



STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL
AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE**

Mr. Warren Michelson, Chair
Moose Jaw North

Mr. Doyle Vermette, Deputy Chair
Cumberland

Mr. D.F. (Yogi) Huyghebaert
Wood River

Mr. Russ Marchuk
Regina Douglas Park

Mr. Kevin Phillips
Melfort

Mr. Warren Steinley
Regina Walsh Acres

Mr. Corey Tochor
Saskatoon Eastview

[The committee met at 15:05.]

The Chair: — Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice. This is a meeting this afternoon. I am Warren Michelson. I am the Chair of the committee, along with . . . The other Chair and members is: Doyle Vermette is the Deputy Chair, Yogi Huyghebaert, Russ Marchuk, Kevin Phillips, Warren Steinley, Corey Tochor. Today we have a substitution of Paul Merriman sitting in for Warren Steinley.

Mr. Minister, this is a continuation of the consideration of estimates that we had started last week. So I'll welcome you, Minister Wyant, along with Minister Tell. Minister Wyant, if you want to just introduce your officials, we can get started.

**General Revenue Fund
Justice
Vote 3**

Subvote (JU01)

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — With me, next to me is Minister Tell, as you know; Deputy Minister Fenwick on my right; and Deputy Minister McFee at the table. I believe Minister Tell would like to just make an opening comment I think.

The Chair: — Minister Tell.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes. Good afternoon. There were some questions arising out of the last meeting, committee meeting respecting Justice estimates. A question was asked: how long will it be before the province's expenditure for rural policing is cost neutral? The answer I'd like to read into the record is, in 2014-15 the province will pay approximately 78.6 million to provide rural policing in the province of Saskatchewan. As per the police regulations formula, the province is expected to recover approximately \$17.5 million this year, the amount billed to municipalities under 5,000. As of April 1, 2014 the yearly amount billed is calculated as an 8 per cent increase over the previous year's total bill. If the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] cost of 78.6 million remained flat, it would take approximately 20.5 years to be in a cost-neutral position.

Question no. 2, how many RCMP cadets are trained at Regina yearly, at Depot? The answer: on average, going back to 2010 and projecting through 2017, approximately 666 cadets per year. Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you, Minister Tell. We have a substitution sitting in for Mr. Vermette: Mr. Nilson. We'll open the floors to questions. Mr. Nilson.

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you. Good afternoon. For the record, could you provide us with your position on a commission on the federal level studying violence against Aboriginal women? We know that this is an issue on a national level, and I think the province is supportive of such an activity, but I would appreciate getting it on the record. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thanks for the question, Mr. Nilson. Well certainly we were a bit disappointed that the federal government

won't be proceeding with an inquiry. This is certainly an important issue in Saskatchewan and a tragedy by any measure, so we were a bit disappointed that didn't happen. However we are doing some very important things in Saskatchewan around this topic, and perhaps for the record I can comment on those.

We do have our provincial partnership committee on missing persons, which is a collaborative organization between police, government, and various community-based organizations. They've done a number of things and continue to work on this issue. And some of the things they've done is they've established some support workers to help families who have members of their family missing. They've developed cold case teams, a standard response policy, and public information lists. So notwithstanding the fact that there will . . . At least the federal government isn't proceeding with an inquiry at this point in time. That's certainly not stopping the very good work that's being done at the partnership level, the provincial level through the partnership.

Also I just want to state that at the federal, provincial, and territorial meetings which we attend on a yearly basis, last fall we released a justice framework, which we are currently working on. We're talking to First Nations communities, not just about trying to find, you know, answers to the basic issue but developing preventative strategies to prevent people from getting into that situation to begin with, and this being Missing Persons Week certainly is intended to raise awareness of a very, very serious issue in Saskatchewan.

But this particular point in time, while we continue to encourage the federal government to proceed with an inquiry — and that's our view — we will not stop doing all the very good work that we're doing in Saskatchewan on this issue.

The Chair: — Yes. Just for the record, we are in consideration of vote 3, Justice, central management and services, subvote (JU01). We'll continue now. Mr. Nilson.

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you. And basically that means Justice and Corrections and everything together, and Policing. Okay. Thank you.

When the announcement was made last week about a new I guess correctional, mental health correctional facility in North Battleford, one of the issues there relates to all of the shared services. And I'm not totally certain, but it looks as if you are going to set out . . . You've got a request for proposal for all of your food service provision in the whole correctional system except for that facility. And perhaps you can explain how these things relate and whether there is an addendum or something that relates to that particular facility.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — We will be sharing a number of services with the North Battleford hospital. I mean I could list some of them: plant services and parking, entrance, reception, that type of thing, loading docks. The food services that you're specifically zeroing in on is of course provided by the North Battleford hospital, and we will continue with that shared service with the North Battleford hospital in this regard.

Mr. Nilson: — Okay. So that one will not be included in the

overall request for proposal. Can you give the background for the request for proposal that's dated February 25th, 2014? My understanding is that you have a report someplace that recommends this, and is that a public report that could be released?

Mr. McFee: — Mr. Nilson, in response to your question, there are two parts to the question.

The Chair: — Could you just state your name please.

Mr. McFee: — Oh sorry. Dale McFee.

The Chair: — Thank you.

Mr. McFee: — Part one, the review was done in relation to food services in general that we provide across the province in the various seven institutions. Part of that was to make sure that we focus on the core duties in relation to corrections. Part of that was to bring some obviously consistence of service and to see if there are opportunities that we can realign some of the resources that we use, perhaps use in other areas that are our core functions.

[15:15]

The second part in relation to the question, the minister isn't eligible to answer obviously, the report being public. Of course there was an FOI [freedom of information] done in relation to this, and it was denied in accordance with section 16(1)(a), 17(1)(a), 17(1)(d), among others in *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. So that obviously has been responded to in relation to why it was denied, and of course certainly I can give this letter if need be with all the rest of the sections rather than recite them here.

But two different things, I think two parts to that question. And certainly as far as the information being public, there's reasons why it isn't. And the second part certainly is the reason why we went about looking at this, which is very consistent from what we had said in other areas of our business. We want to review all areas that we're in and obviously making sure that we're invested in the appropriate areas to focus on reducing crime victimization, focus on reducing recidivism, dealing with the overcrowding in the adult-particular parts of the facilities, and this is one area that we felt there could be opportunity now.

That report isn't final yet. And certainly we'll be reporting back, and we have consulted with the union executive in relation to this to ensure that they're up to speed with how this is transpiring and continues to transpire.

Mr. Nilson: — When the request for proposal was announced or the idea came out, there was a quote from the Corrections deputy minister, Dale McFee, on CTV [Canadian Television Network Ltd.] Saskatoon, January 14th, and it was said that you said this: "This wasn't done for the economic reason. This was done for the core business opportunity." What does core business opportunity mean?

Mr. McFee: — So in response to that question, just for clarity purposes, when you're talking about core duties certainly in relation to basically corrections, what we're talking about is

program and security. In relation to contracting out, certainly there's many areas that we contract out with other service providers. The whole purpose of all of these reviews is to ensure that we are focusing our valuable resources, which is our staff, to the right areas in which we can drive those four pillars that we've mentioned.

And certainly as you're aware, crime rate in this province has been the highest for many, many years — one or two for many, many years — as incarceration rates, as is recidivism rates. So what we're really doing in all of these reviews is focusing our attention on all those things that we're doing that we can look at and find out if there is a better way that we can do things. And can we do things more consistently that will let us repurpose or reinvest staff and/or other resources to deal with the issue that is driving obviously costs, but not only driving costs but is driving our staff time in many, many of the areas that we're discussing.

Mr. Nilson: — Now you just indicated that there's a number of other areas where you're contracting out. Could you describe those for me, please?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes. Some of the other areas that we use, we contract the services of psychiatric — which would be under Health — addictions, physicians, maintenance, and canteen.

Mr. Nilson: — So with the contracting out of maintenance, you use cleaning services and things like that? Or is that just in a few instances, or how does that work? I mean I just, my understanding of correctional facilities is having fully trained staff that are part of your team is a major factor in protecting the public, keeping people safe.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — With respect to maintenance, that is Government Services or Central Services that looks after that particular area.

But I'm going come to back to the, again, that the direct delivery of food services is not a core function of our ministry and in the operation of our correctional facilities to be provided by the staff.

And we're talking about a realignment. And talking about staff, we are in the process of realigning, ensuring that the right people are delivering the right service at the right time. And a determination through analysis is that our core business is providing secure custody and community supervision of offenders.

Mr. Nilson: — Okay. Well I know from the letters that the public sent, and I know you've responded to some of those, one of the core factors I think for most people in the public is basically seeing if you can get these people back into the community as good citizens. And I note even in your request for proposal, one of the key factors there is to make sure that the food services will provide training because inmate labour is going to be used.

And so I think by defining your core services the way you've just defined them, you miss a big part that the public expects of you. And I know that I as a long-term person involved in corrections work am surprised that you would cut out that big chunk in describing what you do. And frankly it's not a

rationale for, you know, cutting off some of these kinds of services which are core. Perhaps you can explain this.

Mr. McFee: — I think what you're referring to is the actual training of the clients in relation to food services. That's not going to change. I mean food services are contracted out in several other provinces in this country, and there's a reason why they're contracted out. But where we are in this stage of this portion is, is looking at all things that we do in relation to corrections, ensuring that we're doing the right things at the right time.

At the end of the day, you know, under Minister Tell, we've been given guidance that we want to make sure that we're spending our money wisely. We want to make sure that our resources are dedicated in the right areas and that we are also looking at those long-term things such as programming, as we talked about last time, but also in relation to food services. There is no change in relation to that whether we contract it out or whether we're using our own people to train clients. That will stay there. That's a staple. That was clearly articulated when this went forward and that won't change.

Again I just want to remind that the decisions haven't been made yet. This obviously has to come back for a detailed analysis, and if it makes sense, we'll look at it. But I think what I can clearly say is the ministry will look at all things and ensure that we're doing the right things at the right time for the best value for money. But not only that is we're using our staff, which is our biggest asset, in the right areas to drive the things that we need to drive, which is to reduce incarceration rates, reduce in recidivism, reduce in crime and victimization, and as I said, that as we articulated earlier, that secure and community corrections are a big part of that and they need to be aligned.

Mr. Nilson: — You've just indicated that there are other provinces that have contracted out food services. Could you describe where those are in Canada?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes, the contracting out of food services in facilities in Alberta, BC [British Columbia], and Ontario.

Mr. Nilson: — Okay, thank you. One area of contracting out you didn't mention, which is an area where I've been getting complaints and some of my colleagues have been getting complaints, is the telephone service. And I'm not sure who you've contracted this out to but it seems like a rather practical, positive thing for people in jail is to continue to have contact with their family at a minimal cost. And this is actually getting to be very expensive for not only the inmates who don't have any money but also their families. So could you describe what's going on?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Telmate, as you're referring to the telephone system, is a monitored telephone system that was installed in the provincial correctional centres in 2010-11 as part of the government's action plan to improve the province's adult correctional system and came out of the report *The Road Ahead: Towards a Safer Correctional System*. Telmate reduces the ability of offenders to conduct illegal activities over the phone. It also assists in protecting victims and the public from unwanted and/or harassing telephone calls from inmates.

Request for proposals was developed at that time, in 2010-11, and managed through the government tendering process. Synergy inmate telephone monitoring solutions of San Antonio, Texas was chosen because they scored the highest in the evaluation process. These services provided by this company also serve Alberta, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia. And of course all data is stored in Canada.

Mr. Nilson: — So how is it then that a person who wants to phone and talk to their family member or somebody that they're mentoring ends up having to register and send their information to the States to this company? And then they're charged a fee both for the collect call and for this service. Can you explain why that's happening?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — The costs for using the Telmate system are free for service and are similar to those associated with prepaid long-distance and calling cards. So for instance, local calls, collect is \$1.85 per call; prepaid debit, \$1.35 per call. And remanded offenders receive three free local calls per day. And of course we have to remember that this doesn't include, there's no charge at all for calls to solicitors, Ombudsman's office, legal aid, educational institutions, drug and alcohol offices, and child and family services, etc.

Mr. Nilson: — But if you don't fit into one of those categories, it can add up quite quickly.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes. And let me further this. Long-distance calls collect, \$1.50 plus a toll charge of 30 cents per minute. Prepaid debit on long-distance calls is \$1 plus a toll charge of 30 cents per minute. Collect calls are charged up to 45 cents for a bill rendering free per call . . . or rendering fee per call. Sorry.

Mr. Nilson: — And on top of that then do you pay your own SaskTel fees, say you're phoning from Assiniboia into Regina?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — You said Assiniboia?

Mr. Nilson: — Yes, or someplace in Saskatchewan. That seems to be the complaint, that they pay whatever fees this system has plus then they also have to pay long distance on a collect call basis.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes. Well they pay the normal long distance call fee.

Mr. Nilson: — Yes, well on collect calls, which is probably the most expensive. Anyway it's an area where it's an irritant, especially for people who never had any contact with the jail system and all of a sudden some family member is caught up in this. And so I just raise that with you, and if there is some way to make some adjustments, I think people would appreciate it.

The closing date for the food service request for proposal was about almost a month ago. Can you tell us how many proposals that you've received?

Mr. McFee: — The closing date was April 22nd. We can't obviously disclose the number of bidders that we've had in relation to that. Certainly that's something that obviously will be focused on in the very near future. And we'll report out once we've done, obviously, the research and due diligence to ensure

that we're making the right decisions.

[15:30]

Mr. Nilson: — How much involvement do the present employees and their union, SGEU [Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union], have involved in the review of the proposals?

Mr. Cooley: — Dennis Cooley. A committee has been established to review the proposals. The committee will consist of representatives from Corrections and Policing management as well as Government Services. The review or the evaluation is based on a predefined set of criteria as per Government Services contracts policy. So that, the scoring sheet and the criteria and the weighting, all of that was established prior to opening up any of the proposals.

Mr. Nilson: — So on the issue of personnel and staff planning, which is 20 per cent of the evaluation, are you including SGEU or any of the present employees in looking at those proposals?

Mr. Cooley: — No, we are not. The committee has been established. That will consist of representatives from the management in Corrections and Policing as well as representatives from Government Services. So that committee will review and score the proposals.

Mr. Nilson: — So basically any of the concerns that your present group of employees have are not included in this at all. Is that correct?

Mr. McFee: — We have advised the union from day one that this was going ahead, actually quite a bit early before we actually went ahead. We've been apprised and having discussions, and we've committed to report back to them what the findings are when we make our decision. So to say that they've never been included, no. In relation to the direct front lines, as Dennis has said, is there's a criteria for that. But we have definitely kept the union executive in the loop in relation to the process.

Mr. Nilson: — Okay. Well it appears they've run the food services in your organizations for a long time, and they probably do have some expertise that would have been quite helpful in this process, so I'm surprised that you haven't figured out a way to accommodate that.

There's been a interesting question — I'm not sure who answers this one — but an interesting question around the farm ownership in Saskatchewan, and the issue relates to a rather large purchase of land by the Canadian pension plan. And I know from my years in that position of Minister of Justice that this was always an area where advice was sought. And so my question goes to what advice is given around whether the Canadian pension plan qualifies to purchase land in Saskatchewan, given the very large amount of land that they purchased and the definitions that are in the legislation.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thanks very much for the question. This legislation is properly within the purview of the Minister of Agriculture. I understand that prior to our time in government that this was an Act which was assigned to the Ministry of

Justice but is now assigned to the Minister of Agriculture. My suggestion would be that the questions are better directed to the Minister of Agriculture.

Mr. Nilson: — Well I raised the question because right on the website it says that this board is a quasi-judicial tribunal that's funded and managed as part of Agriculture, but it doesn't take its direction, decision making from the government. So it's a separate board, I guess we can put it that way, but it appears that the government — not Agriculture, but a different part of the government — has taken a position on this. And my question is, has the Minister of Justice or officials provided advice on this particular issue? And what was that advice?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Nilson, we have, through the Ministry of Justice, provided an opinion on the farm ownership topic, but, as you know, that opinion will be subject to solicitor-client privilege.

Mr. Nilson: — Okay. Well I mean the position of the government seems to be, at least according to ministers who have commented on this, that it's A-okay for the Canada Pension Plan to buy as much land as possible because it's owned by Canadians. Was that the advice?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well I won't comment on the advice that was given, and again I will refer you to the Minister of Agriculture with respect to the position that the Farm Ownership Board has taken, or the Minister of Agriculture has taken with respect to the matter.

Mr. Nilson: — So practically, the position taken by the Minister of the Economy was that this is okay. Is that the government position on this? I'm not talking about legal advice. We're just asking for the government position.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — It is the government's position.

Mr. Nilson: — Okay. And the way you've answered that maybe it also gives us an idea of what the opinion was. So thank you.

Now there's a very contentious issue in Canada right now related to the Prime Minister's comments about the Chief Justice of Canada. Have you as the minister taken any position on this dispute or have you discussed this with other ministers of Justice in Canada?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — We have not had any discussions with any other ministers of Justice across the country whether territorial, provincial, or federal, and we have not taken a position on the topic.

Mr. Nilson: — Will you be getting involved in this at all given that it goes right to the heart of our constitution and basically the public's perception of how Canada works?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — This is a matter dealing with a court which we have no jurisdiction over or responsibility for the administration of. So we'll leave this issue to the federal government and the Supreme Court.

Mr. Nilson: — If there was a request that came to you as the

minister from our lawyers in Saskatchewan to get involved in this because it is important for the whole judicial system, let alone how we interpret the constitution, would you seriously look at having a meeting about this and taking a formal position?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — We would take that request under advisement and certainly consult with our officials within the ministry.

Mr. Nilson: — Okay. Thank you and appreciate that response. I suspect it may be coming before too long so . . . It's a sad time I think in our country when we have this kind of a dispute playing out in the papers of the country and in the discussions.

In the Children's Advocate report that came out today, there are a number of comments about some of the things that I think both deputies talked about last week and this week as it relates to children and making sure they get a good start in life because it's going to save us a lot of money. I'm not sure of the exact numbers of hundreds and millions of dollars that it can save you on the Corrections side. One of the strong recommendations relates to basically an overall policy or plan on dealing with poverty. Is that part of your four pillars that you talk about in the Corrections side or is it part of some of the other things that we talk about on the court side?

Mr. McFee: — As mentioned the last time, obviously poverty, many issues, addictions as we discussed last time, all come into play and certainly that's a significant one. Is it identified as a specific pillar? No, because I think there's many things within the pillar but I mean it plays in all different areas of what we're talking about.

It plays, as I mentioned the other day, in mental health and addictions. It plays in the early intervention prevention, getting them — as in the Hubs and the CORs [centre of responsibility] — getting the first contact at the earliest opportunity. It's rooted in the serious violent offenders a lot of times, so I mean it crosses and touches paths with everything including the alignment and the practices within the system. So is it a specific pillar? No. Is it included? Absolutely, but as you know and as we've discussed before, there's many other areas as well as poverty.

Mr. Nilson: — I note from your reports and some of the comments and basically how the young offender system is now having to be reorganized because there are so many fewer young people incarcerated, and I think that's very good. What have you learned from that side that's going to help on the adult corrections side? Because I know that discussions around changes to the federal legislation for young offenders — I guess there's a few different changes over the last 30 years — were part of that process that maybe didn't translate over into the adult side. So perhaps you could talk a bit about that and explain where maybe some of what you're doing now with the four pillars is actually building on what has been happening on the young offender side.

Mr. McFee: — I mean exactly right if you look at the discrepancy of under crowding, if you want to say, in YO [young offender] population and overcrowding in adult and, you know, similar to as we mentioned in food services, what

we've looked at is we've taken an independent view of this, I mean, and looked at what . . . kind of like a moneyball in the system and what drives the system. And the three distinct differences between adult and YO from the early analysis is sentencing practices, how we do our programming in the serious violent offenders in relation to the wraparound services, how we are further ahead in relation to our YO. And then the other thing to take into consideration is that 65 to 75 per cent of all calls, or not calls you would call them, but incidents that come to the Hub and COR table are dealing with youth.

[15:45]

So that early intervention and early prevention absolutely starts to drop numbers. So what you do is you start to deal with the folks in the system. You deal with how they're getting into the system and you slow that tap down, and then you basically get in at the earliest opportunity and put the resources to them at the most timely, effective manner. So that looks at things such as programming in all different areas in relation to do that.

That's exactly what we're talking about in relation to the adult system and how do we look at those things that we're, you know . . . How you deal with a 16-year-old or a 17-year-old on a treatment basis is no different than you do a 21-year-old, but they're distinctly different by law. But that doesn't mean that the treatment should be different.

So now what we're doing is that exact comparison, and see how we can start to drive the adult numbers down. And if you deal with it in all the components that drive the system, you'll pull the system down in a lot shorter time than it previously has. If you deal with one component of the system — let's say it's just the serious violence — your impact will be very limited. So that's exactly what we're doing in relation to the adult system.

Mr. Nilson: — And that's my observation from outside. And I think that's good. And I guess the question becomes whether some of the ways that you might reorganize the adult system on the contracting out side, for instance, or some of these other things may be a little counterproductive to what you're doing right in the centre. And part of it is because I just know that everybody who works in a correctional centre, it doesn't matter what job they have, feels like they're part of a team trying to deal with people. And when you start dividing these things out, the way this request for proposal is set up, I'm uneasy that it's going to start tearing apart that ability for people to work together. Do you have any comment on that?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — I think I'll start out by answering this question in this way. The correctional services and programs in our adult facilities have not been reviewed for 23 years, 16 under the NDP [New Democratic Party]. We're going to use the independent analysis that we . . . the information we're going to gather from that. We're going to use our people, our biggest resource, our best source of information. We're going to look and see what success looks like. If we continue doing the same, our business, the same way we've been doing it, we'll have the same result.

And we're changing the way we're doing business. You look at the COR and Hub, serious violent offender. All of those programs are intended to change the result. And we're going to

base our . . . We're going to look at what outcomes we want, and the analysis will be based on true analysis so that we can align our resources effectively and properly to drive those outcomes.

Our outcomes of course are going to be that we have less, fewer people in our prison system. We have reduced numbers through young offender. We hope to continue to reduce those numbers, and I think that will define success — fewer people coming into our system that have been there before, recidivism. And we must continue on this pathway based on evidence and focused on outcomes.

Mr. Nilson: — Well thank you for that. I don't disagree with your perspective. One of the questions becomes is how big a net that you cast or how wide because if it's just within corrections, that's not going work. It's got to have policing. I mean it's got to have prosecutions, probably has to have some discussions with the courts, but then it goes in on, like as you said earlier, the mental health side and the other areas. So how . . . Like I guess can you articulate a little more about how it's going to spread across into some of these other areas?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Well absolutely. And discussions and actions have been ongoing with our policing partners, mental health, addictions, and involving Social Services, and this is especially true through the child and family committee. And we're crossing ministries like we never have before, working together, not working through silos and thinking it's somebody else's responsibility. And we will continue on this pathway, working with Justice and the prosecutions. All of this comes . . . We have to be together here. This is not just one ministry trying to solve the problems of the entire social sphere here, and we are more than willing and able to work together and for the best outcomes, for the demonstrated outcomes that we all desire.

Mr. Nilson: — Okay. And I appreciate that. Two questions. I'll ask them one at a time and get an answer. The first one is the changes made to the Criminal Code around some of the, oh you know, intensity that they've put into some of the legislation that attempts to make sentences a little longer, things like that, getting rid of the some judicial discretion. How has that affected what you're doing?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Well first off, and I mean I know you're aware, this is very much out of our control. But having said that is that we have seen very little impact with respect to the legislation.

Mr. Nilson: — Yes. Okay, so that maybe other parts of the system have kind of dealt with the legislation then and blunted its intent. So I appreciate that.

The other question I have is that if, in this review that you're working on right now, it comes out that some of the disruption that's caused by contracting out various parts of your system will cause further difficulties, will that be part of the factor in saying a final no? I note in, you know, the last part of your request for proposal it gives absolute discretion to government to say, well this is a very nice idea; it's a very nice proposal, but given all of the factors here, we're not going to do this. So you know, I appreciate that's in there, but will this whole discussion of having a team of people working in Corrections and Policing

and Justice, will that be a factor as well?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — We're going to take into account all factors and everyone we can possibly think of, and as was said earlier is that no decision has been made on this. So we're going to take into account all the factors and make the best possible decision for our facilities. And you know, one may cause a problem. I don't know. We need to focus on the analysis — what's the analysis going to show? — and make the appropriate decision best for our facilities.

Mr. Nilson: — Okay. Well thank you for that explanation of that area. I have another question. It's in a little different spot, and that relates to the whole privatization of ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan] and that land titles system. I don't think the public really knows that it's not the government that owns it anymore or doesn't own all of it. But are there other areas that you will be looking at to do some similar privatization? And perhaps you could give us a distant early warning about it.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — There's no plan at this point in time in terms of privatization of any other services, at least in Justice or Corrections.

Mr. Nilson: — Okay. Are there any other services that make money?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — There's nothing within the Ministry of Justice that returns a net amount to the GRF [General Revenue Fund]. I'm not sure if that answers your question. Certainly we had some discussions the last time we were in committee about Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority, and I think you're aware that that certainly returns funds to the GRF. But as far as Justice programs are concerned, there'd be no net benefit to the GRF.

Mr. Nilson: — And I'm assuming with that answer then, there's no consideration of creating a private corporation to do the financial services of monitoring?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — No.

Mr. Nilson: — No. Okay. Thank you for that. I know talking to American colleagues in various states — Texas, California, Arizona — corrections is a big money-maker for corporations, and they like to get governments to contract with them and give guarantees of occupancy. You know, I'm not sure if that discussion is part of this review that we've heard about or if it's just the various small pieces. Perhaps you could give us some assurance about that.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — There's absolutely no plan to contract out the operation of prison services like the Americans or in any way. Please. This is about food services, one area. We're aligning our resources so that we can deliver better service to the inmates and the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you. I appreciate that response, and I was hoping that that was what the response was, so that's good.

I don't have much time left here, but one question that I have relates to court structures. I know you've built a number of new

courthouses, and they have lots of technology in them, and there's a fair bit of innovation in space. But I mean are we getting to a point where we're going to basically not have that many trials and hearings, or do them in another way or do them through video in the jails? We build such nice new jails, you can handle a lot of that issue around court appearances over the video stuff. And I'm just wondering if there's money in here that relates to those kind of 21st century or even more into the future ways of handling a number of the criminal justice issues which are very expensive because of the monitoring and transfer of people?

[16:00]

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well as you'll see in the budget, there is certainly a continued expansion in the use of video court in correctional centres and in Provincial Court facilities, and certainly that creates more efficiencies within the system. If we don't have . . . On a prisoner transport perspective, there's not as much expense, and it certainly creates some efficiencies within the system. You'll also know that we're piloting an e-ticketing process with the RCMP in a couple of jurisdictions, and we think that that's going to certainly create a lot of efficiencies within the system in terms of writing and processing traffic tickets at roadside, and we hope to see that expand to a number of other police jurisdictions. But certainly the continued expansion of video court in Saskatchewan I think is good, and we'll continue to work on that.

Mr. Nilson: — Okay. So the e-ticket business, is that like what happened to me in Spain where the guy takes your credit card and you pay for the \$50 right at the corner where you turned left on the wrong red light?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — The process really involves the use of the technology that's on your driver's licence. They'll be able to swipe your driver's licence. The screen then populates with all the basic information about you or me, and then they can pick from a drop-down menu the offences. And then that gets processed right in the car, a ticket gets printed, and then it goes right into court services and the Provincial Court for processing. And there's no pay on site.

Mr. Nilson: — But are you going to look at that? I mean it's very common in other parts of the world, so I mean it would save our friend, Mr. McNabb, a lot of work.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — It certainly isn't something that we're continuing to look at. Perhaps the system's capable of doing that, but it's not something that we've given any consideration to at this point in time.

Mr. Nilson: — Well I think if you can pay for your meal at the table as opposed to at the till, you can probably pay this other way. But okay. Well that's fine. I'm not sure what your deadline . . . I've got maybe another minute or two?

The Chair: — We've actually got 10 as the allotted time.

Mr. Nilson: — Oh, okay. Okay. Well thank you. I wasn't sure what . . . So in that area there is some planning as far as even more innovation and technology. Are there actual dollars to go with that yet, or is it an area where you have to move very

slowly?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — In the budget there's just over \$1.6 million for video courts — \$300,000 for the courts, and almost 1.4 for Corrections. But I can tell you that there has been some dialogue with officials from the province of Manitoba to see what they're doing from a technology perspective to see if there is anything that we can use.

Certainly there's no additional funds in this budget to implement anything further than what's in the budget. But you know, technology's moving very quickly in all areas of government, and certainly it's something we need to continue to look at and continue to analyze, but we know that we'll see lots of benefits from the investments that we're making in video court especially.

Mr. Nilson: — So I think last week we heard that there's another 17 years on the RCMP contract, or something like that. That's not a major issue on the ground. My question relates to whether there are any discussions on a national basis around reorganizing the RCMP that would actually affect how we do our policing now. And it just seems like you get discussions about that, given some of the, well very traditional ways that the RCMP has operated.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — No, not as far as our provincial service agreement with the RCMP is concerned.

Mr. Nilson: — Okay. But I assume the contract has methods and ways of dealing with changes like that that might be big on our side or on their side.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Every five years it's reviewed, but annually we meet with the RCMP, ensuring that the priorities identified are in line with the RCMP, the government, and the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Nilson: — Okay, so another couple of years there'll be another, the first review on the 20-year agreement which . . . That seems very reasonable.

I think last week you gave a little bit of a review of the new court structures that are available, the therapeutic courts and the . . . I know, I mean we hear good things about them. I guess that would be what I would say. My question is, are these projects like sort of that might have a term limit on them or are they becoming an actual part of the system?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — We're certainly, on a continual basis, assessing the effectiveness of our therapeutic courts. There is certainly no plan within the ministry to discontinue any of the therapeutic courts, but we'll certainly continue to assess their effectiveness. We have seen some very positive, some very good results as a result of the work that's being done and the service that they're providing, but in answer to your specific question there's certainly no intention of discontinuing any of the therapeutic courts that we have in place.

Mr. Nilson: — Okay. Thank you for that. A few years ago, it's either I think two years ago or three years ago, there was a change made to *The Provincial Court Act* around the power — well I don't know if that's the right word — the authority of the

Chief Justice to assign judges to various courts and there was some concern about it from within ranks of the legal profession at the time that it happened. And part of it related I think to the court delays in criminal cases, and they wanted to assign more of the judges to handle criminal cases. I'm wondering if there has actually been the necessity to use that power which was given at that time or whether it's really a non-issue.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — We have, as I think I mentioned the last time we were in committee, I receive a report from the chief judge on a regular basis of the Provincial Court with respect to time-to-trial delays. And where the chief judge sees an issue with time to trial, certainly has the ability to redirect resources at the Provincial Court to those areas to help resolve those time-to-trial issues. So certainly within her role as the chief judge, she has flexibility to do that. I hope that answers your question.

Mr. Nilson: — No, it doesn't answer my question because the issue was that people that had been appointed to a specific role in the Provincial Court were all of sudden subject to being moved around in ways they hadn't planned, and I just wondered whether that's been an issue or not.

Mr. Fenwick: — Thank you for the question. Kevin Fenwick, deputy minister of Justice and deputy Attorney General. You're quite correct, as we would expect, that there was a change in the legislation and that there is no formal civil division in Provincial Court any longer. Having said that, there is now, as there was before, one Provincial Court judge sitting in Regina who is doing exclusively civil matters, who is doing small claims. So although the law has changed, there's been no practical change in how the court operates, and we've not heard any difficulties from the court with respect to that particular aspect.

Mr. Nilson: — Okay, thank you. That's the answer I was hoping I'd get, but that's good. Then the courts obviously are functioning fairly well, and I think there's a few vacancies and you're filling them rather regularly, which is good. And as those of us who are a little older hear about the new judges, we don't always know who they are, which is even better because it means that there's a whole new generation of legal leaders within the profession, within the courts.

This is a bit of an interesting question, and I'm not sure if you can answer it or not, but it's for the Minister of Justice. And it's basically the question that has been a conversation with me with some other senior Justice officials who are no longer there, wondering why Justice issues are so far off the front burner of news issues all the time, in that you're really not in the focus of what's happening in the community the way it used to be. Do you have any good answer for that?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well that's a very difficult question to answer. Perhaps it's because of the fact that, you know, things are working quite well with respect to the administration of justice. Certainly the fewer bad news stories there are on the front page of the paper, the better it is for the province of Saskatchewan. So credit to those involved in the judicial system, whether it's the police, prosecution, and the courts for ensuring the proper administration of justice and the proper delivery of judicial services and justice services within the

province. So I'll give them credit for that.

Mr. Nilson: — Well I think the most politic answer would've been to say, well it's the good work of all those that went before us.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — I won't exclude that. So thank you.

Mr. Nilson: — But anyway no, I just wanted to say thank you for the way that you've answered most of my questions. And I accept that there are a few places where you can't give me the answers now, but as a historian, I know I eventually will get access to those documents you won't give now, so we'll find out whether the advice was good or not. But thank you very much for all of your responses, and I look forward to working with you. This process in this committee is a part of making sure that things get better each year, and it's also a place where we find out things that maybe need to be fixed. And so I want to thank the Chair and the committee for providing this forum as well. So thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Nilson. Are there any comments, ministers?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well perhaps I'll just start. Thank you very much for your time. And I want to thank the committee for their work, Hansard for their work, Mr. Nilson for your thoughtful questions. I especially want to thank the ministry officials that are here today, not just the deputies but all the other officials that have joined us today. I thank them for all their support and for their ongoing work for the people of Saskatchewan especially and for their support of Minister Tell and I here today. So thank you.

The Chair: — Minister Tell.

[16:15]

Hon. Ms. Tell: — I just want to, before I thank everyone for being in committee today and the officials for being here, I want to follow up, if I could, on food services. And it was a comment that was made by you, member, in relation to the employees.

Let us remember that the employees are a valuable part of our service provided right across the province. We value the people that work in food services across our system and as such . . . and that's demonstrated by the fact that we are working very closely with the affected union to ensure that the employees are well informed as to what we are doing on an ongoing basis. And we also have to remember that the Ministry of Corrections, the people who administer or are in administration within our correctional facilities, are also very well informed as to how to provide food service to the offenders that are serving time. And I just want to make that clear that indeed we place a lot of value on the employees and we place a lot of value on their opinions.

And as we're moving through this process, there's certain things that we must do as government, and this is one of them: aligning our resources and our priorities and looking to the areas that we can redirect, reinvest in ourselves, to affect the outcomes that we all desire.

So I just wanted to, you know, further that a little bit. And with that, I want to thank all of the officials here today. Thank you to the committee. And I look forward to next time. Thank you.

The Chair: — You look forward to next time. Well that's interesting. But thank you, Minister Tell. And thank you to all the officials. The committee will proceed with voting off of the estimates.

The officials are certainly welcome to stay if they like, but there will be no more further questions on this. So if it serves you better in your time, you're certainly welcome to go. So thank you to you all. There's about 27 officials here plus the two ministers. Thank you for all your answers during these proceedings.

The committee will continue now with the voting of the supplements and the estimates. Vote no. 3, Justice, the central management and services, subvote (JU01) in the amount of 48,660,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Courts and civil justice, subvote (JU03) in the amount of 41,925,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Legal and policy services, subvote (JU04) in the amount of \$33,597,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Community safety outcomes, subvote (JU13) in the amount of 16,381,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Community justice, subvote (JU05) in the amount of 20,924,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Boards and commissions, subvote (JU08) in the amount of 28,322,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Custody, supervision and rehabilitation services, subvote (JU06) in the amount of \$158,431,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Policing, subvote (JU09) in the amount of \$190,218,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Saskatchewan Police Commission, subvote (JU12) in the amount of \$1,471,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Major capital projects, subvote (JU11) in the amount of \$37,691,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Non-appropriated expense adjustments in the amount of 1,304,000. Non-appropriated expense adjustments are non-cash adjustments presented for information purposes only, and no amount is to be voted.

Justice, vote 3, in the amount \$577,620,000. I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2015, the following sums for Justice in the amount of \$577,620,000.

Mr. Marchuk.

Mr. Marchuk: — Sure, moved.

The Chair: — Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried. That concludes the estimates on Justice.

General Revenue Fund Government Relations Vote 30

The Chair: — We'll now move to vote 30, Government Relations, central management and services, subvote (GR01) in the amount of \$10,239,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — First Nations and Métis engagement, subvote (GR12) in the amount of \$80,221,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Municipal and northern engagement, subvote (GR07) in the amount of \$363,815,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Saskatchewan Municipal Board, subvote (GR06) in the amount of \$1,753,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Public service, subvote (GR11) in the amount of \$10,159,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Public safety, subvote (GR11) in the amount of \$10,159,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Provincial public safety telecommunications network, subvote (GR13). There's no amount to be voted on. This is for information purposes only. No vote needed.

Non-appropriated expense adjustment in the amount of \$2,583,000. Non-appropriated expenses adjustments are non-cash adjustments presented for information only, and no amount is needed to be voted on.

Government Relations, vote 30 in the amount of \$466,187,000. I would now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2015, the following sums for Government Relations in the amount of \$466,187,000.

The Chair: — Mr. Merriman. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

**General Revenue Fund
Parks, Culture and Sport
Vote 27**

The Chair: — Now for estimates for vote 27, Parks, Culture and Sport. Central management and services, subvote (PC01) in the amount of \$11,436,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Community Initiatives Fund, subvote (PC06) in the amount of \$9,316,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Building communities, subvote (PC11) in the amount of \$468,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Parks, subvote (PC12) in the amount of \$31,576,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Culture, subvote (PC03) in the amount of \$31,775,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Heritage, subvote (PC07) in the amount of \$9,542,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Sport, recreation and stewardship, subvote (PC15) in the amount of \$4,298,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Regina stadium project, subvote (PC16) in the amount of \$50,000,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Provincial Capital Commission, subvote (PC17) in the amount of \$5,841,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Non-appropriated expense adjustment in the amount of \$3,886,000. This is for information purposes only, and no amount is to be voted.

Parks, Culture and Sport, vote no. 27 in the amount of \$154,252,000. I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2015, the following sums for Parks, Culture and Sport in the amount of \$154,252,000.

Mr. Tochor. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried.

**General Revenue Fund
Supplementary Estimates — March
Government Relations
Vote 30**

The Chair: — We will now continue on with the supplementary estimates, vote no. 30, Government Relations, First Nations and Métis agreement, subvote (GR12) in the amount of \$4,678,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Municipal and northern engagement, subvote (GR07) in the amount of \$491,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Public safety, subvote (GR11) in the amount of \$1,528,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Government Relations, vote 30 in the amount of \$6,697,000. I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2014, the following sums for Government Relations in the amount of \$6,697,000.

Mr. Huyghebaert. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That concludes the estimates and supplementary estimates.

Now we have a motion to present the report to the Assembly, the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice sixth report. Committee members, you have before you a draft of the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice. We require a member to move the following motion:

That the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice be adopted and presented to the Assembly.

Mr. Phillips: — I would so move.

The Chair: — Mr. Phillips so moves. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Thank you, committee members, that concludes our work for today. I would entertain a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Marchuk: — So moved.

The Chair: — Mr. Marchuk so moves. Do we need a vote on that? All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[The committee adjourned at 16:29.]