

April 25, 1986

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

# PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING, SELECT, AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**Clerk Assistant:** — Mr. Koskie, from the Special Committee on Regulations, presents the fifth report of the committee, which is as follows.

Your committee has undertaken an initial review of 1985 regulations and 1985 professional by-laws. Your committee has been presented with supplementary information enabling it to reconsider 22 regulations and 14 by-laws from 1981 through 1984 specifically drawn to its attention by counsel. Your committee needs to review seven regulations and nine by-laws in order to complete its business to December 31, 1985, and is vigorously pursuing all issues raised by counsel outstanding since 1982. No impediments exist at this time that might restrict the committee's ability to fulfil its mandate.

In accordance with its terms of reference, your committee has reviewed the by-laws and amendments to by-laws of the professional associations to ensure that each has proper legislative authority and is in the public's interest.

The committee also considered further responses from the appropriate department or association to nine matters outstanding from its 24th meeting of this current legislature.

The committee reserves ratification on the following by-laws, pending satisfactory resolution of the committee's concerns:

From sessional paper no. 35 of 1981-82, the following: the Saskatchewan Association of Architects.

From sessional paper no. 59 of 1983-84, the following: the Saskatchewan Association of Chiropodists; the Certified General Accountants' Association of Saskatchewan; the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association; and the Rural Municipal Administrators' Association.

From sessional paper no. 16 of 1984-85-86, the following: the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation; The Law Society of Saskatchewan; the Saskatchewan Pharmaceutical Association; The Chiropactors' Association of Saskatchewan.

Your committee recommends that the by-laws, regulations and amendments of the following professional associations be ratified and confirmed by the Assembly:

From sessional paper no. 59 of 1983-84, the following: The Saskatchewan Psychological Association.

From sessional paper no. 16 of 1984-85-86, the following: The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Saskatchewan; The Saskatchewan Funeral Service Association.

The committee will be focusing its attention on the following regulations and by-laws arising out of the addenda to sessional paper no. 2 of 1986: The Physical Therapists Amendment Regulations; the Saskatchewan Association of Architects; the College of Physicians and Surgeons; the Saskatchewan League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents; the Association of Professional Engineers; The Institute of Chartered Accountants; Regulations under the Dental Professions Act (1978); The Law Society of Saskatchewan; The Ophthalmic Dispensers Amendment Regulations, 1985; the Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists; the Saskatchewan Pharmaceutical Association; The Saskatchewan Psychological Association; the Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member for Biggar:

That the fifth report of the Special Committee on Regulations be now concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Engel:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of our leader, the member for Regina Elphinstone, who is unable to be present today — and he extends his regrets to the students — I am privileged to introduce 12 young people from the Maranatha Christian Academy here in Regina. These students are currently enrolled in grades 9 to 12 and it's an Accredited Christian Education school, informally called ACE. They are accompanied by their instructor, Mr. Todd Harrison. I'm looking forward to meeting with you for drinks and pictures at about 11, and I think we'll have a very interesting discussion. Send me a note when you're ready, okay?

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

**Mrs. Caswell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to welcome the students from Maranatha Christian Academy. My brother, Donald White, was one of the founding members of this school and did the law work for them. My children go to a similar school as theirs, and we work together with this group. So on behalf of my family, who has been involved in private education such as Maranatha, I would like to welcome these students as well.

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

**Mr. Hopfner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a very rare occasion I get to stand in this Assembly, because of the distance I am from Regina, to introduce guests, but unfortunately these guests are not from my riding, Mr.

Speaker. These guests are from my good friend and colleague's, the member from Wilkie, riding. I would like to introduce to you, Mr. Speaker, and through you to this Assembly, a group of grade 8 students from the St. George School, in Wilkie, Saskatchewan.

Now that's quite a distance to travel, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to welcome the people that have taken the trouble to get here to this Assembly. I would like to introduce to you, Mr. Speaker, the teacher, Mr. B. Merkosky, and the chaperon, Mr. D. Wilgenbusch — is that it? I hope I pronounced it right — and the bus driver, Mr. D. Huber. I would ask all members of this Assembly to please welcome them here.

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

**Mr. Baker:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you, and through you to my colleagues, 12 grade 10, 11, and 12 students from Sonningdale High School. They are accompanied by their teacher Art Klassen and Faith Struhan. Their chaperons are Glenna Klassen and Ernie Struhan.

And, Mr. Speaker, there's a special request that if you have a moment that this group would like to have you, when we meet at 11:30, would appreciate it if you have the time to come and visit with them.

I would ask all members to give them a big, warm welcome.

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

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Saskatchewan's Migration Record

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to address a question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, you may be aware that Statistics Canada has already reported that Saskatchewan had the worst net migration record in Canada last year — 6,000 more people moved out of the province than moved in. But I ask the Premier: is he aware that this trend is worsening in the first three months of this year? Are you aware that between January and March of this year about 8,500 people moved out of Saskatchewan while less than 3,500 moved in, for a net loss of more than 5,000 people? Are you aware of this situation, Mr. Premier?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm aware that the population for the first time in Saskatchewan's history is in excess of a million people, and that has happened since 1982. And I'm also aware, Mr. Speaker, that the statistics that the hon. member uses are both seasonal and cyclical. So if you put the two of them together and you watch them again. I want the children in this legislature to watch that individual, Mr. Speaker. As I answer the question, I want all the children here and across Saskatchewan to watch the NDP, how they respond in question period.

Mr. Speaker, our population is up over a million people. It's the first time in history that it's over a million people.

We will have seasonal variations when you'll have people moving in and moving out. Mr. Speaker, I expect Saskatchewan's population to grow in the future as it has in the past, and to grow much more quickly under a government that is open to allow provinces to come in here than it would be under administration that said, no, we'll nationalize you and you can go some place else. We're open, Mr. Speaker. We've invited children and people home, and they're happy to come and stay in Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, our population is over the million mark, first time in its history.

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

**Mr. Koskie:** — Is the Premier aware that his government's own figures show nearly three times as many families leaving Saskatchewan today as are moving in? Is he aware that between January and March this year more than 1,600 families moved out of Saskatchewan while less than 600 moved in? Are you aware at what is happening here under your economic mismanagement?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, the potential for new job creation, the activity in new job creation in Saskatchewan, will rank with any province in western Canada, and he knows that. And, Mr. Speaker, the unemployment levels in the province of Saskatchewan over the last four years have beat anybody in Canada. As a result, Mr. Speaker, we see our population growing to well over a million people, and it never did that under a previous administration.

And, Mr. Speaker, we know very well that the people in the province of Saskatchewan and outside the province of Saskatchewan are excited about the building of upgraders, are excited about the building of paper plants, excited about new processing activities, new fertilizer activities, power projects — something like 5 to \$10 billion worth of new projects.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'll compare the projects and the employment record and the economic activity, the rate of inflation, the rate of interest, the rate of protection on mortgages, to any jurisdiction in Canada. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the fact that in the province of Saskatchewan our population is well over a million. The member opposite can take a month-to-month figure and say, well for Heaven's sake, there's been a net decline. Overall, Mr. Speaker, year after year our population is going up, and we're proud of it.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Further supplement to the Premier. Is the Premier aware that nearly half of those people that are leaving the province today are young people in their 30s, 20s. Is the Premier aware that his government's own figures show that more than 3,000 people between the ages of 20 and 30 moved out of Saskatchewan the first three months — a drain of our young people from Saskatchewan. I ask you: can you explain that development and what economic steps are you taking to rectify it? And talking . . . I'll leave it at that.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member asks what economic steps we're taking to address this . . .

**An Hon. Member:** No.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — That's what he asked. Mr. Speaker, I can have him read the same question over again. He asked what economic steps I'm taking to correct the matter.

Now my response to that, Mr. Speaker, is that I would certainly appreciate the support of the opposition, the opposition in this legislature, to build projects that create jobs, projects like Weyerhaeuser Canada building a brand-new paper-mill. That's 300 jobs. They're against that. And I would like to have their support so that we know that that will be there for sure.

I would like to have the opposition's support for a brand-new bacon processing plant in North Battleford, but they're against that. I would like to have their support for a rural gas distribution system so that we can provide those jobs and economic activity and lower the costs of living in the province. That's the kinds of things that we're doing, and I would like to have the opposition's support to create those jobs.

I would like to have the opposition's support to create the upgraders, both in Regina and Lloydminster, or to put together a new fertilizer plant. Those are the kinds of economic things that we're doing in the province of Saskatchewan to encourage people to live and work here.

I would like to have your support for the tax cuts, taking the tax off clothes in the province of Saskatchewan, taking the tax off gasoline, taking the tax off utilities. I would like to have your support to do that to make people comfortable here in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, he asked what economic things we're doing to change it, and I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, here are the list of them, and, Mr. Speaker . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please. It's impossible to hear when the members holler the way they are this morning. I would just ask for order.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — I just reiterate. There are many economic projects, and I would appreciate the support of the opposition to build these projects so that we can have the economic activity and the jobs, which would encourage people both to stay and to move into Saskatchewan because it's a good place and a great place for your future.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Final supplemental. I wonder if the Premier could indicate how many jobs have been created by that non-existent fertilizer plant that you're talking about. I think the only fertilizer that we know of is what's coming from the other side.

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, the member asked me how many jobs have been created by a new project that we just signed. Well isn't that the idea? Isn't that the idea, Mr. Speaker, that we would put together a project to build into the future? I mean they can only live in the past. I mean you're living in the past. The future belongs to those that can have some vision and that can look into the future.

Mr. Speaker, we have created 17,000 new jobs in just recent months — brand-new jobs, Mr. Speaker. And when we want to create new projects, they're against it. Well, Mr. Speaker, I say that we have created jobs in the projects that we have already created. We will create jobs on new projects, and I would only request . . . I mean it would be a simple thing for the opposition to do to support the new projects so that we can create more jobs rather than just being doom and gloom and negative all the time.

### Highway Maintenance

**Mr. Lusney:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Highways. Mr. Minister, yesterday you issued a province-wide press release proclaiming May as car care month in Saskatchewan. Mr. Minister, in that press release, and I quote, you say that we must call you as much as we can to ensure the safety of the travelling public.

Well, Mr. Minister, in light of the fact that you have issued this proclamation, will you now do your part and at least repair some of the highways, deteriorating highways, in this province?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't really understand whether the member opposite is complaining about a very, very good program that is endorsed by the National Safety Council, a group of people who have gotten together to encourage people to take good care of their vehicles. If you are complaining about that, that's certainly your prerogative. If you're complaining about the condition of our roads, we did announce a \$100.6 million capital construction program just a week ago.

**Mr. Lusney:** — Mr. Minister, you can make all the press releases and speeches that you like, but on behalf of the contractors of this province are making it very clear that this government is not capable of building or repairing the roads that are required in this province.

The latest study from the Canadian Construction Association shows that this government is underfunding highway construction by at least 20 per cent, Mr. Minister. That is what they are saying. They also say that Saskatchewan motorists pay an additional \$119 a year in fuel and repair costs because of the condition of our highways. That's what the construction association is saying, Mr. Minister.

When are you going to do something about this problem? When are you going to get ahead with the job of building some roads in this province so people wouldn't be wrecking their cars on them?

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I've already stated that just a week ago or thereabouts we announced a very, very major capital construction program for this province — \$100.6 million in new capital construction. I can also tell the members opposite that an increase in maintenance and rehabilitation to the highways of our province, we increased the expenditures 4.3 per cent this year.

And I do believe that in those types of dollars, when you look at the entire budget of the Department of Highways, something in excess of \$213 million, that that is definite improvement to our highways. And those dollars will be spent in a very, very judicious manner and will indeed improve the quality of our highways.

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

**Mr. Lusney:** — Question to the minister. Mr. Minister, we've heard that story for four years, and I think the public of Saskatchewan isn't believing that when we look at the highways that we have to drive on today.

Mr. Minister, don't you think that rather than issuing the press release you did yesterday, that maybe you should have proclaimed May as "Fill some pot-holes in Saskatchewan month"? Maybe that would do a lot more for car care in Saskatchewan than the issue that you did release.

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

**Hon. Mr. Hodgins:** — Mr. Speaker, the type of news release that the member opposite purported that we should be releasing would be exactly the type of nonsense that the former administration would perpetrate. That news release, my friends, was a very, very good news release. It's a very, very good organization that is engaged in advising the public to take good care of their motor vehicles, to ensure safety in this province, which is something that this government is very, very committed to.

Now if the members opposite are not committed to taking good care of their vehicles and are not committed to safety improvements and safety as a high priority, that's certainly your prerogative. But this government is indeed very, very committed to safety on our highways, and if we can endorse any programs whatsoever that will keep Saskatchewan motorists more safe, this government will be in the business of doing that.

#### Query Regarding Absent Member

**Mr. Lusney:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister and Mr. Speaker, it's obvious that this minister is not much different than the former minister. My question is directed to the Premier of this province.

Mr. Premier, I have a question regarding the former minister. We've had a number of complaints come to our office regarding the member for Wilkie, who, if you look at the time — it's about day 28 of this new session — and the minister, to the best of my knowledge — or the former minister of Highways, has not been in this House once during that period.

Can you tell the taxpayers of this province, Mr. Premier, and the taxpayers of Wilkie constituency, the people that he's supposed to be representing, why the member for Wilkie has not been in this House once during this new session?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I know when

members, at least on this side of the House, when they're not in the legislature, they're working for their constituents at home in their constituency, and that, Mr. Speaker, is precisely what they're doing.

**Mr. Lusney:** — Supplementary, Mr. Premier. Is there some special circumstances that would prevent this member for Wilkie from attending this House at least once, and doing the duties that he is supposed to be doing in this House — at least once in this session?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, people in this House — there's 64 members — they come and they go. Some are here one time, and some are here at other times. But the member from Wilkie met with the Minister of Health, for example, in his riding just last week to review senior housing accommodations and so forth. He's working in his riding which, I suspect, is the kind of thing people like to see done. And he may drop into the legislature, Mr. Speaker, as the member from Canora and Pelly may drop into the legislature from time to time. So I suppose the next time you're out of the legislature, I can ask the Leader of the Opposition, well, where is this gentleman?

I mean, Mr. Speaker, people work in the legislature and they work in their ridings; they do both.

**Mr. Lusney:** — New question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, 28 days of the session and not once did this member appear in this House. And you can say he's working in the constituency or wherever; I don't know where he is, and the people from Wilkie don't know where he is. Can you tell the people of Saskatchewan and the people of Wilkie if this member is currently a resident of Saskatchewan, or has he moved out of the province?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, the member of the legislature for Wilkie is working in his riding. He's meeting with reeves; he's meeting with hospital board members; he meets with farmers; he meets with the public; he consults with the ministers. I've met with him myself. He's working and living in the province of Saskatchewan, in his riding. And I think it's fair to say that the people of Wilkie will decide, Mr. Speaker, whether there's representation and good representation, and, Mr. Speaker, they will. So he can have the responsibility to work in the riding, work in dealing with people, coming back and talking to the cabinet ministers, talking to me, and he can be in the legislature; he can be both. I mean you know that as well as I do.

**Mr. Lusney:** — Well, Mr. Premier, it appears that your member is either unwilling or unable to do his duties as a member of this House and as an MLA for the constituency of Wilkie. There is some rumour that he's even taken up residence outside this province. I don't know if that's true or not.

But, Mr. Minister, since he hasn't appeared in this House once in this session — and there's really no excuse for that, 28 sitting days and not once did he appear in this House — can you inform this Assembly, Mr. Premier, as to whether this MLA has been continuing to get his salary and his allowance and whatever other payments he may have been getting? Can you inform us if he has been getting all of the payments that come to an MLA, and

whether you think that he is justified in getting those payments when he clearly neglected to do any of his duties in this Assembly?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I mean question period is designed for important issues of the day, whether it's jobs or agriculture or health care and so forth. And the NDP go back and they say, well, I mean they want to know how many jelly beans crop insurance may have bought, and they want to know how many days that somebody from a constituency either is in the legislature or if he's working at home. If a member is working at home, Mr. Speaker, that's where people want to see him. I mean it's surprising, Mr. Speaker, that the NDP — and then when you answer they don't listen; they don't listen.

I want the public . . . the public should be able to look at them hollering and screaming and clucking on the other side. You don't want to have an answer. When we do have an . . . Look it, Mr. Speaker, I want the public of Saskatchewan to listen to the NDP. Listen to the kind of questions. They have no respect for the legislature; they have no respect for principle; they have no respect for the public; they have no respect for public employees . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please. Order.

**Mr. Lusney:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, I asked you a straightforward, simple question, and you refuse to answer it. It displays clearly the arrogance of this government when they refuse to tell the public — and I'm sure you would agree, Mr. Premier, would you not? — that the public should know why any member of this Assembly refuses to attend a sitting of this Assembly when this House is in session. Do you not agree that the public should be at least told why this is happening? And I can name you a few other names of that Assembly, or of that side of the House, that haven't been attending this session.

Now, Mr. Premier, would you at this point tell the public why this member from Wilkie refused to attend, not one day in this session, and why he should be expected to receive the money that is being paid by taxpayers of this province for being a member of this House?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, the opposition is saying that a member of the legislature can't have his constituency office and work in his constituency, and he can't do that. I mean that's what you're saying, that you shouldn't be with it.

You know, that's the reason you lost the last election — that you weren't with the people. You thought the whole world revolved around being in Regina. Well I'll tell you what the people of Saskatchewan know. They appreciate MLAs, men and women, who will be in the constituency office and deal with problems and who will be close to farmers, close to business, close to young people, close to those that want to build hospitals — and not, Mr. Speaker, just say that they're going to be in Regina running all over.

You lost every rural riding but four in the last election because you wouldn't stay at home and work. And Mr. Speaker, I venture to say that you might lose every single, solitary, rural riding in the next election in Saskatchewan

because of your attitude.

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

**Mr. Lusney:** — Question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, you are trying to tell the people of Saskatchewan that a member of this Assembly, an elected MLA, has no responsibility to appear in this House at all during the session. What you are telling them, then, is that it is not important to be in the session and to discuss the policies of the government or the expenditures of it on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan. You are saying a member can sit at home and not even worry about coming to Regina. I don't think people will believe that. People, Mr. Premier, I think will agree that you are here, and every one of us is here, to look after their affairs. And they expect us to be here when that session is on. When it isn't on . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, please. The member is making statements but not asking questions. If the member has a question, I'd like to hear the question.

**Mr. Lusney:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, do you not agree that the member for Wilkie has the responsibility to be in this House to look after the affairs of his constituency? And if you think that that is not true, Mr. Premier, being in here four years where your term is up, will you not call the election and give the people of Saskatchewan the opportunity to decide what kind of members they want in the province of Saskatchewan?

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I will call an election in Saskatchewan, and the people will decide, and the people are always right. But if I was the opposition, I wouldn't bet too much money on them either winning Wilkie or the Pelly constituency.

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

### Commercial Bingo Inquiry

**Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you. I have a question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. In May of last year you announced a public inquiry into the operations of commercial bingo halls in Saskatchewan. The three-member board of inquiry held public hearings last fall, and the terms of reference you published called for a final report from them by December 31, 1985. Did the bingo inquiry meet that deadline and, if so, will your government be shortly introducing changes in the legislation or the regulations governing the operation of commercial bingo halls.

**Hon. Mrs. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, I find the question from the member opposite rather humorous because last year when the bingo inquiry was announced, the whole bunch of them over there were ridiculing my department for calling such an inquiry.

As far as the December 31st deadline, it was extended because of the overwhelming — Mr. Speaker, the overwhelming — response from the public. I have received the inquiry . . . the report with its recommendations. It is an extremely complex, large report, Mr. Speaker. We are dealing with it in the

department, and hopefully I will be taking it to cabinet in the near future.

**Mr. Shillington:** — Supplementary, Madam Minister, have you received the report?

**Hon. Mrs. Duncan:** — Honestly, Mr. Speaker, they ask questions and they don't bother listening to the answers. I said I have received the report; the department is dealing with it, and hopefully I will take it to cabinet shortly. I might also inform the member that there was over 700 oral and written submissions. That shows the interest throughout the province into the area of bingo.

**Mr. Shillington:** — Madam Minister, will you make that report public?

**Hon. Mrs. Duncan:** — Yes, in due course.

**Mr. Shillington:** — Madam Minister, when will you be making the report public and, more important, to those people who were naive enough to take you seriously when you said you were concerned about it, when will you be acting upon that report and doing something about the serious problems that exist with respect to commercial bingo halls?

**Hon. Mrs. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe that the member opposite is a lawyer. I informed him that in due course the inquiry and all its findings and all its recommendations will be made public. This is a very serious matter that we are dealing with, and my department takes this inquiry, the recommendations of the panel, the recommendations that they gathered throughout the province, very, very seriously. The inquiry will be made public as soon as cabinet has had a chance to peruse it.

**Mr. Shillington:** — Madam Minister, will you be bringing legislative changes to the current legislative session?

**Hon. Mrs. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, we are reviewing the recommendations. I believe there's 36 recommendations made by the commission. We are reviewing them to see how they will impact on existing operations, how they will impact on the various clubs and charities that access bingo moneys, and I don't want to say what we will or will not do with it. It hasn't been discussed by cabinet, and I'll wait till then.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### Bill No. 30 — An Act respecting a Livestock Facilities Tax Credit

**Hon. Mr. Devine:** — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill respecting a Livestock Facilities Tax Credit.

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. 1 — An Act respecting the Establishment and Operation of the Wascana Rehabilitation Centre for the Provision of Rehabilitation and Extended Care Services in Saskatchewan

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to explain this Bill. In September of 1984 a board of governors was appointed under The Public Health Act to oversee the development of the new Wascana Rehabilitation Centre in Regina. The official sod turning for the project was held last October, and construction is now well under way on the site of the existing Wascana Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, the new facility will not simply represent an expansion and upgrading of Wascana Hospital. The project will result in the establishment of a brand-new \$50 million rehabilitation centre offering a comprehensive range of rehabilitation services and the most up-to-date facilities. It will have some aspects of a hospital and some aspects of an extended care facility. But it will go well beyond these and will be unique among all health care facilities in Saskatchewan.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, it is important to establish a clear and separate legislative base for the operation of this comprehensive rehabilitation centre. And that is what this Bill accomplishes, Mr. Speaker. It provides for a board to operate the centre and sets out its powers and responsibilities, and it includes the other provisions necessary for the effective administration of the facilities and programs that the center will offer.

Mr. Speaker, the Wascana Rehabilitation Centre is a reflection of this government's commitment to ensuring that Saskatchewan has the best health care system in Canada. It reflects our commitment to the steady development of new facilities needed to deliver quality health care services to the people of this province, and it reflects the fact that we just don't talk about health care, but we get on with the job of providing it.

Mr. Speaker, the Wascana Rehabilitation Centre will be a major and valuable addition to health care services in Saskatchewan, and I am therefore pleased to move second reading of this Bill.

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

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A few brief comments before I adjourn the Bill, so that we can consider the remarks of the minister and consult others who may be interested in this legislation.

I do want to say before I adjourn, though, that this Bill does highlight some concerns that we have been expressing in this legislature, not because the Bill establishes a new board for the Wascana Rehabilitation Centre. That obviously is something that would have to be done, or you could have had the previous legislation do exactly the same function. The Bill probably was not necessary to do that. But nevertheless, it is not in itself a Bill that I think anyone could object to, but we think that the public should have an opportunity to take a look at the remarks that the minister has made, and the legislation itself in light of his remarks.

The thing that the Bill highlights, Mr. Speaker, is the whole question of the procrastination of this government with respect to rehabilitation. In 1982 I will remind you, Mr. Speaker, and the House, there was a new rehabilitation centre that was about to be built. It had a board that was administering it. It all was ready. The designs were there. And this government, Mr. Speaker, cancelled it.

So instead of having a Bill in 1986 — into the fifth term of this government — to establish a new board, what we should be having is a new building. And I really think that it is the legacy of this government that is in question with this legislation; the legacy of procrastination for four years; the legacy of working around election cycles — and I think that that's unfortunate. Working around election cycles does not provide very good planning and provision of facilities and services the people should have on an ongoing basis. What is even worse, Mr. Speaker, is that they don't even know when they want to have an election. And so when you plan against an election that you don't even know when you're going to call, it is even more unfortunate.

Mr. Speaker, we have had, from this government, buildings built but no staff to do the work in them. Time and time again this has brought by our attention by nurses and others. Now we have a legislation provided here today, with the Minister's brief remarks, in which we have a Bill to establish a board that doesn't even have a building. So they've heard the criticism the other way; now they've reversed it around and they're going completely the other way around in an opposite direction.

And I think, Mr. Speaker, that those kinds of things have to be considered when we consider legislation that is brought in only after this government has decided that it is too afraid to call an election and is going longer than ever in history . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — The item that's being debated here is second reading of a Bill, and whether or not there's an election has very little to do with the Bill itself. I would ask the member to stay on the subject.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — I thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't disagree with you that whether there's going to be an election has an effect on the Bill or not. But the principle of the Bill also involves the principle of the actions of this government. And the principles of the actions of this government, with respect to this Bill and Bills like it, is simply that their legislation and their programming, being neglected for four years, now is coming four years late.

And I am suggesting to you, Mr. Speaker, that if this government had acted appropriately and responsibly four years ago, we should have been considering this Bill four years ago because everything was in place to have it proceed. This Bill is four years late. People have suffered because they have not had adequate rehabilitation services, and now on the eve of an election we see this legislation to try to bail out the minister and his government. That's the point I want to make here today.

(1045)

Because that's what the people of Saskatchewan are telling us as we travel around this province. And so, Mr. Speaker, I don't want to take a great deal of time on my opening remarks, and I know that my colleague, the Health critic, the member from Shaunavon, is going to have other things that he will want to say. So at this time I would like to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

#### **Bill No. 4 — An Act respecting Small Claims in the Provincial Court of Saskatchewan**

**Hon. Mr. Dutchak:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise to move second reading of The Small Claims Act. The existing small claims enforcement Act permits most matters involving less than \$3,000 to be heard in the provincial court. The advantages of this procedure are obvious. The parties are not put to the expense of a trial in the superior court. Procedure in the small claims court is informal. The parties do not require a lawyer. The higher courts do not become clogged with minor cases.

Existence of the small claims procedure has been extremely successful, but those who are involved in the administration of the court and those who use it extensively have pointed out improvements that could be made. The new Act is a result of experience with existing procedures. The new legislation maintains the original goals of the existing Act. It also clarifies ambiguities in procedure and jurisdiction of the court and simplifies procedures.

The new major initiative in the Act is to allow default judgement in small claims court where the claim is to satisfy a debt or for a specific sum capable of calculation. The introduction of a default judgement system will result in a considerable number of matters which are presently litigated in the Queen's Bench court being handled instead in small claims court.

To ensure that the court remains quite informal and the parties' case does not fail for solely technical reasons, the judge is given broad powers to amend any defect or error in the proceedings. He is also given the discretion to adopt and apply other procedures, providing that they are not inconsistent with the terms of the Act.

This Act broadens the authority of the court with respect to disposing of cases in a similar fashion in situations where circumstances warrant. In addition, litigants will be better served by the expanded provisions respecting service by registered mail on corporations, on the Crown, on municipalities, and on a party's lawyer. Moreover, the judge is expressly given the authority to make an order for substitutional service or service by advertisement, if he is satisfied that a reasonable effort has been made to locate the defendant, but the defendant cannot be found or is evading service, for that matter.

The provincial court judges' association has had extensive input into this legislation. Comment was also received from the Queen's Bench judges and court officials, who were able to identify many areas requiring

fine tuning. Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act respecting Small Claims in the Provincial Court of Saskatchewan.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We certainly agree with the general principles as set out, as established in The Small Claims Act. Certainly it allows the individual citizen access to the court, decreasing the amount of formality, and any steps to further enhance and improve that facility to the people is indeed welcomed.

I want to take a look at the remarks of the minister. I am pleased that he has indicated that there has been some input in respect to introducing the amendments. However, we want to have a further look at his comments and to determine whether any amendments are required. I think in principle we will be certainly supporting the initiation here by the minister. So at this time I would beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

**Bill No. 5 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Small Claims Act**

**Hon. Mr. Dutchak:** — Mr. Speaker, The Small Claims Consequential Amendment Act is a companion to The Small Claims Act. The consequential Act has the effect of changing reference from The Small Claims Enforcement Act to The Small Claims Act in several Saskatchewan statutes.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of the Act respecting the Consequential Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Small Claims Act.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Mr. Speaker, as the minister has indicated, this is a consequential amendment as a result of the previous Bill, Bill No. 4, and it would be appropriate to deal with at the same time in second reading, and therefore I would beg leave to adjourn debate at this time.

Debate adjourned.

**Bill No. 15 — An Act respecting the Application in Saskatchewan of the United Nations Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards**

**Hon. Mr. Dutchak:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise to move second reading of The Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards Act. This legislation is required to implement in this province and in Canada the United Nations convention on the recognition and enforcement of foreign arbitral awards, commonly referred to as the New York Convention.

Before I go into further detail, Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate the significance of this legislation in light of the fact that Saskatchewan is involved in many economic development projects that do involve partners, shareholders who don't live within the province. So clearly as we move towards new economic development projects which we're seeing establish themselves every year in Saskatchewan, this becomes more significant. As

of January 1, 1986, 69 states were parties to the convention. Canada is not yet a party because, for constitutional reasons, legislation is required at both the federal and provincial levels.

In the fall of 1984, the federal government approached each of the provinces and asked whether they supported Canadian accession to the convention, and we're prepared to take the necessary legislative steps for implementation. By 1985, all provinces had responded in the affirmative. All provinces and territories of Canada are committed to introducing implementing legislation. Several provinces have already enacted legislation, and others will undoubtedly follow suit in the very near future.

Once all jurisdictions have passed implementing legislation, the Government of Canada will formally accede to the convention. Canada's interest in implementing this convention is in the field of international trade where Canadian business people often find themselves at a considerable disadvantage in arranging complex foreign transactions because they're unable to avail themselves of the arbitration recognition and enforcement provisions of the convention.

The convention will benefit not only Canadians, but also many trading partners in the United States, Europe, Japan, since arbitration is generally considered a necessary and desirable method of effectively settling business disputes. At the present time it would appear that foreign arbitral awards are not enforceable in Saskatchewan. Implementation of the convention would mean that an arbitral award in a foreign state which is also a party to the convention would be enforceable in the same manner as an award in Saskatchewan.

To improve the effectiveness of the convention, it is desirable to have uniform legislation across the country in this international area. Thus the uniform law conference of Canada draft uniform Bill has served as a model for this Act.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to move second reading of an Act respecting the recognition and enforcement of certain foreign arbitral awards.

**Mr. Koskie:** — Yes, I believe that we will be supporting the principle enunciated by the minister here. We would want some opportunity to look at the comments that he has made, and I would beg leave to adjourn the debate at this time.

Debate adjourned.

**COMMITTEE OF FINANCE**

**Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure  
Urban Affairs  
Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 24**

**Item 1 (continued)**

**Mr. Thompson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I have a number of questions that I want to ask you today in your Urban Affairs estimates. I want to



start off with a special grant that I see has been drastically cut this year, and that is the grant for infrastructure development. I see that you have gone from close to \$1 million, and you've cut it down to \$350,000 this year. I'm talking about subvote 22.

Mr. Minister, could you indicate why this drastic drop from \$918,000 to \$350,000 for infrastructure development?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Mr. Chairman, I want to clarify with the member opposite. Are you referring to subvote 22, operating grant to the town of Uranium City? What particular subvote were you referring to?

**Mr. Thompson:** — It's 22, for infrastructure development.

(1100)

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Mr. Chairman, in my *Estimates* book on page 102, subvote 22 is grants pursuant to The Senior Citizens' Heritage Program Act. Perhaps the member could clarify exactly what he's referring to.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Chairman, while my colleague finds the right book here, I will just ask a couple of questions of the minister.

Mr. Minister, can you tell me what the new mill rate for the city of Saskatoon has been announced for 1986?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — We don't have that information.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Can you tell me whether your officials or you are aware of whether the mill rate in Saskatoon has been set?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — We don't have that information. We're not aware if it has been set yet.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My colleague may have asked last night, but I don't have that information with me, so I'm not sure whether it was handled, but can you tell me what the revenue-sharing grant for the city of Saskatoon will be this year?

Mr. Minister, while you're checking that, I think when my colleague from Regina Centre was asking about revenue sharing to municipalities, you had undertaken to provide a print-out of the grants for this year. I don't know whether you're ready to do that today or whether you need more time, but if it's available I would appreciate it if you would send it over.

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — The Saskatoon figure is \$15,242,059. We'll be sending the information over to you.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Thank you. I appreciate that. It will help us without having, sort of, to waste the time of the committee, if we have it handy.

In the city of Saskatoon, can you tell me what the urban assistance, the capital urban assistance, will provide for the city of Saskatoon in 1986? Urban assistance, the capital, city of Saskatoon. This may be something that's provided through the Department of Highways — you

can correct me, and you might know the answer anyway — but what is the urban assistance; what is the amount of urban assistance in capital provided for the city of Saskatoon in this budget?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — The urban assistance issue is something coming out of the Department of Highways. I think it would be more appropriate to direct your questions to that minister. I'm not sure that all funding decisions have necessarily been made in that regard out of Highways, but I can't speak definitively for them.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — I understand that, because while you were checking for your answer with your officials I did some checking as well. Indeed, it is located in the Department of Highways, and I think it's estimated for 1986 to be \$1.5 million.

Let me turn to the question of transit assistance which is in your department. Can you tell me what the operating grant for transit assistance for the city of Saskatoon is estimated for 1986?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Mr. Chairman, under the formula on transit assistance, I believe Saskatoon would receive the \$4 per capita. As you know, last year the transit assistance increased from \$3 per capita to \$4 per capita. It was a full dollar increase per capita, which was a 33 per cent increase in that transit assistance last year. So under the formula it's \$4 per capita for Saskatoon.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — A quick calculation on my part would indicate that the city of Saskatoon operating grant for transit would probably be about \$960,000. Am I close there?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — I believe we're working off of the 1981 census figures, so I don't believe that the figure is what you suggested, as I don't know what number you're working off of. When the new census figures come in, of course, then we would be utilizing those.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — And when do you expect that?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — It could be that preliminary results may be in by late fall of this year. We don't know.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — That's ... Sorry. Maybe I'm not following. I apologize if I misunderstand something. But are you saying that you have budgeted for transit operating grants to cities for 1986-87? Therefore you must have used some criteria in order to determine how much money to put in the budget, because I know the Department of Finance wouldn't allocate any funds to the Department of Urban Affairs unless you provided them with some evidence to show here is why you're asking for X numbers of dollars. I mean that's just normal management procedures on the part of the Department of Finance. The member from Kindersley will tell you that, as well as I could.

Mr. Minister, how much did you estimate, in dollars, will be going to the city of Saskatoon in operating grants in this fiscal year, which is in these estimates which we are now considering? Very routine question. I'm finding it difficult to understand why it's taking you so long to answer these

questions because this kind of information is always provided in the briefing books which departments normally prepare, and all you've got to do is read the line. It's really unusual that you can't provide the answers.

Okay, if you want some more time, I'll ask the next question. The next . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . My question? My question is, Mr. Minister, for the third time, how much operating grant are you estimating in your budget for the city of Saskatoon? I won't hold you to an exact figure. I'll allow that you may want to discuss it with the city further. But what is your estimate in operating grant for the city of Saskatoon?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — The information that I have would suggest 618,000 plus the incentive grant, which would take it into the magnitude of around \$1 million; but of course we don't know the exact size of the incentive grant at this point in time.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. So when I estimated it at about 960,000, I was close. Okay, I appreciate that. Can I ask you one more question and then, in order that we don't spend so much time while you find the answers, I'll give you a list of other questions I will be asking later and leave it with you, and then, while my colleagues pursue some other questions, you can then have your staff find the answers for me.

In transit assistance, under capital, how much capital grant is being provided or estimated to be provided for the city of Saskatoon for this fiscal year, 1986?

(1115)

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — We don't have a specific targeted capital grant for transit assistance. What we did have is a 25 per cent increase during the two years on the provincial capital fund, going from \$20 to \$25, and that of course is unconditional moneys which the municipalities can spend as they so choose.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Are you saying, Mr. Minister, that under the transit assistance budget for cities, that you have done away with what was a special or was a capital grant program, you've done away with it. It no longer exists. Is that what you're saying?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — We have transit capital for the disabled, but the old capital grant for transit assistance, that program stopped when the new provincial capital fund came in with the 25 per cent increase over two years.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — That's rather interesting. In other words, for transit assistance capital in your budget for the city of Saskatoon you have zero. That's what you're saying. Because for you to say that it has been transferred to the community capital fund, or whatever you call it these days, is really saying that you've cut out this provision and you've added it onto a program which isn't new; it's a replacement for other programs that existed before. So we've established here today that for transit capital assistance for the city of Saskatoon — and therefore I assume it's for other cities as well — you have no money at all. That's clear.

But you did say you have assistance for transit for handicaps. What is your estimate for the city of Saskatoon for the transit for handicaps, in capital?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Well you can play with words all you want. The reality is that, rather than continuing on with the old transit assistance capital grant program, and not being able, likely, to increase as much as we would have wanted to the provincial capital fund unconditional program, we chose to in fact increase substantially the amount of money available through the unconditional capital program for municipalities.

So you could have, in fact, continued on with a program and increased one somewhat, or you could have reduced this particular program and increased the other substantially, at the same time providing municipalities with greater funds for them to spend unconditionally — and that was the decision that was taken.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Okay. When did this imaginary increase come about — this year, last year, the year before, three years ago?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — This is the second year of the two-year provincial capital fund program. Last year was its first year. It's a two-year program, a 25 per cent increase available over that two-year period of time. And when this new program commenced with the 25 per cent increase in unconditional funds, that was when the old transit assistance capital grant program was terminated. This provides greater unconditional revenue available to municipalities to do with what they choose.

**Mr. Tchorzewski:** — Mr. Minister, I wasn't going to raise this today — I simply wanted the facts — but since you raise it, I feel that I must.

You talk about an increase and, quite frankly, you're about as accurate on your increase as you were last night about the gasoline tax the municipalities supposedly had to pay, which you had to backtrack off yesterday evening.

Mr. Minister, listen carefully to this. I have here a letter that was written to your predecessor by the president of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association last year. The president of SUMA refers to this increase that you are talking about. And that's why I referred to it earlier as the imaginary increase because there was no increase, there was a reduction.

These aren't my words. These are words from an association that I know and you know is extremely concerned about municipal funding, the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association. And in the letter I quote to you word for word what the president of SUMA said to your predecessor, and I'm sure that you're aware of it:

We understand the increase of \$5 per capita in the Provincial Capital Fund came from this former urban surface transportation estimate (which was gone), however if we calculate approximately 680,000 urban dwellers in the province at \$5, we find to be something in the order of \$3,400,000

which is \$2,000,000 short of the amount that was slashed out of the urban surface transportation estimate. So, once again we appear to be losers in the shuffle.

Letter from the president of SUMA, Mr. Minister, stand up in this House when you answer the questions, keep away from the politics and give straight answers. You did not have an increase. You juggled the figures; you changed the estimates; you moved some of the subvotes around, and then the net result was a \$2 million cut. You know it. Your officials have told you that. Why don't you admit it? This started happening last year; it's continuing again this year; and the result has been that property taxes, as we discussed yesterday, have had to increase dramatically.

Now because I know that others want to ask some questions, I am going to just give you notice of questions I will be asking on this same subject later on, and then if your officials will take some notes, they can get you the answers and we won't spend a lot of time on it.

We've discussed for the city of Saskatoon the revenue-sharing estimate for 1986, and you gave me that number and I appreciate it. I would like you to be able to give me the revenue-sharing grant to the city of Saskatoon for 1981 and 1982, when it's convenient. I hope maybe later today.

We also discussed the capital urban assistance for the city of Saskatoon. You said it's about \$1.5 million, with some loose change. I would like to know what the capital assistance for the city of Saskatoon was in 1981 and 1982.

We also discussed transit assistance, both operating and capital, for 1986 for the city of Saskatoon, and you gave me the figure and I appreciate that as well. I would like you, not right now but at some future time when we get to this subject again, to tell me what the operating grant to the city of Saskatoon for transit assistance was in 1981 and '82, as well as for capital. And I'll leave this for now because I know my colleague, the member from Cumberland, has some questions he would like to be asking you ... or Athabasca, I'm sorry. The habit of the chairman.

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member requested information about transit for the disabled program. And the capital last year, as I understand it, was around 290,530 in the budget, and that is increasing substantially to approximately 386,530. So a fairly significant increase in the capital requirements for transit for the disabled program.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, get back to the right estimates here now. And I want to first start off by the special infrastructure development grants, and I see that this year there is no money allotted for that special fund. Has that been cut off or has that been put into another subvote?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — I'm still not sure what program and subvote you're referring to.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Okay, Mr. Minister, for your information, it's on page 102 and it's on the top of the

page: grants to local authorities and other third parties, and grants for the town of Meadow Lake for infrastructure development. Last year you spent \$560,000 for that infrastructure. This year I see there's nothing allotted. I'm just wondering, have you cut that program off or has that been transferred to another subvote?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — For the member's information, that never was an ongoing, province-wide program. That was a special three-year arrangement with Meadow Lake. That particular arrangement has now come to an end. The dollars committed were spent. And that's why you see the figures in the blue book as they are today. It is not an ongoing provincial program. It was a special, single, one-time arrangement with the town of Meadow Lake that has now come to an end.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Are you saying then, Mr. Minister, that there are no other towns in the province that had the availability of the funds that went for infrastructure development in this province — that it just went to Meadow Lake?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Mr. Chairman, we deal with the infrastructure needs of the province through our regular capital programs. And if there are special or pressing infrastructure needs in any particular community that are such that they demand special attention, then of course the provincial government would deal with those on a case-by-case basis, determining whether or not indeed this is a special priority that demands special attention, also taking into consideration the ability of the local municipality to raise funds on its own — in other words, taking a look at its own fiscal position to determine the health, fiscally, of that particular municipality.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Mr. Minister, I only have the figures for two years and that would be '84-85, '85-86. And I see that Meadow Lake received \$1.310 million under grants for infrastructure development. Could you indicate what the amount was, the total amount that was given under these special needs?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — To Meadow Lake, 1.810 million.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Yes. I'm sure, Mr. Member, that there would be many towns in this province that would appreciate a \$2 million special grant for infrastructure development. How many other communities in the province, Mr. Minister, utilized this program?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — I indicated this is not a program.

**Mr. Thompson:** — How many other communities in the province were given grants of this nature?

(1130)

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — The Meadow Lake situation, as I indicated earlier, was a special and unique situation in light of the geographical location of Meadow Lake — being just south of the old DNS line and having many of the similar concerns and problems that would face some of the northern communities, and yet not having access to double the capital funding as some of the northern communities of course do in terms of the capital fund.

And for that reason, it was deemed that this was indeed a special situation justifying special attention. Certainly the soil conditions in Meadow Lake were such that the situation certainly was justified.

There are other situations around the province that are justified as special needs from time to time. You will remember I indicated last night, if you were in the Assembly, that Regina has had a pressing water problem here, the taste and odour of Regina drinking water, most abhorrent to those people who lived here for 11 years. And one would have expected that the former government would have solved that problem, would have recognized it as a special problem.

In fact it wasn't solved and this government, through the carbon filtration plant and the grants that we provided to Moose Jaw and Regina, certainly solved that problem — an example of a unique situation which demanded certainly unique attention. And the Meadow Lake situation is another one.

As I indicated, we take a look at each individual case as it comes up, from time to time, to determine whether or not there is justification for the provincial government to provide additional funds over and above what the provincial government already provides in terms of capital funding.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Well I find this quite interesting, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, that the provincial government, the Urban Affairs department, would issue a special grant of \$2 million for infrastructure development to the town of Meadow Lake, which no other town in this province has received.

And then you say that it has special needs. And you go on to say that it was just south of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan's line, or the NAD (northern administration district) line, and that it had to catch up with the type of moneys that were going into northern Saskatchewan because it really wasn't fair, the North was getting more money — and I will touch on that — than Meadow Lake was.

Then you touched on soil conditions. Well I want to tell you, Mr. Minister, Carrot River, I'm sure, would appreciate a \$2 million grant, and they're in no different condition. The soil conditions are the same in Carrot River as they are in Meadow Lake. They live right adjacent to the NAD line. So I suspect, Mr. Minister, that the town of Carrot River will be coming to you and asking for a \$2 million infrastructure grant, and they should be given that.

There are many towns in this province who have soil conditions that are not the best conditions for building on, and I'm sure that they could use the special needs. But I just want to say that Meadow Lake is an old town. It's been there for many, many years . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's right, since 1930. And it's had sewer and water in that town since 1930 and has had all the facilities that northern Saskatchewan have never had, and I talk about north of Meadow Lake.

Big River should fall into the same category. We can take

a look at Green Lake, which is 30 miles away from Meadow Lake, and when did they get sewer and water, Mr. Chairman? They never got their sewer and water or moneys from the government to put sewer and water in until around 1976. And Meadow Lake has always had these facilities.

So I think that when you have a special infrastructure development grant of \$2 million to the town of Meadow Lake, then it most certainly should apply to Loon Lake and St. Walburg. It should also apply to Ile-a-la-Crosse and La Loche, and it should also apply to Weyburn and Carrot River. Now I think that you've picked one town out and the excuses that you've used are just not fair.

Northern Saskatchewan still hasn't caught up with Meadow Lake or southern communities. A lot of the communities have just got their water systems. They haven't got paved streets up in northern Saskatchewan. We're just getting our fire halls. And there's so much that has to be spent up in northern Saskatchewan.

But I just want to say, Mr. Minister, and I want to make it clear, that if Meadow Lake is available for this type of an infrastructure grant, development grant, then I think the town of Debden and every other town in this province should be available for it and you should be out promoting it.

I want to now turn to the northern municipal services. Here we now get back into the argument of what you are doing in northern Saskatchewan. I see the figures show that in 1984-85 we were spending \$1.690 million on municipal services and had 32 individuals working. We now look this year and we see that cut down to \$763,000 and 17 people working.

Well you've cut the individuals who are working for the department to over half. And when you take 700,000 away from 1.7 million you will see that there's \$1 million shortfall there.

In 1971, Mr. Chairman, we had a situation in northern Saskatchewan where local governments really had no authority at all. In 1971 many of the larger communities were working with \$2 per capita. And you take a community like Ile-a-la-Crosse, which was an advisory body, had a population of 1,200 people so they had \$2,400 to operate their town. That was in 1971. I leave out the county of Uranium City and the towns of Creighton and La Ronge. They had that infrastructure and that development.

It was the policy of the New Democratic government to go in and create a good strong municipal body in northern Saskatchewan, and that's what we were doing. And there were a number of steps that were taken. The northern municipal council, of which my colleague from Cumberland and myself were the first members on that council, was created so that local governments could be created and that they would be able to take over their own affairs. And that worked quite well.

As you know, we now have pretty well in all the communities in northern Saskatchewan elected bodies, and they've had money to work with. But the towns have

a lot of building to do. They have to catch up. They've got 40 years to catch up to Meadow Lake — 40 years. And you take the older communities down south, they're behind 40 and 50 years. And to say because all of a sudden there was a thrust to build up municipal facilities in the DNS area, that somehow Meadow Lake was losing and they had to catch up to the North . . . Well I tell you, Mr. Minister, that's exactly what you said. You said that because of the funds that were going into the department of northern Saskatchewan's area, that Meadow Lake felt they weren't getting their fair share, so they had to catch up. And I suggest to you that that's true, that that's what you have said is the true thinking of your government because you indicate quite clearly that no other community in Saskatchewan has got a \$2 million infrastructure development grant. No other community has taken advantage of that infrastructure grant with the exception of Meadow Lake.

So what do we have here now? We have a government who has said, look, here's a town who is sitting right close to the line but is tapping the resources of the citizens of the NAD (northern administration district) line — north of that line. And I ask the member from Meadow Lake to stand up and deny the fact that it's not the citizens of La Loche, Buffalo Narrows, and Ile-a-la-Crosse and Beauval and Canoe Lake and Green Lake who make that town tick.

You can go into Meadow Lake on any given day of the year, and you'll walk down the street, and you walk into any building, and it's all the northern people who are down there. They do their shopping and they keep that town going. But yet your government decides in its wisdom that that's not enough, that the citizens of the northern administration district come down and do their shopping and keep the town of Meadow Lake going, but that you have to cut back on the northern communities in the funds that they are giving for their infrastructure in the local governments. You have to cut them back, and you have to give a special \$2 million grant over and above all the other grants that Meadow Lake gets for infrastructure development.

Well I'll tell you, I'm sure that the town of Shellbrook would like to have a \$2 million infrastructure development. And I know that Carrot River would like to have it. And I know that Nipawin, and I know that Prince Albert would love to have that extra grant. And if it's put out on a per capita basis and you got \$2 million for Meadow Lake, just think what the member from Duck Lake could do. He'd have a pretty nice cheque to bring to Prince Albert. He would, because if you take 30,000 people that Prince Albert have, compared to the 3,000 to 4,000 that live in Meadow Lake — and you're using a per capita basis, and I'm sure that's what you would be using for this grant — that there isn't a town in Saskatchewan that would not like to have that grant.

But the excuses that you are using . . . And now you're taking money away from the northern communities, and I have many communities in northern Saskatchewan who are coming to me and saying, look, our operating grants have been cut. One just has to take a look at your estimates, and that's a fact.

The community of Pinehouse the other day has got to a point where it had to lay off four of their staff who are working for that community because they haven't got the money. Some of the smaller communities are telling me that they have been cut back \$10,000.

**An Hon. Member:** — It's their MLA. They need a new MLA.

**Mr. Thompson:** — That's right. The member from Duck Lake says that because they have a New Democratic MLA up in Athabasca, that that's why this government is cutting them back.

Now I tell you, when we got in in 1971, we didn't do that to Meadow Lake. We sure didn't do that to Meadow Lake, and we didn't treat any other community any different. We treated them all equal. With municipal affairs everybody was treated equal . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . We didn't use that. But the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake, from his seat, says that the reason that the towns up in my constituency are getting these drastic cuts, and that Meadow Lake is getting the \$2 million for infrastructure development, is because of myself, a New Democratic member. And I don't think that that's fair to say that. I don't think that's fair to say that.

But I want to say, Mr. Minister, that you have made some very serious cuts in northern Saskatchewan. And you're going to have to answer for that. When these communities say they can't keep their town managers . . . Some of the smaller communities tell me there's no way they can keep their town managers.

When the minister from Meadow Lake and the Minister of Urban Affairs quit talking, then I will continue to ask my questions. And I'm not asking the questions of the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake. I'm asking them for the member from Urban Affairs.

So if I can get back to making my comments, Mr. Chairman, I just want to say that when I take a look at the massive cuts that we've had in the last two years in municipal affairs, municipal services in northern Saskatchewan, from \$1,000,690 to this year's \$763,000, and a cut in staff of over 100 per cent — a cut in staff of over 100 per cent — I think, Mr. Minister, that the priorities of northern Saskatchewan are just not with your department.

(1145)

And I go into these communities and they're all telling me the same things. They just haven't got enough money to operate with. And I will get down to the different items in here, but I do want to make it very clear that there isn't one community in my constituency, Mr. Minister, that would not appreciate a development program such as the one that you gave to Meadow Lake, the \$2 million for infrastructure development. There isn't a community in my riding that would not appreciate that special grant, and I would say that if you're going to give that type of grants to Meadow Lake, then I think every other community in this province should be entitled to it and that you should advertise that this money is available for infrastructure development.

I want to get you to comment, Mr. Minister, on why we would have such a massive cut in municipal affairs in northern Saskatchewan — from \$1.690 million to today, \$763,000. That's for municipal services in northern Saskatchewan, not just my riding, but that covers all of the northern administration district — Cumberland House, Creighton, the whole works of them.

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Well, I'm delighted to have the opportunity to respond to the member opposite. I think the only massive cut that there has been has been a massive cut in doom and gloom in northern Saskatchewan and a commensurate rise in enthusiasm because of what is happening in northern Saskatchewan today.

And I will just talk about one example, because I'm sure the members from northern Saskatchewan are more capable of talking about this than I am. But consider the boom that is taking place at present in the gold mining industry in northern Saskatchewan. Thanks to my colleague, the member from P.A.-Duck Lake, we have seen a phenomenal increase in exploration and mining activity in northern Saskatchewan under this government — under this government.

And I think, if the member is so concerned about northern Saskatchewan, how can it be that he remains a member of a party which is committed to doing away with uranium mining in northern Saskatchewan. That's the key question. If you are so concerned about your northern communities, how can you maintain your membership and sit there as a member of the NDP opposition when your party wants to do away with uranium mining in northern Saskatchewan? That has significant implications for municipalities in northern Saskatchewan, and we all know that.

Now the other difference between this particular government and your NDP administration is this whole matter of how we deal with northern Saskatchewan. You had this imaginary line there which cut off everybody in the North from the South — the old DNS. And under your administration the government was going to tell people what to do. The big government was going to tell people what to do. Well we operate under a different philosophy, and you will know that it is this government which has provided more autonomy and self-direction for municipalities in northern Saskatchewan. It certainly wasn't your administration that changed the legislation.

I want to ask the member opposite: does he think that everybody here in the province would like to pay what the citizens of Meadow Lake are paying today for foot frontage costs? I think it's important for him to understand that the citizens of Meadow Lake, whom he has been talking about in a somewhat disparaging way by implication, they pay \$63.18 per foot frontage — literally unheard of throughout the rest of the province. So they have taken upon themselves, the citizens of Meadow Lake, a substantial cost burden in order to help solve the problem that they were facing. And this particular government was certainly willing to help with that particular problem.

And I think that most of the people in the province of Saskatchewan would expect that the provincial government would have that kind of sensitivity to a location, to a municipality, which doesn't have the same funding benefits that those in northern Saskatchewan do who get twice the capital funding that those in southern Saskatchewan. But Meadow Lake didn't have access to that because it was below the old imaginary DNS line. And so they quite justifiably came to the senior government and said, can you help us out, because we are willing to shoulder a very substantial burden ourselves?

And why doesn't the member opposite recognize that? Why does he want to drive a wedge between communities in our fair province? I want to remind the member opposite when he talks about special grants, special grants for special situations — that I happen to agree with because I think that's what people in this province want — that under your administration you operated on the same principle, a very reasonable principle, but you don't want to admit that today.

Your administration provided funds to Lloydminster to deal with their pipeline situation to the tune of \$10 million; a special situation for Lloydminster, a situation that undoubtedly was justified.

Undoubtedly the Regina water situation was justified in terms of the senior government providing assistance to fix up the taste and odour of the drinking water problem here in Regina.

Undoubtedly the Meadow Lake situation was justified in terms of providing additional funding, particularly since the Meadow Lake citizens were willing to take upon themselves such a substantial burden to fix up their particular problem.

So I think on all counts the member opposite's arguments, in fact, don't stand up under scrutiny. They provided special grants under special situations to unique community problems.

This government isn't doing exactly the same, but this government is also providing the kind of economic stimulus in terms of the resource development and mining and exploration which is going on in northern Saskatchewan that never happened under the NDP administration — never happened.

And it's beyond me why the member opposite didn't cross the floor when he had an opportunity to and stand up for the kinds of things that he knows should have gone on in northern Saskatchewan under your administration but never did. And it still is beyond me why he supports a party which is against uranium mining in northern Saskatchewan and that provides so much benefit for northern Saskatchewan, and he knows it.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I sincerely hope that you will give me the latitude that you have just given the minister.

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

**Mr. Thompson:** — You know full well that we were here to discuss Urban Affairs estimates. We have just heard the minister go on and on and on, and he talked about uranium mines and he talked about gold mining and he talked about exploration and I sincerely hope — I sincerely hope — that you will give me the same leeway that you're going to give that minister.

You indicated — and you didn't answer the question that I originally asked you anyway — you just went on on a tangent and you started talking about everything that you shouldn't have been talking about.

And you said that when we were a government, we were trying to separate northern Saskatchewan. Let me tell you, if anybody's trying to separate northern Saskatchewan right now, Mr. Minister, it's you and your government. When we got in and we set up the municipal body within the department of northern Saskatchewan, we set that up so that we could give northern Saskatchewan an equal opportunity so that they could have the same types of services that anybody in the South has had, and has had for 50 to 100 years, and they were entitled to.

We wanted to bring them in line with the South; make them feel that they were equal to the south; and we wanted to build up fire halls and town hall offices and the likes, an infrastructure that just was never there. And that's what we did.

And the member, he wants to get back in the gutter again. And let me tell you, Mr. Minister from Prince Albert-Duck Lake, I took that kind of gutter stuff from your members for the last four years when we sat in government. And you're still muttering from your seat. And I don't think that your government has anything to mutter from. If you want to get down to the gutter stuff, well, Mr. Attorney General is the one who's doing it from his seat, and he wants to bring my family up from the seat.

I ask him to stand up in this House as the Attorney General and make them statements about my family that you just made from your seat. Go ahead and stand up and make them. That's the type of member we've got, the Attorney General, the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake who likes to muck around in the mud like his colleagues did in the last four years in this legislature when I sat on the other side. Well, Mr. Chairman, if you could bring the Attorney General to order then, fine.

But I want to get back to you, Mr. Minister, and Urban Affairs, and I just want to say that we wanted to bring northern Saskatchewan in line with the South. We wanted to build up the type of an infrastructure that communities like Big River and Debden and Carrot River and any of the towns down South had, and they didn't have that. It took a lot of money to build that up, and it took a lot of initiative on the part of the local governments to get in there and work with government departments to make sure that this was a reality. And there was mistakes that were made, and it maybe cost a little bit more money.

But I'll tell you, when the member for Meadow Lake talks about the special amount of money that was put in for that special grant to Meadow Lake because it's a different town and the footage costs \$160 . . . or \$63 a foot frontage.

Well the same applies up in northern Saskatchewan — only a lot more severe — because when you leave Meadow Lake, you have to drive 200 miles to get to La Loche, and you can just imagine what it's like for that community to try and operate their town on the same level as it is in Meadow Lake. It just doesn't happen that way. They have to drive 200 miles to get most of their services. So I think that's really not a fair assessment to use.

But we're interested in maintaining the type of good local government structure that we had in northern Saskatchewan and, Mr. Minister, I think that the only way that that could take place is to — and you say you've changed the regulations so that Northerners have more say — but I think if you're going to give them more say, then you most certainly have to give them more money to work with. And you have to realize that northern Saskatchewan is a unique situation — not just Beauval, not just Beauval and Ile-a-la-Crosse — it gets more severe as you go farther north. And when you get up into the Stony Rapids and Camsell Portage and Uranium City and Black Lake, Wollaston Lake, and when you get up into that area then it costs a lot more, a lot more than it costs as Beauval. And of course in Beauval it costs a lot more than it does to operate the community of Meadow Lake . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Yes. The minister he said that really we're not that worried about the local government and the cut-back in their funds, because we're creating all this activity in the gold mines. I just want to make that comment that the uranium mines that are up in northern Saskatchewan are working. They will continue to work. And they will continue to work.

**An Hon. Member:** — As long as we're here.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Whether you're there or we're here . . . whether you're there or whether we're here. It's your interpretation that you're putting on that.

But I don't know for sure, Mr. Minister, how many individuals are working in the gold-mine. I'm just not too sure if there is a gold-mine operating in northern Saskatchewan yet. And you just tell me, Mr. Minister, if there is a gold-mine operating, because I think that there's one under construction. I think there's one under construction, but I don't think it's operating.

And when we set up the uranium mines . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well the Attorney General has asked you, Mr. Chairman, to sit me down. He continues to talk to the Minister of Urban Affairs while I'm asking him a question. Now I would like to deal with the Minister of Urban Affairs and not the Attorney General. Now if your Attorney General wants me to be sat down, then you stand up, Mr. Attorney General, and make your point to the chairman. Stand up . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Well the member from Weyburn's getting into it. The member from Weyburn. The butterfly. He's up here now and flopping around. Now if you want me to sit down, then you ask the chairman. But I'm not going to ask questions of the Minister of Urban Affairs if he's carrying on a conversation with the Attorney General at the same

time. I'd like to have a little bit of respect.

And then the Minister of Urban Affairs made the remark that we somehow, when we were in government, by creating the department of northern Saskatchewan and creating local governments, that we were trying to drive a wedge between the North and the South . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, Mr. Chairman, if the Attorney General wants the floor, he can get up and make his point.

I tell you, if this conversation is going to continue between the chairman and the Attorney General, and the Attorney General and the Minister of Urban Affairs, then I may as well sit down and let somebody else take over. Because this is getting out of hand.

(1200)

Mr. Minister, you indicated we were trying to drive a wedge between northern and southern Saskatchewan. I say that that's not true. We were trying to give the Northerners the equal opportunity, the same opportunity as they had in the South. And we built all the municipal facilities that are up there. We put the sewer and water systems in. And they're hard to maintain. It's not easy to maintain them up in northern Saskatchewan because of the geographical location. And there has to be more money given to the local communities to operate them facilities. We put the sewer and water in, and we put fire halls in, and I know there's a few more fire halls that still had to go in, and you've pretty well completed that.

But I just want to say, Mr. Minister, at no time — at no time were we trying to drive a wedge between the North and the South. Our policy was to try and make people up in northern Saskatchewan feel that they were equal partners with the rest of Saskatchewan. And the only way that we can ever become equal partners is if we can provide the type of services to northern people as the same services that they have in the South.

And it's going to cost extra money. And that's what concerns me when I see that you have cut back dramatically on municipal services and the funds for municipal services. Because we have all the bodies up there who are elected now, and they want to run their towns, and they feel that they're becoming fast a part of southern Saskatchewan, a part of the whole province. All of a sudden now — they were well on their way, and now they get a cut in funds. And if this cut in funds is going to continue, then they're going to get discouraged, and we're going to start going backwards.

And I ask you, Mr. Minister, to not cut funds to northern Saskatchewan. I ask you to use a formula — the same type of formula that you used for Meadow Lake, where they have a ground that is tough to handle, and I realize that. But in the North we have the same problems, and we need that extra money to operate our towns. And I ask you not to treat them any differently but to give them the money that they need to operate. Sit down and listen to them.

And I know, I've seen the correspondence that's gone back and forth between Urban Affairs and the northern

communities, and they're concerned. And I think it's valid, their concerns. And I ask you, Mr. Minister, to take a serious look at increasing the funding for our northern communities and the local governments that are in the North and make them feel that they're a part of Saskatchewan — not a group that's out there separate from the rest of the province.

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do want to say that I believe the member opposite is very sincere in his desire to see northern Saskatchewan progress. He's lived in the North many years. I'm sure he's as concerned about northern communities as I am about my community.

The difference between us is the approach that is used to deal with the problems. And I think it's important to point out, it's important to point out first of all, Mr. Chairman, that there is no reduction in the amount of money going to northern communities. In fact, for the member opposite, there is a 3 per cent increase in revenue sharing for northern communities, treating them similarly to southern communities.

In terms of the particular blue book figure that you were looking at, we are simply striving for greater efficiencies in the Department of Urban Affairs, and there were three vacancies that had not been filled for some time. So we're not talking about a reduction in services; in fact, with the new arrangement that we have with local municipalities in the North, I think we're providing a much better approach to government in northern Saskatchewan than was previously provided.

And if I might say for the member opposite, while I appreciate your concern for your communities, there's a difference between working with communities and helping them develop than simply always trying to do things for communities. And that's a paternalistic approach, and that was the approach of the old DNS — bring people in to do things for municipalities rather than attempt to help them to develop by themselves together. That is a much better approach, and that is the approach that this particular government believes very, very strongly in. And that, of course, is why we passed The Northern Municipalities Act, so that people could have greater authority and greater discretion and greater ability to run their own affairs.

Now that is a substantial difference in approach and in philosophy between the former NDP administration and this Progressive Conservative government. We do not believe in a paternalistic, "do things for people" approach because they can't do it themselves. We believe in working with communities as much as possible to build a better Saskatchewan.

Now I must comment on the suggestion that somehow nothing was happening in the gold-mining industry in having any positive effect for municipalities in the North. In fact today there is a tenfold, 10 times increase in exploration activity compared to what was going on under your administration — tenfold increase today. In addition, there are hundreds of people directly and indirectly involved in that kind of activity that weren't there previously.



And the third thing I would say is that you may not think that an NDP government would close down the uranium mines, because you can't talk that way. You come from the North. And I understand that. But I want you to know, in my constituency the NDP candidate is passing around in his brochures that the northern uranium mines will, in fact, be closed down.

And that simply is the reality. And I don't know if you want to face that reality, but that is the reality. Your party is talking about closing them down. Your party is not talking about sustaining them.

The fourth thing I want to mention is, is the member suggested that I was saying that you wanted to drive a wedge between the North and the South. You didn't understand my comments, and so I want to repeat them. I'm sure you wanted the best for the North; we want the best for the North. But when you suggest that Meadow Lake — if it has special needs, a unique occasion of problems — that they shouldn't be dealt with in a special way, in the same way that your administration dealt with Lloydminster in a special way, then in fact you are driving a wedge between communities.

And it's got nothing to do with a wedge between the North and the South. It's suggesting that somehow there isn't a special, unique problem in Meadow Lake that demands special and unique attention in the same way that Lloydminster needed special and unique attention, in the same way that Regina with its water problem here needed special and unique attention.

That's the role of the senior government of the provincial government, to respond to those kinds of special and unique occasions and provide funding over and above the normal funding levels that are provided to communities. And I want to remind the member opposite that this government in fact is providing for northern communities double — double — the amount for capital funding on a per capita basis that is provided to southern communities.

So you see, our commitment to the North is a very substantial commitment, a substantial commitment in terms of funds; a substantial commitment in terms of working with the communities rather than in a paternalistic working for the communities approach; and also a substantial commitment in terms of building the resource community, providing exploration, providing mines that weren't there previously, and sustaining the mines that are there today. That's our commitment to northern Saskatchewan.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, I want to make a few comments, but I don't want to get into this long debate again. I think that . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I think, Mr. Chairman, that there's no sense in me answering questions for the member from Weyburn from his seat. I'm going to deal with the Minister of Urban Affairs here.

And I just want . . . a small comment that you indicate that when we were in the DNS up there that we did everything for the North; and your approach is different, that you're letting them do it. I just want to say to you, Mr. Minister,

that there was no local governments in northern Saskatchewan until the DNS took over. There was no local school boards in northern Saskatchewan either until the DNS took over. There was no Northern Lights School Board until we took over. They're there now — they're there now — and we gave them that authority, and we gave them money to operate under. And that's fair — you say we didn't do that, but I say we did, and we were successful at it.

You talk about Meadow Lake being unique. I know Meadow Lake is unique; I know the type of ground that the community sits on. But, Mr. Minister, I don't think it's any more unique than northern Saskatchewan. And I just ask you that. You know, I don't think it's any more unique. So when I was saying that the grants, the special grants that were given to Meadow Lake, I think that they should well apply to northern Saskatchewan and to many other southern communities.

You talk about capital expenditures, and that you have doubled the capital expenditures in northern Saskatchewan. Well, Mr. Minister, I take a look at your capital expenditures for northern Saskatchewan and I see for three years in a row it's \$450,000 — and you talk about doubling capital expenditures.

Well I can tell you that the sewer and water system that was put into the small community of Turnor Lake — and that was a cost-shared agreement with the federal government and the provincial government, because it's part reserve and part non-treaty — that there would be three times as much money put into that capital project as what you're putting into all of northern Saskatchewan.

And you now have a five-year capital project program, and if it's \$450,000 a year and you use that on a per capita basis, I'm sure that you can't stand up in this House and say that you have doubled, since our administration, the capital grants in northern Saskatchewan. That's just not true, because the figures will bear that out.

We're not talking about municipal services; we're not talking about operating grants for the communities; we're talking about capital grants. And in your estimates your capital grants is \$405,000. And that's for all the communities in northern Saskatchewan, and that's not much. But for you to say that you've dealt with that, well that's just not true.

I just want to make another small comment. You comment about all the jobs and all the opportunities that were up in northern Saskatchewan. Well I say to you, Mr. Minister, you go up into northern Saskatchewan and any time you want to come I'll take you out to the communities and you'll see that that project that you were talking about most certainly is not going to solve all the problems of unemployment in northern Saskatchewan.

We have communities with 90 per cent unemployment up there. We have 99 per cent of the residents of northern Saskatchewan who do not have a full-time, year-round job. And I tell you that is true. There are many, many people, and I'm not talking . . . I'm going to leave the professional people out of it. But the residents of northern

Saskatchewan — there would be close to 99 per cent of the people who do not have a full-time, year-round job.

I'm not talking the traditional users. We have commercial fisherman and trappers who make their living at that, year-round. But we have so many other people in northern Saskatchewan who are not fishermen and trappers and who are never going to be, but want to get out into the labour force. And that's where the problem lies. And I just got a call from Pinehouse, and they've had to lay off four more of their workers in the community. The town hall has laid them off because they just haven't got the money to operate. And that's taking place all through the North. But your capital projects — you know that statement is just not true.

(1215)

I see operating grants to the town of Uranium City. That has gone down from a million to 350 to \$160,000 this year. Could you indicate just what's left in Uranium City as a municipal body and what that \$160,000 is going to cover? Is there any plans to shut that town completely down?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — As the member opposite is aware, the population of Uranium City has decreased from 2748 in 1980 to today a figure of 170 in 1986. I expect to see that the . . . An estimated 170 I'm saying is the figure here; an estimated 170 in 1986. From an urban affairs point of view we expect to see the community continue. The funding, of course, is at an appropriate level, given the substantially reduced population size of the community.

**Mr. Thompson:** — And as long as that community maintains that population, Urban Affairs will continue to fund that community? Is that right?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — We would continue to provide funds as necessary, reviewing the needs of the community.

**Mr. Thompson:** — Mr. Chairman, one more item under Urban Affairs and the northern . . . I want to, Mr. Minister, ask you about the fire protection that you have under your subvote here, and I believe it's for fire protection facilities. Are there some facilities that are still being constructed, i.e. fire halls, or fire trucks to be purchased yet, in northern Saskatchewan?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Well, as the member knows, in 1985-86 five communities took advantage of the northern fire protection facilities program and received a total of 104,500 — a number of communities, Creighton, Sturgeon Landing, Timber Bay, and so on. It's forecast that the full amount of the grant for '86-87 will be taken up as both Stanley Mission and Wollaston will be acquiring some facilities, and it's anticipated that one other community will commence construction of a fire hall as well.

**Mr. Yew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I agree with a lot of the points, the very serious points that were raised here by my colleague, the member for Athabasca. And I will have a number of issues, as well, dealing with . . . issues pertaining to the Cumberland constituency.

For starters, Mr. Minister, I have a letter coming from the city of Flin Flon. The mayor issued this letter to the former minister of Urban Affairs. You may not have this information immediately, but none the less I'd like to raise the matter with you during estimates of this legislature. It goes on to say, Mr. Minister:

To the Hon. Tim Embury: Enclosed please find a petition signed by the residents of South Hudson Street, FLIN FLON, Saskatchewan. The petition is to express concern about the lack of rebate on property taxes to the residents of Saskatchewan, similar to the one being enjoyed by their counterparts on the Manitoba side of the border. Needless to say, the Provincial Rebate of \$350.00 to the Manitoba residents, goes a long way to lessen the burden of relatively high property taxes in Flin Flon. The petitioners are wondering why such a relief is not available to them. As this is a Provincial matter, I am forwarding this petition to you, for your consideration. I look forward to receiving your comments, in this regard, at your earliest convenience.

This letter was issued this winter, Mr. Minister, and I wonder: at this point in time what commitments or response have you had with the people of Creighton and particularly the residents of South Hudson Street? I may want to remind the minister that those people are Saskatchewan residents, and they are entitled to a fair policy with respect to government services and government policies.

But the letter that I have with me, a carbon copy that was sent to me, indicates that the member for Athabasca stated a lot of issues pertaining to the North, which have been disregarded by your administration. This letter indicates to me that this is basically what has happened. You have neglected to look after the needs of northern residents. If you wish to comment, Mr. Minister, I'd appreciate getting a response and an updated status on that petition.

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — It's difficult to see how the member comes to the conclusion that we're not responding to the needs of northern residents. I think I just spent a fair amount of time talking with the former member who was questioning me about the very positive things that are being done by this administration to address some of the needs in northern Saskatchewan.

I would remind the member opposite that he belongs to a party which wants to shut down the uranium mines in northern Saskatchewan . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And the member who was addressing me. And if anything is going to harm northern Saskatchewan it's going to be to shut down those uranium mines. I'm pleased that we have a government which is sensitive to the needs of the North. And we want to see the North expand and we want to see it grow and we want to see jobs created and we want to see resource development take place. We don't want to see a government come in and say, shut down the uranium mines. We don't want to see a government come in and say, shut down the new paper project in Prince Albert. We don't want to see a government come in and

say, put back the gas tax on. None of that will help northern Saskatchewan.

I would remind the member opposite that in NDP Manitoba today, there is a very stiff provincial gas tax — a very stiff provincial gas tax — and a payroll tax, and a 6 per cent sales tax. They buy clothing there, they have to pay a tax. People in Saskatchewan buy clothing, they don't have to pay a tax. In fact I suspect they come into Saskatchewan to buy their gas. I suspect they come into Saskatchewan to buy their clothing. I suspect that a good number of them wish they were living in Saskatchewan instead of in Manitoba.

**Mr. Yew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister wants to talk about jobs, agriculture, health, and education programs that his government advocates for the people of this province. I must dispute what the minister, with respect to his arguments . . . Because as of today, Mr. Minister, we have higher welfare dependency rates in northern Saskatchewan and in Saskatchewan in general. We now have 65,000 people on welfare, a much higher percentage than there were in 1982. And now we have an increase in unemployment. There is high unemployment in this province. There's 42,000 people unemployed, looking for work.

But in specifics, Mr. Minister, we're dealing with Urban Affairs and you go on to talk about the many programs and services that you have delivered, the many opportunities and options that you have delivered and provided for the residents of northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Minister.

May I remind you that the North, to this point in time . . . You keep reiterating resource development; you talk about uranium development. Fine. That's fine. I'll accept that. And you talk about gold development. But, Mr. Minister, just how much of that revenue in resource development is going back to the pockets of the people in northern Saskatchewan? I want to know, and the people of this province and particularly the people of northern Saskatchewan want to know, just how much of that revenue is going back to the people in northern Saskatchewan. How much of that gold is going back into the pockets of the people at the local level? Can you answer that?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Well I'm not the minister of gold mining; I am the Minister of Urban Affairs. But I would be happy to respond by saying that, can you imagine what it would be like in northern Saskatchewan if the uranium mines were shut down. You come from the North. Can you imagine what it would be like if the uranium mines in northern Saskatchewan were shut down? Can you imagine what it would be like if that resource activity that is taking place there today were not taking place? Surely northern Saskatchewan has benefited from those policies. Surely northern Saskatchewan has benefited from those policies . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Well the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg is talking from his seat. Perhaps he would like to stand and ask a question if he has a question.

Northern Saskatchewan has benefited substantially from

the resource policies of this particular government, and if you want to see the northern uranium mines shut down, then you just continue to support the NDP party — continue to support them. Continue to say the NDP party is best for northern Saskatchewan. Continue to say, I'm proud of a party that wants to shut down the northern uranium mines; I'm proud of a party that is against the kind of resource and exploration activity that is taking place as a result of the policies of a Progressive Conservative government. Say that you're proud of a party that once had a gas tax on that hurt northern Saskatchewan. You say that you're proud of a party that would have charged people a sales tax on clothing purchases.

That's really what we're talking about here. And I think that intelligent, thinking Northerners are going to recognize, when it comes time to mark their ballots, that the future of northern Saskatchewan is far more secure under a Progressive Conservative government than it ever would have been under an NDP government.

**Mr. Yew:** — Mr. Minister, you keep reiterating . . . We're dealing with Urban Affairs but you keep wanting to talk about the uranium development issues in northern Saskatchewan, and the chairman has given you a lot of clearance on it.

**Mr. Chairman:** — Mr. Members, the noise from both sides is getting a little loud and I can't even hear the questioner any more because of the noise coming from his side. And while both members are asking and answering questions, would you please tighten them up.

(1230)

**Mr. Yew:** — I'll tighten up my bow, Mr. Chairman, against that minister who is really arrogant, providing to this Assembly a very biased attitude towards the top half of this province, the people living in the northern administration district.

Mr. Minister, I want to remind you — and for the record — I want to remind you that my colleague and I, the member for Athabasca, and myself and the party were the ones that advocated pro-development in northern Saskatchewan. We took a pro-development stand in every convention that we had, because of the need for jobs — because of the dire needs for jobs. We wanted to get away from that welfare dependency syndrome that we have been subjected to.

I may not be as eloquent in English as you guys, but you come up North and let's debate in Cree, and I'll tell you . . .

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

**Mr. Yew:** — Me and my colleagues in northern Saskatchewan, many of my colleagues in northern Saskatchewan will certainly agree with many of the points that my colleague and I have raised today.

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

**Mr. Yew:** — I asked you a little while ago just how much

revenue is going back to the people in northern Saskatchewan out of uranium and gold-mining developments. To this point in time, Mr. Minister — and I want to get back to what I was initially stating here — my colleague and I have taken a pro-development stand, and we also initiated surface lease agreements which played a major role in the provision of jobs for Northerners. But when your administration came into effect in 1982 and 1983, you dismantled not only the department of northern Saskatchewan, but you ignored the surface lease agreements that were there designed to assist and to support training and job opportunities and options for the people in northern Saskatchewan.

To this point time many, many . . . The majority of the people living in the northern administration district represent about 70 to 80 per cent native. And to this point in time, Mr. Minister, I have yet to see fair resource revenue-sharing formulas designed to put money, revenue, and jobs to those particular groups of people in this province.

Way back in the early '70s, like my colleague from Athabasca mentioned a moment ago, the communities in the North, the 44 communities in the North were in a dire and depressed situation. When the NDP came into power in '71 and '72, they advocated a policy of local government, a policy of local autonomy, local decision-making. And we established meaningful programs for the people in northern Saskatchewan.

We established the first municipal council that had input by the people of northern Saskatchewan. We had consultation. We had full public forum meetings with every organization in the North. We weren't afraid to deal with the people. We went to the people. We dealt with the native organizations. We dealt with the local grass roots leaders to bring about meaningful local government legislation. And we brought about school boards, community college boards, surface lease agreements such as we discussed a moment ago for the uranium mines.

And we had, Mr. Minister, an opportunity for once, an opportunity for the North to become involved with mainstream society in Saskatchewan. For far too long now, Mr. Minister, we've been left on the sidelines. We are not, and I have stated before, we are not — native people in particular — have not been in the mainstream, social and economic mainstream of society. And I'm sure you can't dispute that fact with me.

Because today, Mr. Minister, I see 63 per cent of people in jails and in the correctional centres in this province — 63 per cent of those people represent native people. You look at the statistics, and you'll find out that there's more native people in the provincial jails and correctional centres today. And now I ask you, is that fair?

Mr. Minister, you talk about services and programs that you have provided for people in northern Saskatchewan, and you dispute many of the points that me and my colleagues raise. Well I have a letter here coming to you and to the Premier written and submitted by 24 local governments and they are saying: in northern Saskatchewan we have high unemployment. Our tax

base in the communities is very low. Therefore, the letter goes on to say:

Northern Communities need Sewer and Water services; roads; street lights; office buildings; firehalls, fire trucks; water and sewer extensions; all of these (Mr. Minister) cost money. The Northern Communities cannot afford them, because the Per Capital (grants) we get isn't enough.

Some smaller communities only get and receive from your government, and that's what it says — \$40,000 to run their communities — \$40,000, just imagine that. What can you buy with \$40,000? Can you administer a community with \$40,000? I ask you, Mr. Minister, is that fair? I'm quoting from the letter, Mr. Minister.

Another quote I'll give you is . . . it ends with the conclusion here, Mr. Minister, and I'll send both copies of letters that I've brought to your attention, if you want.

The closing, the conclusion of this letter states, Mr. Minister, submitted by the 24 local governments, is that they say:

I notice that Saskatchewan was a signatory of the Canadian Constitution, and, according to the New Charter of Rights and freedoms, everyone should be treated equal. We are just (simply) asking for equality in Northern Saskatchewan.

Mr. Minister, this letter was sent to your Premier last year. And to this point in time, Mr. Minister, I . . . You know these are carbon copies sent to me and to my colleague for Athabasca. And to this point in time, I haven't seen any concrete evidence of you people on that side of the House, the PC government — I have not seen any concrete evidence of tackling and committing yourselves to resolve the very extreme hardships of those people living in northern Saskatchewan.

Today we have the highest unemployment ratings throughout this province. Like my colleague said a moment ago, the unemployment rate is 99 per cent in many of our northern communities, and I agree with those figures. The welfare dependency rate are high. The incarceration rates of native people are high. I mention that because the majority of the North is predominantly native. So you can't tell me, Mr. Minister, that your PC government is doing an excellent job in northern Saskatchewan. I simply can't buy that.

You people called this legislature together on the 17th of last month in anticipation for an election, but the polls told you otherwise. You just couldn't go. You had cold feet. Then you slapped together a quick budget, and as I mentioned before, out of desperation — that's what you did. You put together a budget out of desperation with no concrete planning, with no concrete plans to remedy many of the issues confronting us in this province.

And in particular, Mr. Minister, I look at the resource revenue, the northern revenue-sharing portion in your budget submitted for 1985-86 . . . pardon me, '86-87, correction there. And I noted under . . . My colleague

from Athabasca talked about the northern municipal services, but I want to talk about the northern revenue-sharing program.

I look at the 1982 and '83 budget, Mr. Minister, and I look at the 1986-87 budget — I've got both of them here, Mr. Minister, for your information. I'm sure you've got the records — and I notice that there is a decrease in northern revenue sharing to northern communities, 19.5 decrease — a cut. You have in your budget estimates for 1986-87 earmarked 5.2 million. In our budget, the New Democratic budget that you guys cut to ribbons, we had 6.5 million earmarked for northern local governments. How can you explain that one, Mr. Minister? How can you justify some of the statements that you and your colleagues are hollering about continuously? Whenever each member on this side of the House makes good points of concern to our constituents, you get up and you start hollering and bellowing so that the message can't be heard audibly by the chairman, by the Speaker, or the minister that's being questioned.

But at this point in time, Mr. Minister, I want you to answer some of those questions that I've been raising.

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Well I wish the member would take the time to thoroughly investigate the statistics. If he takes a look at the actual last budget that you brought in in your administration, 1981-82 . . . And I think you'd better discount your '82-83 budget because that was an election budget, and everybody knows it was an election budget. So '81-82, the actual funds that you spent in northern revenue sharing, including grants to northern communities for recreational facilities, were around 5.4 million.

(1245)

But I would remind you that at that time Uranium City was a much larger community than it is today — much, much larger. Today Uranium City is a much smaller community, but not only is Uranium City a much smaller community, we are, in fact, providing more in total dollars. If you take a look in the present blue book on page 101, and you add up all of the various funds that are going to northern communities, there are more dollars today going to northern communities. And of course Uranium City is a smaller community at the same time. So when you compare everything that should be compared in this kind of a comparative picture, I think you can see that our commitment to provide funds to northern Saskatchewan is a very substantial commitment.

**Mr. Yew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister refers to the 1982-83 budget as an election budget. I want to ask the minister: then what do you call this budget before us, '86-87? Is that not an election budget as well?

I say that, Mr. Minister, because you have come out, and the Premier has come out, and many of your colleagues have come out with millions and millions of dollars of government ads all over the province.

We've had nothing but major announcements, major programs announced by your government in this past several weeks, the past few months, in anticipation of an

election. But to this point in time, Mr. Minister, while we're reviewing your election budget, you're suddenly embarrassed. You've suddenly got cold feet. That's the only conclusion I can arrive at because the Premier to this point in time has yet to call an election.

The people in the North and the people of this province want to get some responsibility and some appropriate programs to remedy the many problems that we have pertaining to employment in this province, pertaining to the North, pertaining to agriculture, health, and education.

So, Mr. Minister, I can only conclude, if you suggest that our last budget was an election budget, then I, too, can suggest that your fifth budget presented in this legislature was, and is, nothing but an election budget, and a budget, I'm sure, that was slapped together out of haste and desperation without any concrete, sound planning and consultation with the communities in this province.

I want to ask you, Mr. Minister, you know, my understanding in terms of building strong local government with some decision-making powers and some autonomy and some jurisdiction to be able to provide the services and programs it deems necessary for its jurisdiction, it must have an economic base, Mr. Minister. It must have revenue to operate and to administer the type of services and programs required by that particular community or by that particular jurisdiction.

To this point in time, Mr. Minister, you have yet to answer the question. My colleague for Athabasca raised it, and I'm going to raise it again — in terms of resource revenue sharing — we have raised it continuous times in the course of the last four to the fifth successive PC government budgets and under estimates.

I want to ask you, in the year '83 and '84 a financial document that was produced here by the legislature in terms of your operations — and I haven't got it before me but I can get a copy of it — indicated in terms of uranium development and in terms of licences and permits dealing with forestry and tourism, fishing and trapping, we had revenues generated from the North to a tune of \$503 million.

Now I say to you, Mr. Minister, people in northern Saskatchewan are contributing a fair share of their resources to this province. But are you, Mr. Minister, are you and the PC government contributing just as equal an opportunity for those Northerners to build upon those resource revenues that you are developing and taking away from them? Have you got a policy for resource revenue sharing that can compensate for their losses?

People in northern Saskatchewan are accumulating loss after loss under your administration. Just recently you sold the forestry rights to a Washington firm. Did we, Mr. Minister, have any consultation with the people in northern Saskatchewan? And I'm going beyond the initial phrase of questions that I had before you, Mr. Minister. Getting back to the resource revenue sharing, just how much of that revenue, Mr. Minister, is being funnelled back to the communities in northern Saskatchewan to

help build a sound economic base for those northern people?

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — Mr. Chairman, there are a number of points that need to be made in response to the member opposite. The total funding for northern Saskatchewan is up when you take a look at revenue sharing, up 3 per cent. When you take a look at the revenues that have accrued to municipalities from municipal property taxes, for example: 150,000 in 1979; 316,000 today in 1985. Revenues from land sales accruing to the North: 25,000 in 1980; 1.078 million today in 1985 — a very good indication, I think, that we're in the right direction as we pursue our policies in northern Saskatchewan.

But the member talks about economic development and how it relates to the people of the North and the municipal situation in the North, and municipal governments, and so on. I think we need to state very clearly what the position of this government is in comparison to the position of the former government. And I think all members of this House remember, and certainly the members opposite should remember, because they were part of that organization, that government, that had as its foundation plank in northern Saskatchewan the old DNS, department of northern Saskatchewan.

And what do we remember most about the department of northern Saskatchewan? We remember that a very eminent judicial figure in this province said: the department of northern Saskatchewan is a bureaucracy run amok — a bureaucracy run amok under the former NDP government.

Your approach to economic development in northern Saskatchewan was to ever expand this department of northern Saskatchewan. It was once again a big government, state-control approach; we will control your lives; we will do it for you — and the member who just stood on his feet, I think, was somewhat involved in that old department of northern Saskatchewan — we will direct the affairs of the lives of people in northern Saskatchewan, because as long as we can keep them under our thumb, then we will have control, and we will have power.

Well the approach of this government is not to keep people under their thumb; it's to release the potential, to release the opportunity that people naturally have whether they are individuals or whether they are families. And what a profound difference between the philosophy of a Progressive Conservative government or the philosophy of a New Democratic Party government.

And I can tell you that if they were back in power they wouldn't change one iota. And I want to tell you why they wouldn't change — because they don't understand economic development. Who understands economic development? People with some substantial business experience understand economic development.

Do the members of this House understand that the NDP party today? Of the 64 candidates that they have nominated to contest election, only four — only four of 64 candidates have any business experience? How is that

going to help the municipalities of northern Saskatchewan? How is that going to help increase economic activity in northern Saskatchewan?

Four of 64 candidates have any business experience. How do you think you can run a province? How do you think you can have any sustained economic development when you don't have anybody who understands small business or business in the province? You don't have an iota. You don't have a sniff when it comes to economic development, and you know it.

And how is northern Saskatchewan going to benefit from a party that doesn't understand economic development? I'll tell you how much your party understands economic development. You understand economic development so much that your party has passed resolutions saying: we are going to shut down, we are going to phase out uranium mining in northern Saskatchewan.

Do you call that economic development in northern Saskatchewan? How can you seriously sit in your seat and say, I support the policies of the New Democratic Party, when that party wants to shut down the northern uranium mines? Is that economic development?

This particular party, this particular government, believes in releasing the potential that people have and that organizations have and that communities naturally have. That is why today, under a Progressive Conservative government, the exploration and the mining activity, for example in the gold industry, is up 10 per cent compared to what it was previously.

And when you take a look at the tourism activity under this particular government . . . You people were interested in just keeping Saskatchewan to yourself, because you wanted to control. This government believes in opening up the province of Saskatchewan. We believe in saying to people: come on in to this province. Come on in.

And as a consequence of our tourism activities here in the province there has been a substantial increase in tourism activity in northern Saskatchewan. And the members know that, particularly the members from northern Saskatchewan. They know that. Now that's economic activity.

Economic activity is tourism in northern Saskatchewan. Economic activity is keeping the uranium mines going in northern Saskatchewan. Economic activity is continuing to provide impetus and drive and initiative to the gold boom in northern Saskatchewan, so that hundreds of jobs are going to be created, and indeed hundreds of people today are involved in that activity.

But I think a very significant difference between this administration and your administration, when it comes to northern Saskatchewan, is what we are doing in the forestry business in northern Saskatchewan — what we are doing in the forestry business in northern Saskatchewan.

I want the member opposite to know, and I want all members of this House to be reminded, and I want the people of Saskatchewan who are watching to know, that

it is this particular administration that has worked hard to put together a world-class deal to bring a world-class paper company into this province, that is going to invest \$500 million to bring to the province of Saskatchewan the first-ever paper-mill of its kind, a world-class facility. That's economic development. That's the difference between a Progressive Conservative government and a New Democratic Party government. And that is something that we can all be proud of . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Now the members say that he's trying to talk out the clock. Well I would remind the member opposite — I would remind the member opposite — that as Minister of Urban Affairs . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . If the member opposite would have the courtesy to sit down and let me continue on with my speech. You had the opportunity to speak when you were on your feet; now I will continue speaking . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** — Order, order. Order, order, order! While the minister is replying to the question, there should only be one person speaking, and that's the person replying. Mr. Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Dirks:** — I can see, Mr. Chairman, that we don't have much time left this afternoon, but the member opposite had asked about economic development. He had asked about economic development.

Surely any intelligent, thinking person that is concerned about northern Saskatchewan knows that, if you're increasing tourism, if you're increasing the gold-mining activity, if you're going to keep the uranium mines in operation, if you're going to bring in a paper-mill project, that is economic activity in northern Saskatchewan. That is something that all members of this Assembly should be proud of. The NDP members from northern Saskatchewan should be supporting those kind of activities. We're building for the future. We believe in a future for northern Saskatchewan. We don't believe in shutting it down.

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

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 1:01 p.m.