want to take a trip for a holiday the whole Saskatchewan package, you're more likely to attract them to come than if you just show them one event. That's what we're trying to do — show them the package, promote the province, and invite them to Saskatchewan.

And I think in this province we have a lot to celebrate and this is an opportunity to do it. And most people in the province want to take advantage of it.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Well certainly I'll provide the list of individuals, Mr. Minister, and you can come up with whatever story you wish for them, but they are concerned or they wouldn't have taken the time to write in about it.

A couple of questions. Your former deputy provincial secretary, Mr. Leeson, resigned. Were there any . . . and could you give us the severance package that Mr. Leeson got when he resigned. Was there any severance or any compensation to him at all when he left the services of your department?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Leeson resigned to go back to the university from where he had taken a leave of absence to serve in the public service. He resigned and returned to the university without severance because that was a decision of his.

And I think we were fortunate to have him for the time he was able to make available to us and to the Provincial Secretary's department and the government. But as it is with leaves of absence, one has to go back when they are up.

And there is also questions of superannuation in your previous job that have to be considered, and all of those things I'm sure Mr. Leeson must have thought about. But he resigned and therefore there was no severance.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Can you tell me

about the process for hiring your new assistant deputy provincial secretary?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Speaker, the government was searching for someone with Mr. Marchildon's qualifications to fill the role of Provincial Secretary. We did an extensive search. We had in the Department of Economic Development the deputy . . . the present deputy provincial secretary had done some contract work on trade-related matters. His expertise in trade, his particular expertise with regard to the FTA and — the Free Trade Agreement — and his extensive knowledge of the constitutional questions in Canada, which is something . . . although we don't talk about it in the context of the constitution, we're talking in a context of Canadian unity and some of the issues that are ahead of us.

Some of his qualifications were extensive and exemplary and he was the kind of person that we were looking for in order to be able to pilot some of the very extensive work that we're going to have to be doing with regard . . . particularly dealing through the intergovernmental affairs side of the Provincial Secretary's department. There are many other responsibilities as well. But the government sought out Mr. Marchildon, who was at university in Washington, D.C. (District of Columbia), Johns Hopkins. And we're fortunate to have been able to entice him back to Saskatchewan from where he had originally originated.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Had Mr. Marchildon worked in the public service in Saskatchewan before at anything?

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — No he had not, Mr. Speaker. I think he had practised law in Saskatchewan, but had not worked for the public service.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you. Well I haven't had the opportunity to formally meet him before today. But welcome back and I hope you enjoy your stay in the public service of Saskatchewan. It can have trying moments attached to it.

Thank you, Mr. Minister, that's all the questions I have now. Evidently everything else I had for you has to be asked in Executive Council, that you no longer do polling and you no longer have anything to do with patronage so therefore we should not ask you those questions.

**An Hon. Member:** — Did you ask him all the travel stuff?

**Mr. Swenson:** — No I didn't.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Mr. Minister, and officials. A couple of questions on computers first. You purchased eight new computers, I believe, for your office out of 42 employees. Do all the employees in your office have computers?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — The answer is yes; we are in the information age and we are . . . that's not got directly a lot to do with it. But we try to equip our employees with the best possible equipment to make them more productive, more

efficient, so the answer to the question is yes.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Well, Mr. Minister, you purchased seven new computers for almost \$22,000 from Professional Western. Was that tendered to start off with? If so, how many tenders did you receive and what were the computers that you purchased — what speeds and what model?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — I am pleased to be able to inform the member from Souris-Cannington that everything in the Provincial Secretary's department that is purchased of this kind of magnitude is tendered. These computers were tendered.

The information that you ask about how many tenders we received, we don't have it here but I will undertake to provide it for you. But the major thrust of the question is, were they tendered? The answer is, yes.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. What kind of computers were they? Were they 486's and how fast?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — The answer to the question, Mr. Chairman, is they were 486's.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Mr. Minister, do you happen to know what speed they were?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — I am informed — I would not ever pretend to be the expert in all of this but I have people with me who are — that they have eight to twelve megabytes of RAM (random-access memory) memory, which is sort of the area in which it is necessary in order to be able to access and utilize the Internet. And the lowest speed that any would have would be about 33 megahertz.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Well approximately 3,000-plus dollars for a 33 megahertz machine is paying high end again.

I'm thinking back to the Minister of Labour who wasn't sure how many computers he bought but he got . . . or monitors I believe it was. It was five monitors he thought he'd got for \$2,000 each, which is a high price. He's not sure what he received so he's going to get back to me on that.

But I'm just wondering if you purchased these also through SPMC (Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation).

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Once again I remind the Chair and the member and the House that these were tendered. These were low tender. And all of the purchases are made through the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation. They're tendered through the SPMC.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I'd like to ask you a few questions dealing with your travel and the ministerial travel.

Could you please give us the information on your personal

travel — where you went, what were the purposes of the meetings and the length of stay, and who accompanied you on those trips?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — It would take . . . all the travel . . . I could read it to you but it would take some time. Can I just provide it? We will send it to you.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I hope you're sending that over quickly so that I can ask you some questions on it, because you have spent almost a quarter-million dollars on travel in the last year. I wonder if you could give me some information as to how that compares with last year's travel?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — I believe . . . you're talking about last year's travel?

**An Hon. Member:** — Right. And this year's. How does that compare to this year's?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Okay, the last year . . . because we don't have last year's travel because we sent it over to you last year, and this year's . . . So I can't sort of look at two sheets and compare that. But we'll provide it to you and show you that. I'm going to ask to see whether somebody can tell me a range of change that there might be there.

Mr. Chairman, I can provide — although we will provide more detail — but I can provide the following.

In 1993-94 the out-of-province travel was at a cost of \$94,717.83, and in 1994-95 — and we can only compare this fiscal year we're in now to that, and that's the range you should be looking at — the travel was \$156,649.60. And the reason for that is because the department incurred a greater number of responsibilities and we had some rather very substantial issues that we were pursuing. For example, the internal trade negotiations in which I was involved in intergovernmental affairs; it was involved very extensively; it required more travel than the year before.

The Primrose Weapons Range, we were on some very extensive negotiations, both at the officials' and the ministerial level, which actually as a result of those effective negotiations brought to the province from the federal government, \$9 million of additional compensation which for some time the federal government had resisted in paying. So the increased . . . the modest increase in travel to gain \$9 million seems like, I think nobody would disagree, was a good investment.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Well you are claiming you gained \$9 million that was owed to us. In actual fact, is it not that you received a payment of \$9 million that had been owing to us? You said that the federal government has been holding off on this for awhile. We must have had a legitimate claim against something on the Primrose Range to receive some compensation. So it was coming.

Now you spent \$156,000 on this travel. Surely it didn't take

\$156,000 worth of negotiating, travelling back and forth, to accomplish this Primrose Weapons Range finalized negotiations.

And what did you gain out of the intergovernmental trade arrangements across the country? What improvements have we seen in Saskatchewan that have actually benefited it?

(1530)

I don't see any change in my corner of the province when it comes to the interprovincial trades in meats, as an example, where we can't ship processed meat or cut meat across the border into Manitoba unless it's first gone through a federally inspected plant. And most of the butcher shops right along the border, in a lot of cases, are buying their meat from Manitoba and can't turn around and sell it back into Manitoba.

So what benefit have we had, Mr. Minister, in that particular area?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that I can sort of put a number value on it but it is indeed very extensive. The role of the Provincial Secretary's department, through intergovernmental affairs, is to be a central agency to assist other departments in the roles that they play in their respective contacts with federal government, with other provincial governments, with international governments.

And some of the major things that have been accomplished is some very extensive agreements, very important agreements, dealing with overlap and duplication between the Government of Canada and the Government of Saskatchewan in the area of environment, in the area of fisheries. Quite a large number for Department of Economic Development, for example, and the federal government, similar department in the federal government, saved I think a considerable amount of money by establishing one office for access by business people for the purposes of advice and any information they get for assisting their business. One office in the city of Saskatoon rather than two different offices, which used to be the case.

And we are continuing to work to try to make the government more efficient, more effective, and eliminate duplication and overlap. We have had some extensive international work that has been done. Recently the Premier announced in Saskatoon a memorandum of understanding . . . and what we haven't fully concluded it with, but with some things we can do with The Ukraine.

We renewed the twinning with the province of Jilin in China. Everybody knows that the market in China for Saskatchewan export is very extensive and a very important one. And if you recognize that when you deal with a country like that you have to have some personal contacts — there's an element of trust you have to develop — that means that you should be prepared to invest some money to do the travelling that is necessary in order to be there. Because if you're not, somebody else will be.

I know when I was there in June, the Australians were practically claiming that whole region of the continent as their territory, even though it is Canada, and Saskatchewan in particular, from where the Chinese buy a good chunk or a good portion of their grain, wheat, potash — all kinds of things. These are very important contacts that one has to have in order to be able to keep ahead of the rest of your competitors.

So I think the benefits are extensive. You can't . . . one of the problems we've had in Saskatchewan is that we've been the greatest kept secret in North America. And I think we have got to put an end to that. We have got some assets and some advantages here that are worth marketing, and this government has made a commitment to go out there and market this province and show the investors who may be prepared to come here that this is a good place to invest. And we've had some results.

So I can't give you a list of 1 to 20, but I can give you these kinds of ranges and feel very confident that we have had some pretty significant successes.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. You gave, I believe, all the arguments as to why there were trade offices in Hong Kong and Minneapolis and New York and London — to make Saskatchewan available to the world and to put our products before the people that we wanted to sell them to.

And yet when that was going on, you and your colleagues of the day were complaining that that was a total waste of money, that we had no business being out in the world trying to set up trade missions, trying to set up trade offices to promote Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan's products.

And yet today you're the very person that's running off to China to do exactly those same kind of trade missions to sell those very same products that the trade offices were doing, Mr. Minister. And the trade offices that were so wrong, your government has now turned around and is again setting up trade offices in various locations.

So, Mr. Minister, the twinning with Jilin province came about, I believe, during the 1980s under the previous administration. And it is indeed a very valuable contact for the people of Saskatchewan and for the Government of Saskatchewan. And indeed we should carry on with that contact.

And so, Mr. Minister, it's important that we do so, but it's important that we also not be hypocrites when it comes to saying on one hand when in opposition, that those types of trade missions and trade offices are wrong, and then when you become government, establish those very same contacts because now that you're in government they're good because you're doing it.

If it was wrong before, Mr. Minister, it's wrong today. So if it's right today, then it was right before when it was happening. So, Mr. Minister, while I think that it is indeed proper that we carry on with those contacts, I think the question that has to be asked

is what direct benefits that are new because of your trade mission did you get from China?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the member answered that question because I think I can enlighten him and the House as to the benefits that are there. The fact of the matter is that travelling — the way we do the contact internationally — is more effective than it was done before because we can put the priority where it needs to be at any particular time.

Furthermore, it is less costly to send trade missions, which will involve, as we always do, people from the private sector and the public sector, targeted to particular areas to pursue certain objectives and get results.

Let me give you this example. With the work that was done in China, some of the immediate economic results of the Saskatchewan business mission are valued at over one-quarter of a billion dollars of new business. This was the work that was done in June and the work that was done by our Premier as part of the Canadian delegation that went over to that part of the world later this last year.

For example, AECL (Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd.), a \$20 million contract; Canpotex, \$88 million; Lateral Vector, \$88 million direct investment; future profit-sharing of incremental oil revenues — there are many such examples which were made possible because of the relationship that was established by the trade missions that were made, the work that has been done by various officials, and the work that has been done by the private sector. That is very important.

But it's important to understand that you have to recognize the governmental structures; you have to recognize the business cultures of any particular nation you do business with. And in a place like China, for example, it is important that you deal at the governmental political level with appropriate levels of similar people in that country.

I can relate that one of the things that was significant when I went there in June was that we were able to help the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool successfully negotiate its participation in a World Bank grain system project in Beijing. There had been some difficulties in the project, and the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool could not get to see the appropriate people in the hierarchy of the Government of the People's Republic of China.

And I don't take any credit personally — it just happened that I have this particular position — because of my position, was able to make those people in their administration accessible to the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool people. They were able to solve a problem, and they were able to get a further contract.

I think that's pretty good — both from the point of view of future possibilities . . . because once you establish a reputation and some trust, all kinds of things open up for you.

And where we can help companies like the Saskatchewan

Wheat Pool or AECL or Canpotex or Lateral Vector, I think it benefits everybody in Saskatchewan because of the spin-off in economic development that comes back to us.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Mr. Minister, I'm glad you brought up AECL because the AECL program that you put a stop to in this province, that was going into Saskatoon, would have meant that the people of Saskatchewan, industry in Saskatchewan, would have had both the certification and the technical expertise to work on nuclear facilities.

As the case is today, we have a limited research facility in Saskatoon, whereas the mechanical expertise continues to reside in the main in Ontario, where we would have been building up that expertise within the province of Saskatchewan.

So when a large deal is signed or is in the works, such as the AECL agreement with China, we have lost that portion which would have been available to Saskatchewan had the AECL project gone forward here.

Now when the machine shop is looking to build parts and pieces for a CANDU (Canadian deuterium uranium) reactor, that work is going to go in all likelihood to Ontario because our machine shops don't have the certification and the experience of working on nuclear reactors. That work and experience is done in Ontario and we've lost that. We could have had that — and we lost it because of your government decisions — based on the AECL agreement signed by the previous administration.

So, Mr. Minister, certainly the AECL agreement is good for Canada. I think it has a limited benefit for Saskatchewan or at least certainly a much more limited benefit than could have been received for Canada.

Canpotex has been selling into China for a significant number of years. They have built up their trust and their level of access into that nation. And while certainly you may have been there to take some of the credit when another deal was signed, Canpotex has been dealing with China for a long time.

Lateral Vector, from what I've talked to the people involved there, that this is more of an informational exchange, and that while certainly of benefit to Lateral Vector to be involved in the Chinese oil industry, there is going to be very limited spin-offs for the province of Saskatchewan because the work and the people employed are going to be in China, and it's information that is going from Lateral Vector to China to participate in this.

So we've lost some of the benefits because of your government's decision on AECL. Canpotex was already there and had developed these markets. And the Lateral Vector one has only a limited benefit to Saskatchewan, while it may have indeed a very large benefit to Lateral Vector as a corporation.

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Chairman, let me begin by responding to the reference to Canpotex. I want to indicate that the political contact is extremely important as it applies to future contracts for the purchase of potash and the interests of

our potash industry here in Saskatchewan. That's just the way business is done in countries like China.

And so it was important that we re-establish that contact, and then we maintain it and that we continue to nourish it into the future because the possibilities for Saskatchewan . . . and remember that almost all of the potash in Canada comes out of Saskatchewan. So to say that somehow there's no benefit in Saskatchewan is not correct. But the opportunities are very significant.

Now one of the significant breakthroughs that was done in this particular contract, it is now a long-term contract. What used to happen before is that it was short-term contracts on certain amounts or certain tonnage that was bought, and then Canpotex and therefore the Saskatchewan companies would be uncertain as to what production levels they could have because they never knew for sure what they would be able to ship next year.

There now is a long-term contract as a result of the work that was done there. That has provided stability. That is important to the industry and therefore is of benefit to Saskatchewan.

I also want to clarify something else on AECL. AECL not only has its research component here in Saskatchewan, in the city of Saskatoon; it's also got its marketing. Now that's very, very important because marketing means that it provides very extensive procurement opportunities for Saskatchewan businesses. We have now got the window into providing supplies and goods because the marketing arm of AECL is here in Saskatchewan. That is not insignificant. That is extremely significant.

Now the member may say we should have built a reactor. I think that's what the original deal . . . The fact of the matter is that in Saskatchewan we have more generating capacity for electricity than right now is required. It would not make sense to spend a billion dollars, when we've got all kinds of other needs and obligations, to build a nuclear reactor for the generation of electricity.

We have research being done, again at the University of Saskatchewan, to determine what are the future energy needs of this province. They will tell us what they are, so we'll be able to make the right decisions rather than simply pursuing one option, which was the case before, and by doing that possibly making the wrong choice. We want to know what all the options are so that we can make the right choice.

(1545)

**Mr. Swenson:** — Well, Mr. Minister, indeed we don't have a shortage of electricity right now. But I believe that there have been reports coming out of SaskPower that because of the lead times in building up a new generation capacity that we are approaching that point in time where we either have to start building a new facility some place or start getting into the market to buy electricity at some point down the road from somebody else. And perhaps we can buy some electricity from

the limestone generation plant in Manitoba. And perhaps that is what the government has in mind; I don't know.

But when you talk about the marketing arm of AECL, when it comes to purchasing in Saskatchewan, you have to be certified to supply a nuclear reactor. You have to meet certain engineering requirements. In most cases, those machine shops, those companies that have that certification, are in Ontario. They could have been here because we were building a plant. But we're not building a plant, so they remain in Ontario because local industry has very little contact with AECL in providing that kind of a service to them. There are certainly some. But we would have had a lot more, Mr. Minister, had that been built here. And we could have benefited then in turn from the development of AECL CANDU reactors in China, which we have missed out on.

Mr. Minister, a question on fisheries. You mentioned that part of your travel dealt with fisheries. What was your involvement with the fisheries?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — We had some discussions with regard to aquaculture. And a technical fisheries mission from Jilin, I think, has already been to Saskatchewan recently to develop further plans to introduce wildlife fish from Saskatchewan into Jilin, which provides an opportunity for us. And I think there was some success in that.

And there's some continuing work being done because there's potential for a commercial joint venture in Jilin involving the province of Saskatchewan and the Jilin people. That's what the main thrust of our discussions were. And there seems to be some further development, which we're optimistic about.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Well thank you, Mr. Minister. This was mainly then on the same trip that you went to China dealing with all the other issues. So where did you spend the rest of the \$156,000 that wasn't spent on the China trip? I thought your officials were going to prepare a list of where the trips are. Will those be available today?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — I think, just while we're getting some information, I want to clarify something because I think the member misheard me. When I talked about the \$156,000 — that was not the ministerial travel. That was the global travel of the whole department, just to show you how frugal we are.

**An Hon. Member:** — That's out of province, though.

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Well, yes. So that was the total travel budget for the Department of the Provincial Secretary, and as I said, we will have to put together that information for you so it's broken down where those trips were and that's no problem — we'll get it for you.

I'm not sure we can get it for you within the next half hour or so, but we'll make sure that it's available.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Well thank you, Mr. Minister. I'm

disappointed that you wouldn't have the travel broken down and available, because that is one of the questions that we ask on a regular basis.

And I'm sure that you were aware that it was coming up and it seems to be a pattern that has developed within your entire government, that while you have supplied us indeed with the travel expenses, that whenever you come to the House to provide the answers — which is what estimates is supposed to be about — all of a sudden, sorry, we don't have that information available but we'll get it to you at some later date.

And I look back at last year, the travel information that was provided in April, we didn't get the final numbers of that until December — eight months later. And I realize that you guys are used to dealing with union employees and perhaps that's the speed at which they work; but it's been my impression, having worked with a number of them, that they are good employees and can do their work fairly quickly.

So I have to assume that it's some other reason that's taking place that your information is so slow and so scanty that you can't even provide a list of where the minister went in the year, of which some portion of the \$156,000 that was spent in your department — a department that seems to have very little employment opportunities, or very little to do — that you can't supply even a list of where the minister has travelled to in the year.

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — As the member knows, I like to provide precise information. And we'll make sure that we get that to you with all of the things that the member wants and it won't take till December. I don't think the information last year took till December to provide.

**An Hon. Member:** — One department did.

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Well I can only speak for my department, and I like to think that we're very efficient and very forthcoming in the information. But I will give you an indication of the travel and the locations to which I travelled as minister. And then we'll provide you, sort of, the costs of each one when we provide you with the information.

But I did attend the internal trades ministers' meeting in Halifax in April; internal trade ministers' meeting in Winnipeg in May; the trip to China, Korea, and Tokyo in June; a meeting with ministers responsible for francophone affairs in Moncton, New Brunswick in August; the annual premiers' conference, which I attend as the Deputy Premier on a regular basis, in Toronto in August; the commissioning ceremony for H.M.C.S. (Her Majesty's Canadian Ship) Regina which took place in Victoria, B.C.; and the installation of the Governor General in Ottawa.

So as you see, the travel of the minister of Provincial Secretary is not particularly extensive because we try to prioritize our travel to where we think it's important to be.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister; will you also

provide the information as who accompanied you on those trips as well as the other information related to in-province and out-of-province travel? Who was travelling where and at what cost?

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Yes, as a matter of fact it just struck me that in fact I have already provided that on the trip to China at the request . . . even though the House wasn't sitting. I don't know whether it was from this member who's asking the question or someone else. But that's already been made available to you by letter from me. But we will do it one more time and add all of the other trips that were involved so that you have that information.

Item 1 agreed to.

Items 2 to 9 inclusive agreed to.

Vote 30 agreed to.

**Supplementary Estimates 1994-95  
General Revenue Fund  
Budgetary Expense  
Provincial Secretary  
Vote 30**

Item 1 agreed to.

Vote 30 agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I certainly want to extend my appreciation to my officials, the officials from the Department of Provincial Secretary, for being with us here today and assisting me in providing the answers to the good questions that were asked by both the member from Thunder Creek and the member from Souris-Cannington. And I want to extend to them my word of appreciation for their involvement and for the scrutiny which they have provided and continue to provide.

And I say that sincerely, because although I think, sometimes wrongly, some people conclude that simply because opposition ask a question, that somehow that's done in a negative way, that's not necessarily so. It's important that people do question us so that we are continually diligent and are in a position to provide answers that the public has a right to know. So I want to extend my thanks to the members of the opposition for their role in that process.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the minister and his officials for their cooperation today and for answering our questions.

The committee reported progress.

**MOTIONS**

**Hours of Sitting**

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, by leave, I would

move:

That notwithstanding the rules and procedures of the legislature, this House do adjourn at 5 p.m. this afternoon and reconvene later this evening at 7 p.m.; and further, that this House sit on Thursday, May 18 — that being tomorrow, Mr. Speaker — at 10 a.m. to 12 noon, and reconvene later that day at 1:30 p.m. for routine proceedings.

I so move, seconded by the member from Churchill Downs.

**The Speaker:** — Order. Motion moved by the Government House Leader, the member from Regina Elphinstone, seconded by the member from Regina Churchill Downs, the Speaker has taken the prerogative to make a slight amendment, and I will ask the House agreement to that. Instead of adjourn at 5 p.m., recess at 5 p.m. if the members agree to that amendment.

The motion therefore will read:

That notwithstanding the rules and procedures of this legislature, this House do recess at 5 p.m. this afternoon and reconvene later this evening at 7 p.m.; and further, that this House sit on Thursday, May 18, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and reconvene later that day at 1:30 p.m. for routine proceedings.

Motion as amended agreed to.

(1600)

## COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

### General Revenue Fund Executive Council Vote 10

**The Chair:** — I would ask that the Premier please introduce the officials who have joined us here today.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to introduce to the House, to you, sir, the officials who are assisting me today.

I have here to my immediate left, the deputy minister to the Office of the Premier, Mr. Frank Bogdasavich. To my immediate right is the director of operations and executive services, Mr. Don Wincherauk; he's seated across the aisle. Behind him is the manager of administration, Ms. Bonita Heidt; and behind me is the executive assistant to the deputy minister, Mr. Jim Nicol. There may be others coming in depending upon the nature of the questions, and if so I'll try to identify them to the members of the House.

### Item 1

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome to the Premier and to his officials here this afternoon. We are looking forward to the opportunity to hold the Premier of this province

accountable for all of the things that are happening in Saskatchewan, and for all of the departments that he's responsible for as the Premier of this province.

Mr. Premier, we'll start off relatively easy here and just ask you a few questions. Have you submitted the answers to the global questions to our office yet? And if not, we would hope that you'd do that as soon as possible with regard to the global questions that we provided each department.

As well, Mr. Premier, we're a little bit concerned about the lack of cooperation from a number of your departments with respect to the global questioning of the various other departments that you ultimately are responsible for, specifically with regard to the travel costs of each one of the departments. We received them from a few of the various departments. Unfortunately the others did not see fit to provide us with those answers. And we would appreciate it, through you, who are responsible for all government departments, to provide us with that information.

As well, Mr. Premier, we received nothing with respect to the legal actions of any department that may have legal actions ongoing. We would appreciate it if you would provide us with that information as well. And I would just ask for your cooperation and your commitment in that regard.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Chairman, thank you to the Leader of the Opposition. With respect to the global questions and the specific global questions, if I may describe them that way, I'll undertake to have Executive Council global questions over to your office, if the leader will consent, within the next few days.

We are a little bit trapped, so I'm advised, by the — how should I describe it? — the fact that we're dealing with my executive estimates today. But we'll get them to you in the next few days, maybe even earlier. They're being cleaned up and worked on.

I have no information about the travel costs, but I will undertake to review these with the ministers. I'm advised that they're part of the motions process of the government in any event. I know you want them right away. We will try to undertake to get those to you too in the next several days, as well as legal actions.

Unfortunately I have to rely on the Department of Justice for the tabulation of all the legal actions. So my commitment to you, both for myself and for the ministers, is to try to get something back in the next 24 or 48 hours — three or four days at the most, beyond that.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Premier. We would like specific details on all of those if you could provide them as well, with respect to the travel, who accompanied them, all of the details that you normally would ask for in that situation.

Moving on to other areas, Mr. Premier, recently — well just moments ago — we completed the Provincial Secretary's estimates; the sum granted was some seven and a half million

dollars approximately, a total of \$350,000 more than last year. Previous to the NDP taking office, the title of the Provincial Secretary was little more than a symbolic ministry in a lot of respects. Under the NDP, the massive reorganization took place in order for, firstly, the member from Cumberland to become a cabinet minister, and secondly, in order for the member for Regina Dewdney to maintain some degree of responsibility and maintain his cabinet status.

Mr. Premier, how do you justify such a massive expenditure and such a massive increase in an office that is dedicated solely to politics? It's mostly dedicated towards polling, things of that nature. And the Provincial Secretary's office spends something in the magnitude of \$16,000 per month on political staff. In fact, under the guise of reclassification, your political workers continue to receive massive raises outside of your own 4 per cent increase. I wonder if you could speak to that for us.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, first of all, with respect to the Provincial Secretary, there is a lot of confusion at large — I don't say of the Leader of the Opposition — respecting the Provincial Secretary. There always has to be a Provincial Secretary for constitutional reasons if nothing else, the keeper of the great seal.

I know that you could argue that could be doubled up with another minister, but in this case, the Department of the Provincial Secretary, the largest expenditure item — I'll try to put a finger on it if I can — relates to intergovernmental affairs. There used to be at one time a free-standing department called the department of interprovincial affairs. We have done away with that. Actually I think the former administration, of which your party of course was the governing party, did away with it.

And here's the breakdown. Intergovernmental affairs for '95-96 spends — it's projected they spend — \$886,000. Protocol office, \$811,000 and I think the member would agree that this is not a political office, which is the case. There is the expenses of Lieutenant Governor, 248,000; office of the French language coordinator, 230,000; telecommunications and broadcasting, 243,000 — that relates to the functions generally in government at large. That's roughly the accommodation.

So that . . . there's not much you can do with that. You're going to need an intergovernmental affairs branch somewhere. You can either house it in the Premier's branch or assign it to some other minister but you're going to need this. I felt that a Provincial Secretary in charge of intergovernmental affairs — just that function alone, given what's happening in Quebec, given what's happening with the federal Liberal budget, namely offloading — was warranted and that is the situation.

Now with respect to the other matters, namely people in the staff of the Premier. We have reduced the numbers, something in the order of about 16 per cent from where they were in 1990-91. And in terms of actual dollar savings, they amount to about a million dollars if my memory serves me correctly; I'll be corrected here by my officials not to mislead the House.

So we are doing, I think, over the last three years, quite a credible job in reductions. So that's how we justified the Provincial Secretary and how we justify the, what I think, is a pretty tight ship in the Premier's office.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Premier. I think a lot of people in Saskatchewan would disagree with you when you're spending that kind of money, a lot of it going towards political polling, advertising, in spite of the fact that you made a lot of commitments during the election campaign to reduce the amount of political polling as well as substantially reduce, I think it was something as well as advertising, something in the magnitude of 80 per cent was a figure as I recall that you committed to the people of Saskatchewan.

If you remember the election campaign, sir, your commitment to the people of Saskatchewan was that you were going to clean up the waste and mismanagement and that would deal with all the problems associated with this province. And indeed, I don't think that has happened, Mr. Premier. I think people still believe that there is lots of spending by the Provincial Secretary's office and many other departments that you're ultimately in charge of in terms of government advertising.

It's been difficult to get any answers out of the Provincial Secretary on terms of political advertising. And when we've asked it, the minister . . . the Provincial Secretary from his chair is saying that we've never asked it. We've asked it repeatedly in question period and he has always dodged the question.

And, Mr. Premier, we would ask you now to commit to providing us with the answer with respect to the costs of political polling that your department, the Provincial Secretary's department, has come forward with in the last few months, particularly in the amount of budget that has been allocated towards what we would consider, and I think the people of Saskatchewan would consider, nothing more than political ads that you and your government and departments have been running over the last about a month.

(1615)

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I want to emphasize very strongly with respect to advertising that this government has implemented — I think we were the second in Canada, but that was by chronology; Ontario did it first — what I would call is a fair tendering process with respect to advertising services.

And I will not take up the time of the House to tell you the details of it. These can be certainly provided to the Leader of the Opposition.

And that was a first in Saskatchewan — ever. Whether it was under the Liberals or the Conservatives or the old CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) or the old NDP, in the context therefore there is a fair bid situation. And while in advertising low cost doesn't necessarily always win because you have a subjective judgement as to the quality of what your



message is going to be, on balance there's been some improvement, some considerable improvement.

For example, we are told that the savings on communications spendings . . . and I'll break them down for you in three figures. Advertising agencies, from 1991 to '94-95, the year recently concluded, total savings of 24.9 million.

In the case of printing, there have been reductions from the same time frame, 1991, '94-95, over the four-year period, of 19 million. It's actually a little bit over 19 million.

The polling in 1990-91, was \$939,000. That's almost a million dollars. In '94-95 the polling will be slightly over 300,000. But none the less in the four-year period the total savings on polling just come in a shade under 2 million — or 1.9 less.

Now if you total up the 24.9 on advertising agencies, actual dollars spent less, the 2 million on polling, actual dollars spent less, on the printing, \$19 million actually spent less, what you have is a saving of \$45 million over four years.

Now if the member opposite says we should try to do more by way of savings, I concur. The constant task of government, especially these days, is to make sure that we can in fact do all that we can do to be as efficient as we can be. But we have done fairly good over the last three years and some several months, and we intend to continue working away at it and limiting our advertising, our printing, our polling, in a way that makes it quite efficient.

May I make one other last point before I take my place. I don't know if the hon. member will have met, in his capacity as Leader of the Opposition, with the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association or the Saskatchewan broadcasting association, but I do from time to time.

And in fact their concern — I won't say complaint — their concern is that the decrease in advertising and these kinds of functions is so great that they actually see a little bit of an impact on their bottom line. They argue that the government has lost a lot in just the communication of some of its programs.

So what we're trying to do here is to balance two competing interests — tell government programs in a fair and open and responsible way, and do it in a way in which we can find efficiencies in less, given the fact that everybody has to do with a little bit of less.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Premier, within the Provincial Secretary's office there's been a . . . we were wondering how you justify the patronage positions that the Provincial Secretary's office has been engaging in, such as Dickson Bailey who is receiving, we understand, something in the magnitude of \$6,031 per month compensation. Mr. Bailey was on a contract to the . . . is on a contract with the department of Provincial Secretary's office until a real position could be found for him.

Before being elected as Premier, you claimed you'd eliminate patronage. You said that you would set up an independent commission to oversee appointments to ensure individuals were hired on a basis of merit rather than on political affiliation. And as you know, Mr. Dickson Bailey has a long history associated with you and your party.

And I'm wondering how you can justify an action of hiring Mr. Dickson Bailey compared to . . . when you take into account the kinds of commitments you made to the people of Saskatchewan in the last election campaign with regard to patronage appointments, saying that if you're hiring people who are past MLAs, who are all of those kinds of things, that would be something that you wouldn't be engaging in, Mr. Premier.

And it seems very clear in this situation that Mr. Dickson Bailey, by I think most accounts, most people in this province would fairly judge him as very much a political appointment type of a process that he went through. And I'm wondering how you justify a position of that nature, particularly for a salary of that level.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Chairman, what I want to say is three things in response to the question, because I think again it's important to put this in a global picture.

First of all, as I explained with respect to advertising agencies, we really revolutionized the appointments of members to what we call the ABC's — agencies, boards, and commissions. People now actually apply. They make out applications. And they are screened in the applications and then they serve, as appointed by a recommending minister and approved by cabinet.

This is also not new. Other provinces have followed and implemented. But I do think it's a significant reform.

My second point that I wish to make is that in Executive Council, staff reporting to the deputy minister . . . And Executive Council is roughly divided into two portions. One is the deputy minister, Mr. Bogdasavich, who's been a long-time civil servant federally and actually in other provincial administrations. These were advertised.

And again I won't take up the time of the committee, but in March 1992, to give you an example, five senior policy advisors were all advertised and were hired by competition — administrative officer and so forth. I could go down the list as is required.

So we do try to advertise very much, where possible. Now the specific question that you refer to is related to Mr. Dickson Bailey, and Mr. Dickson Bailey was a 50 per cent employee, in effect, of the federal government and the government of the day here in Saskatchewan because he was in charge of the infrastructure program. And that's what he did. He put together the 178, 179 million — I don't mean alone, but he was responsible for it.

When that program was more or less nearing completion, as it is more or less now nearing completion — and I might add very successfully administered and his competence demonstrated long before that time, but in this area — his next task was health district boards. He's had experience in this because he's been involved in the electoral office, been involved in that, and knows how election and the mechanics of elections are to take place.

So the issue here for all of us is not whether or not a New Democrat can assume an office, or a Conservative or a Liberal — that will invariably in a small province take place. The issue is whether or not for regular civil service functions, as much as possible, with some exceptions, you can follow the processes of hiring and you hire incompetence, whether it's NDP, PC, or Liberal.

I think Dickson Bailey is a very competent person. He happens to be a New Democrat. You don't agree with politics of it; that's fair enough. But we have people who work and advise on government with politics I don't agree. For example, Mr. Ken Krawetz, to name a name, is the Liberal candidate in the upcoming provincial election, this year or next year, for Canora constituency. He is on the board of teacher education and certification.

We've picked Ms. Linda Trytten, Liberal candidate for Rosetown-Biggar — I don't want to be advertising these people but — as the multi-type library development committee. And one could go down the list. I'm sure there are Conservatives there as well.

So if you take a look at the level of the civil service and you see that 98, 99 per cent are Public Service Commission appointees, they have to follow all the tests, and the 2 per cent or less, the ABCs of which there is some discretion which is involved, we've instituted a lot of checks and balances to cut out patronage.

Can we do more? Yes. Will we do more? Yes.

Dickson Bailey, I think, is a bad example, if I may say so, for you to use; but that's my personal view of Mr. Bailey.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Well, Mr. Premier, I think a lot of people in Saskatchewan would disagree with you. I think they would say he was hired none other than the reason why is simple — he is an NDP partisan and that's the fact of the matter, and he's been hired at a very handsome salary of \$6,000 per month. Most people in Saskatchewan don't earn that kind of money in two months, let alone one, Mr. Premier. And the fact of the matter is he is clearly identified with your party and I think people across this province recognize that. And I think during the next election campaign they'll hold you accountable for things of that nature.

Because you made the promise to the people in the last election campaign that there would be none of this type of thing happening. And I think that's why people across this province

are beginning to question you and your government in a whole range of areas with respect to these types of things. You say on one hand you won't do it, and then you turn around and do it just as blatantly as you can possibly do it. And I think the people of Saskatchewan are getting very, very tired of that type of attitude from you and your government, sir.

That's why I think we're getting these kinds of questions constantly being asked of us as we travel around the province, about the commitments that you made to the people of Saskatchewan during the last election campaign, and why to date you haven't fulfilled those commitments to the people of Saskatchewan.

Moving on to another issue, Mr. Premier, we want to deal with a little something that has come up with respect to the Minister of Labour, and that's a company that he's dealing with up in North Battleford, called PDN.

And as you're aware, there's been concern about the financial arrangements surrounding the Minister of Labour's constituency office in North Battleford, which has been leased at an exorbitant rate by something called PDN Ventures, a non-profit, so-called non-profit company owned by some of the minister's closest supporters.

This non-profit corporation has built up a cash reserve of something in the magnitude of \$32,000, which is supposed to have been turned over to a charity. And we wonder if you endorse that type of activity that the Minister of Labour is engaged in.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Chairman, I don't want to prolong unnecessarily estimates. But as some people say, the member opposite . . . and I hope that he will not take this offensively, I'm not going to let it slide by, the comments that our promises are not fulfilled.

I will when I sit down and there's a page available, give to him what was our platform card in 1991 — The Saskatchewan Way. I have it here. And I will not take the time, but he can judge for himself.

Our first promise was: First things first — common sense financial management. Open the books. Open the books. Yes. The PST — "New directions, new priorities. A commitment to save 7,500 jobs threatened by the expanded 7 per cent PST. We will repeal this unfair tax."

Which is what we did. That was the promise that we made. And work with manufacturers and processors for value added. I could go down. A better quality for life, and so forth.

Actually I think I'll save this although anybody is entitled to get it because I've sent them so many copies. It doesn't seem to matter . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — No, please send it over.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Well, fine. It doesn't seem to make any difference. They still continue to do it and make the statements.

Now with respect to the question of members, whether they are in cabinet or MLAs, in the submission of their accounts. Those are submissions of accounts which the members are responsible for. They know the rules. They know how those rules are to be applied, and they are vetted as best as possible by the Legislative Assembly. I am not here in the position of judge of any member. That is not my function.

There are avenues for complaint. Those avenues for complaint of course involve the Board of Internal Economy. And I believe the minister himself, in question period three or four days ago, said that's not the only option that's open. Any options are open.

But the minister has assured me, as he has the House publicly, as you heard his assurances. And in the absence of other evidence or other concerns, I take those assurances.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Premier. In the last election campaign, I find it absolutely amazing that you would have the people of Saskatchewan believe that your entire platform was on a baseball-card-size little thing that you passed around to the people of Saskatchewan. Indeed you made a number of commitments to the people of Saskatchewan. There was a lot more than what was on this little baseball card that you had suggested are the only commitments that you made to the people of Saskatchewan.

Open the books. Yes, that's what you said all right. You talked about opening the books. And the Gass Commission clearly said the books were open the entire time for anyone to see. That was part of what the Gass Commission said.

As well, Mr. Premier, in addition to what is written on the baseball card, the NDP's baseball card of what they were going to do . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — It's not a baseball card; it's our platform.

(1630)

**Mr. Boyd:** — It was about the size of a baseball card, a little bigger than that, but that's about what it was made up of. There was a whole host of other things that you promised the people of Saskatchewan. There was a whole range of issues that you talked about, Mr. Premier, things like the PST was not going to be around after October 21 if we're in power. That was one of the commitments that you made to the people of Saskatchewan. But we'll deal with that. We'll deal with that a little bit later and try and hold you accountable for the people of Saskatchewan with respect to those.

With respect to the Minister of Labour and his little escapade that he's got going, that little venture — nice, little, cosy arrangement — he has going on with his friends in the NDP Party and campaign manager up at North Battleford, the

\$32,000 that have been built up that supposedly is going to be turned over to a charity . . . In the legislature, under questioning, Mr. Premier, he said to the opposition and indeed to the people of Saskatchewan that you endorsed it, that you had communications back and forth, that he had written you a letter, and you had corresponded back with him with respect to this issue and said that it was okay.

And I'm wondering, Mr. Premier, if you would care to share some of that correspondence that you had back and forth with the Minister of Labour with respect to this issue because I think the people of Saskatchewan deserve some answers on this very important question of whether you agree with a non-profit corporation being set up and set up under the circumstances that the Minister of Labour has set it up. The campaign manager, as part of that non-profit corporation, being set up to administer and somehow or another turn over money to charities . . . and indeed none of that money has been turned over. In fact what has happened with that money, Mr. Premier, it's actually bought the building that they're in now.

We wonder why this is some kind of . . . is acceptable. Most people in the . . . in fact I understand everyone, with the exception of the Minister of Labour, rent at arm's length from other business people in this province. And we are wondering and the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, I think, are wondering whether this, in your view, is an acceptable action and if you had . . . And according to the minister, he says that you endorsed this type of action. And we were wondering if you would care to share the correspondence that you had with the minister.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Chairman, the answer that I have to give is the answer which I have given to the hon. member, and that is this. The rules with respect to the expenditures are set by a committee of this legislature of which you or some representative of your party is on.

If you don't like the answers given by the minister publicly to you in question period, which answers he has given provided to me, you have a recourse of action. That is the situation which takes place. And that is the position that I adopt, and that is where I think the hon. member should pursue his concerns.

I would also say to the hon. member, he can diminish the baseball card approach to the platform, but he can't get around the fact that that is the platform. That's it . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well this is what we campaigned on. This is what we promised. We have . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Here's some of the things you campaigned on too.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Well the hon. member says there are other things we campaigned upon. Let him produce those things, and let's get on to that . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — There it is right there.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Well I don't know what you've got in your hand, but let's debate it and get on to it.

But I tell you, you take a look at what we've done here. And if I had to say that this is a record of accomplishment, a big record of accomplishment . . . I got to tell you about the baseball card and the history of the CCF and the New Democratic Party, just on this point.

This is not something that we pulled out of the air in 1991. It's been a facet of every CCF campaign since 1944. And the hon. member says baseball cards; that's a lot better than putting a platform card on disappearing ink which is what the Tories do.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Disappearing ink, as the Premier calls it. I'd like the Premier to explain this away then. The PST is not going to be around after October 21 if we're in power. Talk about disappearing ink. Talk about disappearing promises, sir. That's the kind of thing that the people of Saskatchewan expected for you to hold to your promises, and yet none of them have been fulfilled.

We'll ease the tax burden on ordinary families. That's what you said; \$4,800 more today in 1991 — the tax load on the average family of Saskatchewan — than it was in 1991. Is that not correct? The Minister of Finance has said that the . . . under questioning here in terms of department estimates, has said that there's been \$225 million net increases in taxation in this province — net increases.

And yet we'll ease the tax burden of ordinary families. That's what the Premier's commitment was to the people of Saskatchewan in the last election campaign. The Associate Minister of Finance said the NDP won't raise any personal taxes for four years. Well, Mr. Premier, has that happened? No new taxes? No, it hasn't. And that's why, Mr. Premier, I think that commitments that you made on the baseball card back in 1991 are something that the people of Saskatchewan do not believe any longer.

They don't believe your commitments in this regard, just as they don't believe the Minister of Labour and his response with respect to PDN. They don't believe him. We would like to know from you, sir, did you have communications, written communications, with the Minister of Labour with regard to his arrangements for his office in North Battleford? Did you have communications with him? Did you approve it? The Minister of Labour says you gave approval for his arrangements at his constituency office in North Battleford. And we would like to know — and I'm sure the taxpayers of Saskatchewan would like to know — whether you gave approval, written approval as he said you did.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Chairman, I make my position clear on this. What I communicate with my ministers is a matter between me and my ministers — full stop, period. I have said and I will repeat again, what the minister has assured me is what he has told the House. I've gone that far in breaking the rule which is the proper rule of government.

If you don't like that, then what you should do is follow the avenues which are open to you. Those avenues range all the way from the Board of Internal Economy to official other authorities. And if I may say so, this is an area which, of all the people, the Leader of the Conservative Party ought not to be raising in the belief that he can be doing it with any credibility.

Now I want to come back to the tax decreases issue. The tax decreases issue here is very simple. We repealed the harmonization of the PST tax as we said in The Saskatchewan Way. That's a net saving of approximately 110 million. We have announced the personal tax decrease for the child tax reduction from 200 to 250; that's a \$4 million reduction, \$150 reduction to the debt reduction surtax, \$55 million or a total of \$59 million for individuals.

On top of that, business tax decreases have been as follows: reduced the small business tax rate from 10 to 8 per cent, second lowest west of Quebec; exempt direct agents from E&H, 11.3 . . . Well it's going to take too much time. You know what they all are. They total up to 51.6 or — in the term of this administration — \$220.5 million in tax breaks. Now this is nothing short of phenomenal, given the circumstances which we inherited. I remind you what we inherited. We inherited a deficit of \$900 million in the year '90-91 — a deficit.

And while we're talking about credibility and promises, you might just be kind enough to tell us, if you will, how it is that you're going to find — I think the easy technique is the 5 per cent elimination of fat from government which amounts to \$250 million — how you're going to find that. And on top of that, how are you going to find the roughly \$500 million you're going to need each and every year in order to eliminate the debt that you and your people racked up, a debt of \$14 billion on top of all of that? You might just let us know how you do that while all the while giving us a tax break.

Talk about voodoo economics. This is the Liberal leader's game. I didn't think it was the Conservative Party leader's game as well. But I tell you, it doesn't add up. It doesn't sound credible. It isn't credible. The people are not going to be bought because back in 1982 they had politicians of the right saying, elect us and we'll do away with the sales tax. Elect us, and we'll reduce 10 per cent of personal income tax. And we now, the people of this province, are getting ourselves out of that tremendous hole. There is where the tax relief comes into place.

What we had to do with respect to cuts, what we had to do with tax increases on the other side of the ledger are occasioned by the fact that the legacy of the Conservative Party of Saskatchewan has been to put this province on the brink of bankruptcy. Thank goodness the people of Saskatchewan have had the fortitude, the wisdom, and the courage to pull together and to stay together to get ourselves out of the hole, not out of the woods, and now see the dawning of a new day.

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

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Premier, for that enlightenment

for the people of Saskatchewan. I would like to continue dealing with the PDN situation that we've raised with you. The simple question, sir, is did you approve the arrangements that the Minister of Labour has with the people who he is renting an office from, office space from in North Battleford or not? Simple as that. Did you give approval for it?

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — As simple as that, I've said this now at least twice during this session. I repeat again. It is not my job to approve or disapprove no more than it is yours because I'm going to ask you whether you approved. Did you approve about some of the expenses that have been tabled by some of your members — yes or no? And I want you to table your writings, all that you've had.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Premier, the idea of estimates, as I recall, is for us to ask you questions — ask you questions, hold you accountable and your government accountable. We'll be happy when we're on that side of the House to answer any questions you have.

And then I'd expect the people of Saskatchewan now would like to hear . . . the Minister of Labour says he had discussions with you on it. He says that you gave approval. He said there was written correspondence between you and him on this issue.

And I think the people of Saskatchewan would simply like to know from you, sir, whether you gave approval for the Minister of Labour to be engaged in a cosy, little arrangement so he could be the sugar-daddy at election time in North Battleford and spread \$32,000 around in North Battleford.

It was only under intense questioning from the opposition did he finally . . . did the PDN finally decided they were going to do something with that amount of money that had been built up over the last number of years. And then they went and bought the building. And somehow or another, that's supposed to be comforting to the people of Saskatchewan and the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

Once again, sir, did you have discussions with and did you give approval for the Minister of Labour to be engaged in this type of operations with PDN?

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Chairman, I have given my answer, and that is the answer which I cannot further elaborate upon. That's the only position I can take because I've said it. I've given you the answer that you wanted, and there it is. So you can continue to ask all you want. That is the position.

**Mr. Boyd:** — I don't think the people of Saskatchewan are satisfied with your answer, sir. You can say that; oh yes, you talked to him about it, or you didn't talk to him about it or anything else. The fact of the matter is, sir, is you have a minister of your government, a minister within your government who is renting office space from his campaign manager and a few other friends of his.

And they've set up a non-profit corporation and have built up

\$32,000 within that non-profit corporation, and who knows where that money was going to end up? It was only under the questioning from the opposition that the minister and his friends finally relented and bought the building that he lived in . . . that he was operating his office out of, pardon me.

And I think the people of Saskatchewan have the legitimate right to know whether or not, as the minister said, you gave approval for that. Is the minister not telling the truth? Or are you not telling the truth, sir? The people of Saskatchewan would like to know that. They would like to know whether you believe that this is an appropriate expenditure, an appropriate expenditure for a minister or anyone else to be making — simple as that, sir. Did you give approval for it?

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Chairman, I have given the answer which I shall give again. Listen to me carefully, will you please?

I neither give approval, nor do I reject individual MLAs expense accounts. Have you heard me on that?

Now will you, while you get up there . . . because I'll want to know from you to what extent were you privy and to what extent do you have correspondence in your file respecting the several matters which affect your caucus? Will you table those because the people are telling me they're not satisfied. You tell me.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Premier, the people of Saskatchewan would like to deal with PDN; that's who they'd like to deal with. They want to know the answer to the question. The minister said in question period here, that he had discussions with you and you approved it, and I just want you to confirm that. Is the minister misleading the House or are you misleading the House? Which one is it? Can't be both ways. Either he misled the House or you are today misleading the House, Mr. Premier. And I think that's a very simple question.

He says that there was correspondence back and forth. He talked about it with you. He had written correspondence with you. And the people of Saskatchewan believe that there's something funny about those arrangements, Mr. Premier. And I'd like you to, for the people of Saskatchewan, to shed a little light on this issue in terms of your discussions with the Minister of Labour.

Because I don't think it's an appropriate expenditure and I don't believe the people of Saskatchewan would think it's an appropriate expenditure for \$32,000 to be built up in some kind of fund, non-profit corporation that is at best — at best — bending the rules as far as they can possibly be bent.

(1645)

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — You know, if you don't think it's a proper expenditure, then I challenge you to take it to the police. I challenge you to take it to the Board of Internal Economy. I challenge you to take it to those agencies. Do that.

You're responsible for your accounts. Every individual MLA is responsible for their own individual accounts. I neither accept nor approve or disapprove of any MLA's accounts. I've said this to you before.

Now while you are on your feet, will you be kind enough to tell us a little bit of the history of what you know and what is in your office and what correspondence there is in your office pertaining to the several matters, which I cannot talk about obviously, the several matters that you're facing. Because the people of Saskatchewan are telling me that they don't think you're telling the whole story there about what's going on with the Tories. So why don't you do that?

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Premier, Mr. Chairman. I think the people of Saskatchewan expect nothing less from the Minister of Labour than if he is indeed saying that you had correspondence, and you gave approval for it. And now you're essentially denying that, that you did not have any correspondence with him or that you did not discuss it with him. It's clear to me — and I think it is to the people of Saskatchewan — that the minister is not telling the truth, that he has misled the people of Saskatchewan.

If that is the case, Mr. Premier, would you not think that the appropriate action for the Minister of Labour would be to resign? I think the people of Saskatchewan would think that the appropriate action for the Minister of Labour with regard to such a serious issue as this . . . has to be held accountable.

And he said that there were discussions with you, sir. He said that there was approval from you. And I don't think the people of Saskatchewan are going to accept anything less than for you to either confirm it or deny it. Which one is it? Do you confirm it or deny it? Or is the minister not telling the truth? And if he isn't telling the truth to the people of Saskatchewan, we should expect his resignation, and so should you expect it.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Chairman, the Leader of the Conservative Party is very, very easy with his words of resignation. But how silent he is in the last several weeks about calls for resignation. How silent he is. How silent. There's a standard . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well no, you're talking about members of my caucus. Let's talk about members of your caucus and zero tolerance. Where's your standards?

I'm telling you, Mr. Leader of the Conservative Party, what I've said before. I do not approve or disapprove of any MLAs' accounts. That is the responsibility of each individual MLA. Those accounts go to Legislative Assembly, and they're handled in accordance to that. If you have evidence to the contrary, then you take it to the police, or you take it to the other authorities. That is what I am saying to you. That may not be a good enough answer for you. I think that's an honest answer, it's the correct answer, and it is the proper answer.

**Mr. Boyd:** — And I think it's an answer that the people of Saskatchewan won't accept, sir. I don't think that they believe the Minister of Labour and I'm not sure they believe you on this

either. I think the people of Saskatchewan deserve an answer to this. It's a very simple question.

The Minister of Labour says that his arrangements are proper and that he discussed them with you and you gave approval for them. I think it's appropriate then to ask the Premier of this province whether indeed you feel that this is an appropriate way of leasing a constituency office. It's as simple as that, sir. I think the people of Saskatchewan deserve that from the Premier of this province.

Just look at it from a hypothetical situation if you don't want to deal with him specifically. Do you believe that, in a hypothetical situation, that a person renting an office from a non-profit corporation, building up some \$32,000, is an appropriate expenditure for a member of this legislature?

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Chairman, I am not here in the course of my estimates to answer hypothetical questions. I will be here to answer factual questions. I'll be here to answer factual questions about departments of government, particularly my department of government. If the member opposite is not happy with the Minister of Labour's answers, which have been as clear and as forthcoming as I have heard them on the particular day of the question period, I repeat again he has other courses to take, other routes to follow, other positions that he can advance.

My position here is as I have stated. It is to explain the Government of Saskatchewan Executive Council, to defend government policy, to indicate where government expenditures should or shouldn't be made, to debate with the Leader of the Opposition in this regard. If he's got a beef about communications allowances or anything else involving an individual MLA in cabinet or out of cabinet, take it up with those authorities. I do not approve or disapprove. That is not my job, not my power, not my duty.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Premier, thank you then. It becomes extremely obvious then that the Minister of Labour has misled everyone in this legislature, as well as the people of Saskatchewan, because he said that he did have approval from you. He said that there was correspondence with you. He said that you did give him the assurance that you believed that that was an appropriate leasing arrangement for his constituency office.

And I think the people of Saskatchewan . . . My view is that the people of Saskatchewan do not accept that as an appropriate expenditure. And I'm surprised that the Minister of Labour would rise in his place in this legislature and say that the Premier of this province did give him approval when the Premier of this province now rises in this House and says that there was no such thing happened, and no responsibility for it.

Mr. Premier, the people of Saskatchewan don't believe that this is an appropriate expenditure, I think. When the people of Saskatchewan . . . And you want to talk about the facts. And we can deal with the facts, if you like.

The arrangements were such, as I understand, that a company set up under the name of PDN — which is NDP backwards — PDN Ventures, a non-profit company owned by some of the minister's closest political friends, including his campaign manager in the last election campaign, have set up a non-profit corporation to administer the offices that he leased, his MLA office that he rents from them, leases from them. The arrangements are such that there has been \$32,000 built up in a cash reserve over the last number of years. And since that time, \$32,000 or something in that magnitude has been used to buy the building by this non-profit corporation that has been set up to lease an office for him from his political friends.

That's the arrangements that have been set up. And the minister, under intense questioning in this legislature, stood up and said to you and to the people of this legislature and to the people of this province that there was nothing wrong with that and that he had correspondence with you, sir, and that you approved it. And now we see — and now we see, sir, you stand in this legislature and deny that there was any such thing happen.

Well who's telling the truth? That's all I'm asking, Mr. Premier. Are you telling the truth or is the minister not telling the truth? The point is we have to have some answers on this. And it isn't good enough for you to stand up and say, whatever anyone wants to do, it's up to them. Because the message is clear here, sir — either he isn't addressing this properly or you aren't addressing it properly.

And I think the people of North Battleford and the rest of the taxpayers of this province and the Assembly is owed an apology by either you or the Minister of Labour. And at the very least, if it's the Minister of Labour who has misled this House, he should do nothing less than the honourable thing, and that is to resign his position.

That is what he should be doing if you indeed will not confirm that there was correspondence and that there were discussions about this matter. Do you not think that that is an appropriate action for the Minister of Labour to give his resignation under this situation?

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Chairman, it is ironic and I might also add tragically inappropriate to hear the Conservative leader talk about the right thing to do. I don't mean as an individual. This is a new person who assumes office, new to his position as official opposition leader. And it gives me no pleasure to say what I'm going to say.

He is labouring under very difficult circumstances by the public record. But I don't think the people of Saskatchewan are going to very long consider or take seriously the observations of the hon. member with respect to this particular standard which is involved there.

The question here is approval or disapproval. And I have given you my answer in this regard. This is not the job of the Premier or anybody else. This is the job of the MLAs. And significantly you won't take it up with the Board of Internal Economy or

other agencies, if that doesn't satisfy you. All the other agencies that the minister has himself in effect suggested are open to you.

I think that all you do here is continue to in effect somehow mitigate the unfortunate circumstances in which you find yourself. You're not going to do it in this case, I'm sorry.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Premier, then it seems very obvious to me and I think to the people of Saskatchewan that the minister did not have the approval of you. He did not have correspondence with you. I take you at your word that he did not have correspondence with you and that he did not have written approval from you as he has suggested.

On April 28, in *Hansard* of 1995, and I quote, the Minister of Labour said:

Because of the controversy the member opposite caused to the media, the Premier (the Premier) has also questioned me in regard to whether or not there was any problem with the rental of my constituency office.

And I've assured him in writing that there is none. The members can check that out as well.

And that's what we are doing here this afternoon, sir, is simply checking it out. We are simply asking you whether or not you had discussions with him, whether you questioned him about the leasing arrangements, and whether then you gave approval for those leasing arrangements or not. Did you or did you not approve it, and did you have discussions with him, with the Minister of Labour, and did you question the Minister of Labour as he has suggested you have?

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Chairman, now comes the truth of what this questioning has been, and now comes the proof of the — how should I use my words to make sure that they follow the parliamentary rules — the gross exaggeration of the line of questioning.

The line of questioning for the last 20 minutes has been that the Minister of Labour gave me correspondence, discussions, and that the Minister of Labour told the House that I had approved it. That's what you said. And by your very reading of the answer of the Minister of Labour, upon which then you fabricated this House of cards that he should resign, collapses by the words — the very words that you read. Oh yes, and you shift off those words because your researchers gave it to you. And now it is, oh well, I'm not making an allegation that either he should resign or I should resign. I believe you, sir, Mr. Premier . . .

**Mr. Boyd:** -- Oh yes, of course you will because that's the way you operate. But you told the House that that's what the Minister of Labour said. Were you misleading the House? Were you doing the dishonourable thing? Will you resign for misleading the House?

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

**Mr. Boyd:** — Now comes the truth, the Premier of Saskatchewan says, now comes the truth. He stands up and says all kinds of things about what we are asking questions about.

The simple question that we have asked you and repeatedly asked you this afternoon is, did you or did you not give approval for this scheme? Did you or did you not give approval for this scheme?

The Minister of Labour says that you questioned him about it. Did you or did you not give approval for it, sir? He talked to you about it. He says he had written correspondence with you about it. And I think the taxpayers of Saskatchewan would want to know the truth in this matter, Mr. Premier. He says that there were discussions. He says that there was written correspondence with you. He says . . . and we would like to know whether or not there was approval for. Simple as that.

After questioning the Minister of Labour, as he has suggested that you did, he said that you questioned him about this matter. I would simply ask you, sir, then did you give approval for this? Did you believe that this was an appropriate thing for the Minister of Labour to be doing? Or what was the nature of the questions that you asked him with regard to this whole affair? Did he say anything about the leasing arrangements? What questions did you ask the minister with regard to this whole incident?

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Chairman, again, the parliamentary word here which I'm searching for is difficult to come by, because here is the member for the last half hour saying that the Minister of Labour told the House that I'd approved the arrangement. And then he concocted from that straw case, one of us was not telling the truth.

**An Hon. Member:** — Absolutely.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Absolutely, you see — this is the member.

Here's what the member said to the House. These are the quotes:

The Premier has also questioned me in regard to whether or not there was any problem with the rental of my constituency office.

And I've assured him in writing that there is none.

The members can check that out as well.

**The Chair:** — Order, order. Order. It now being at the hour of 5 o'clock, the Committee of Finance will stand recessed until 7 o'clock p.m.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.