

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Martin: — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a good deal of pleasure today to introduce a group of students from a town called Wymark in my constituency. The name of the town was derived from a “Y” in the railroad track, and I believe that that’s the way a lot of towns were named — something unusual relating to the area, or somehow the railroad track had something to do with a lot of these places.

However, that’s not the important part. These students are students who . . . a lot of them that I have met with earlier, and had a good deal to do with. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Knelsen, chaperons Frieda-Marie Elias and Judy Neufeld. And Judy’s husband is also on the school board with my brother, so we have had a good deal of co-operation and interchange with this school, and I’d like the members of the Assembly to join with me and welcome them here today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Saxinger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I’d like to introduce to you, and through you to the members of this Assembly, 37 students, grade 10, 11, and 12 from St. Louis and St.-Isadore-de-Bellevue. They are accompanied by the teacher Eric Harder from St. Louis, Andrea Gareau, Euclid Gareau from St.-Isadore-de-Bellevue. They are here visiting Regina. I hope they enjoy their visit to the Legislative Building. I hope they have a good trip home, and now would you please help me welcome them to this Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with my colleague, the member for Kinistino, in introducing to you, and through you to the members of the Legislative Assembly, the group of students from St. Louis and St.-Isadore-de-Bellevue school. It’s certainly an area that I’m very, very familiar with. I have some cousins that have attended that school in St. Louis. And it’s just my pleasure to join with my colleague in welcoming those students from St. Louis and St.-Isadore-de-Bellevue.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m especially pleased today to introduce to the Assembly, through you, Mr. Speaker, some 20 grade 12 students from Bert Fox High School in beautiful Fort Qu’Appelle, Saskatchewan. They’re accompanied by principal Pat McNally and Dick Rathgaber; bus driver, Glen Cook. I will have the pleasure, Mr. Speaker, of visiting with the students after question period this morning.

And I’d like to take the opportunity to invite all Hon. Members, and I know that the students will join me in this, in welcoming everyone throughout the province to visit

Fort Qu’Appelle and the Qu’Appelle Valley this summer. It’s a very progressive, dynamic community, Mr. Speaker, and establishing a real mark in this province with their welcome for tourists, Mr. Speaker, I would ask all hon. members to join with me in welcoming the students, their teachers, and the bus driver, Glen Cook.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Farm Debt Crisis

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct a question to the Premier, and it concerns, Mr. Premier, your meeting with the Prime Minister yesterday. And everyone has heard about your discussion in respect to the French language rights, and I know because of your flip-flop you’ll need more time to give your position on that.

But what the farmers of the province are asking, Mr. Premier, did you discuss with the Prime Minister yesterday anything with respect to the debt crisis and whether or not the Prime Minister is prepared to deal with the farm debt crisis? And if so, can you indicate any of the details in respect to addressing this very serious problem?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister and I did have the opportunity to discuss several issues, including agriculture. The Prime Minister was happy that they were able to increase the guarantee by the federal government on initial prices for wheat, which is up about \$130 million, and that the signs look like that it’s increasing, and some good signals internationally that there may be room for co-operation so that governments like the United States and the European Economic Community will back away from subsidies to get the prices up. He does recognize that you can’t get the price of wheat up just in Canada, that we have to move internationally to be able to do that.

We also talked about the science centre of excellence and the kind of research necessary at the University of Saskatchewan for farmers — a new agricultural building that we’re prepared to put 70 to \$80 million into, plus western diversification money that he thinks and believes it would be important for new varieties for research, for biotechnology, because increasingly the success in agriculture will be based on management.

He did go on to say that he was happy to be able to have now allocated to western Canada over \$2 billion in deficiency payments and that he would stand with me in defending farmers against unfair practices abroad, and that if he can do anything with respect to providing more assistance, more help for farmers in terms of research, in terms of cash, in terms of his support . . . he did acknowledge the fact that he has written off much of the debt that’s in the grain stabilization; that he reduced much of the debt that was in Farm Credit Corporation so that they could respond in a larger fashion. It adds up to several billion dollars, Mr. Speaker.

So, yes, he's committed to western Canada. I think people last night, when they met with him, recognized that no Prime Minister in the history of the country has done more for agriculture than the Prime Minister that's in Ottawa today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — New question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. Mr. Premier, what you have said is all well and good. But the fact is that there are . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — . . . there are literally thousands of farmers on the verge of losing their land. They are ridden with \$6 billion of debt. Farm families desperate for help in respect to the debt crisis. I'm asking you specifically, did you and the Prime Minister address that specific problem of the debt crisis and can you be more specific; what are the proposals that you can offer to the farmers who are desperate today?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, we talked about agriculture and debt and the amount of money that we are prepared and can provide farmers and the things that we can do, and we went on, at some length, talking about the billions of dollars. I will say in all seriousness that the solutions of interest rate protection, zero per cent interest rates for cash advances, billions of dollars in cash going out to farmers, setting up counselling assistance, protecting farmers, Mr. Speaker, so that they can have as much legal protection as possible when they're facing difficult situations, are exactly what the Prime Minister wants to hear from premiers.

He did point out, and I think I shared the observation with him, when you're looking at the alternatives to looking at a PC solution versus an NDP, I think you'll see across Saskatchewan, but even now as we speak, across the province of Manitoba, more and more people respect the fact that the Prime Minister has done more to help them in Manitoba than any NDP administration that they've . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order. Order.

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Premier, obviously, is this correct, my interpretation that indeed you have not discussed, nor did the Prime Minister give you a commitment that he will deal with the debt crisis in this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, what the Prime Minister said in public, and what he said to me, was that he was happy to be able to provide literally billions of dollars of cash — of cash. Almost half of farm income, almost half of farm income in Saskatchewan, half of farm income comes from government. Now that's never happened before. And the Prime Minister is happy that he can at least stand there and say he has provide . . . at least half of the farm income — and you don't have to pay it back; deficiency payments, Mr. Speaker — don't have to pay it back.

I will say to the hon. member, and I was in his riding night before last, I will say, Mr. Speaker, that they are very happy to see a Progressive Conservative government in the province of Saskatchewan, a Progressive Conservative government in Ottawa providing real assistance and not just buying their land through land bank, like the member from Quill Lake always wants the NDP to do.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Salary Increase for Staff Members

Mr. Solomon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier; it has to do with his government's expenditure of public funds. Can the Premier confirm, that since January 1 of this year, that your government increased the salaries of cabinet ministers' political staff, and can you also tell the taxpayers how much these increases were, in either percentage or dollar terms, and how you justify salary increases of any kind for political staff when your government has imposed a two-year wage freeze on the rest of the public sector?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I don't have specific information; I'll take notice of the question.

Mr. Solomon: — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Premier. I'm shocked. You're telling me, and you're telling this House as Premier, that you don't know whether your staff has had salary increases or not; you don't even know what's going on in your own government. No wonder this province is in such a financial mess, Mr. Premier.

Who makes these decisions for you, if not the cabinet, on staff salaries? The public wants to know and has a right to know, and you should justify how their tax dollars are being spent. People are telling me that you are wasting their money left and right, and this is a matter . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Does the member have a question? Please get to your question.

Mr. Solomon: — People are telling me, Mr. Speaker, and this is another example of what they are telling me. The question is: how much money, Mr. Speaker, have you spent on increasing the salaries of your political staff since January 1?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I believe it's the same question; I took notice, and I will be glad to provide the information to the hon. member when I can get the information.

Vacant Rental Space in Saskatchewan

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to reply to the question that the Premier took notice of some time ago regarding the amount of vacant space this government holds pertaining to the province as a whole and

specifically to Regina, and also in dealing with the new trade and convention centre.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the rules of the House do not allow one to say the word "lies," but there are very blatant distortions of the truth, and we have certainly seen this from not only one member but very many members on the other side of the House.

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Before the member actually gets into it, I'd just like to draw his attention that we don't want to directly accuse or imply any members in the House of that sort of action.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — That's why I refrain from using the term. But I would like to get to the point now that the figure of \$34,000 that has been cast around this province, in this House, and in campaign literature in two major cities, is certainly far from what is the truth. Thirty-four thousand dollars is more than seven times the amount of the vacant space for the entire province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and those are the facts.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — And those are the facts. And I get annoyed, Mr. Speaker, when members opposite try to distort and try to confuse the people of the province of Saskatchewan with statements that are not correct.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order. Order.

Ward System

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Urban Affairs, and it has to do with the ward system. A recent survey of 14 Canadian cities which have populations between 100 and 200,000 show that all but one have a ward system of local government.

You will know that most cities that have a population of over 200,000 also have a ward system, with the possible exception of Vancouver, where the people have asked for it but a right-wing government has refused to give it to them. Canadian cities have moved to the ward system because it gives local electors a more direct voice in their local governments.

Mr. Minister, my question is: why do you want to turn back the clock? Why do you feel that Saskatchewan cities should be marching out of step with other cities in this country?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Speaker, in the absence of my critic, it's interesting to notice that my old critic is back, but if and when this government chooses to deal with the ward system, an announcement will be made and all the explanations with it will be made at the time of the announcements.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The minister on many times has talked about finances being at the heart of this. I ask him: why can't you leave local

government affairs to local governments and to local voters? Considering your government's monumental mismanagement — monumental mismanagement — why do you think that you have anything to teach the voters in our cities about how to run their governments?

Hon. Mr. Klein: — Mr. Speaker, the ward system has been an ongoing battle in this province since 1959, and times change. You know, their best selling book, "An economic outlook for the '70s," is outdated now. Times change, Mr. Speaker, and as these times change, the taxpayers of the province, who are an intelligent, sophisticated group of people, are telling me that they want to elect their councils.

They don't want to just elect a narrow point of view person that . . . I have never condemned any alderman in the ward system yet for doing a bad job. But because of the system, Mr. Speaker, what happens is that alderman is automatically responsible for his own little turf, regardless of what the cost is to the taxpayers of the city at large, Mr. Speaker. And clearly they can't function . . . they don't function as this system does, Mr. Speaker, where we're elected as a government and an opposition. And they keep yelling and they don't want to listen.

But in the meantime, in the council chambers, the aldermen that represent their narrow points of view and are not responsible to a government or an opposition, have a very difficult time in looking at the city's management as an entire whole situation when they are responsible to just one tiny little section of their city.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — A new question to the Minister of Rural Development, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, you have heard the Minister of Urban Affairs state his opinions on the ward system and why it should be done away with. You will know — at least I hope you know — that rural municipalities, the people in rural municipalities, also elect their councillors through a ward or division system. Are the people of Saskatchewan to assume what the Minister of Urban Affairs says with respect to cities will also be the case for rural municipalities? Will you also be pushing down the throats of rural voters an at-large system for electing councillors?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — You talk about pushing stuff down people's throats. How was the ward system in this province introduced in the first place? You rammed it right down everybody's throat. And to compare apples to battleships is stupid.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — The Minister of Urban Affairs is pushing a double standard. What he's saying, it's okay for rural municipalities to have a ward system, but it's not okay for the people in our cities to have a ward system. In this particular case, what's good for the goose isn't good for the gander. In plain English, explain this double standard to the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Klein: — I hope he's not the critic for Rural Development, Mr. Speaker.

Are you suggesting for a moment that the town of Hudson Bay or the town of Kindersley has a ward system? I mean, it's ludicrous.

Mr. Speaker, in this whole discussion of the ward system, I have never indicated that it won't work. I have often cited Winnipeg as an example, where natural divisions, natural boundaries, natural communities exist, and all of the outlying subdivisions form the one great metropolitan Winnipeg. Now you're talking of a city of a half a million people. Our two major cities are less than 200,000. And to start comparing the ward system of a city to the ward system of a rural municipality just makes absolutely no sense.

Task Force on Health Care

Mr. Goodale: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Health. To the Minister of Health, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the government's proposed task force on health care in Saskatchewan, the minister will know that that was announced as the centre-piece in the throne speech now four weeks ago, and it was suggested nearly a year ago in the internal Coopers & Lybrand analysis of the Health department. I wonder if the minister could give us today a firm, specific date upon which he will announce the details of that task force? When will the minister reveal those details? Will he tell us who he is now consulting in the preparation of his task force, and specifically, who has he consulted since March 21? And what role is going to be played in this whole process by the Coopers & Lybrand study group upon whom the minister relied so heavily last year in making the health-care cuts that he made in 1987?

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, yes, the hon. member is right in saying that it was a major announcement in the throne speech. As the hon. member will know, and as all members of this House will know, the throne speech is the outline of the government's intentions for the year to come, and certainly that announcement of the task force, it was included for that very reason.

As we have said, as I have said on several occasions, and as I said in my speech during the budget debate here, the task force . . . and I gave some outline of what that would be about. And all I can say to the hon. member is, as we have said before, it will be announced in due course, and within a matter of weeks, Mr. Speaker.

Dental Plan for School Children

Mr. Goodale: — Mr. Speaker, a new question, but also to the same minister, with respect to Health, and it has to do with the operations of the dental plan for school children.

Mr. Minister, dentists in Saskatchewan are advising, at least some dentists in Saskatchewan are advising their clients and patients that they do not believe that there is any regular coverage for school children under your new dental plan during the summer months. And therefore, if parents wish to have their children taken to the dentist under your dental plan, they would need to do that before the end of June, whereas some parents have been planning to do it during July and August.

Could you clarify that particular point for parents across Saskatchewan who may be waiting for a summer appointment, only to find that that appointment is not covered under your dental plan and they will have to have those appointments arranged before the end of June?

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I would be . . . I certainly do want to clarify that, because there was . . . last summer, during the transition period, there was some confusion as it related to the month of July and August.

There should be no confusion at all, Mr. Speaker, now, and parents — in fact many of them — are planning to take their children to the dentist during the summer months, as they did during Easter holidays just past, and as they did during the Christmas holidays prior to that.

Mr. Speaker, children under the dental plan will be covered through all of the months of the year. And certainly we know, and the dentists in the province know very well — all of the dentists, I believe, know very well, at least through their college, and they can certainly find out through their college, and they can certainly find out through their college who administers the plan — that young people in this province are covered for 12 months of the year.

Child Hunger in Saskatchewan

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Social Services, and it deals with his attempts to trivialize the problem of child hunger in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Minister, are you aware that the Saskatoon food bank has had a 25 per cent increase in requests for food baskets since January 1, and are you aware that that food bank now serves more than 6,000 people a month, 6,062 to be exact, in March; that 40 per cent of them are children; that another 10 to 15 per cent of them are teenagers?

My question to you, Mr. Minister, is this: when are you going to stop playing games with a serious problem and introduce a program to deal with the rising problem of child hunger in this province? When are you going to start introducing things like expanded school lunch programs in the schools, and increase social assistance rates and the minimum wage so that people have the financial resources to feed their children in this province?

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Speaker, look who is playing games. The NDP, last week, called people numbers, and they gave out numbers, saying numbers that were hungry. I have to know who they are, because I have to feed people. I can't feed numbers. The NDP have had a week now and have not sent one name of one person in need to me, so that is what the NDP are interested in — numbers, playing games. We are interested in families, and if they will give me the names of families in need, I will help them. Thank you.

Mr. Prebble: — Well, Mr. Minister — a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I'll be on my deathbed before I'd give you an individual name, because I don't trust you in terms of what you'll do with that name.

Mr. Minister, you already have the names. The names are a great many of the children that are on the social assistance lists of this province, because more than half the people who are on social assistance in Saskatchewan are children, and they're living on completely inadequate social assistance rights under which families can never feed their children.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is this: Mr. Minister, in light of the fact that a family of four in this province with the two children is now receiving in real dollar terms more than \$3,600 less a year than they were in 1981, when are you going to stop playing political games with this question of child hunger and provide adequate social assistance rates to the people of this province so that families with children no longer have to be faced with living below the poverty line, as much as \$5,000 below the poverty line, as a result of the policies of your government?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Speaker, the NDP have not sent any names of people in need because they don't have any. Saskatchewan has the highest rates for social assistance in Canada for families, the highest in Canada. The games will stop when the NDP stop playing games and send us the names of people in need.

Every day I get letters, I get phone calls from a few people who are in need, and I try to assist them in every way possible. The NDP have had over a week and they've played games for another week. They do not care. They only want to play games, and that's what they're doing right now.

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Minister, I'm not interested in playing games with the minister . . . Supplementary. I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, supplementary.

Mr. Speaker, my question concerns, first of all, the fact that we on this side of the House, don't trust the Minister of Social Services . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order. Order. I think we're getting into a political debate, and I'd like to have the member get to his question.

Mr. Prebble: — . . . Mr. Speaker, Mr. Minister, Mr. Barry Earl, the deputy director of the Saskatoon public school board, is quoted as saying that "the breakfast program for hungry children . . ."

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order. Unfortunately, I must interrupt the question here. He's quoting, and I'm sure he can make his point without the quote.

Mr. Prebble: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A new question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Barry Earl, the deputy director . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Sorry. Sorry . . . sorry. The hon. member . . . I ask the hon. member to place his supplementary without the quote. I'm sure he's capable of that.

Mr. Prebble: — Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr.

Speaker, the Saskatoon public school-board is noting that they have a breakfast program in Saskatoon which is now serving four to five public schools in the city. They're anticipating expanding that to eight to nine schools in the fall. And they're saying, Mr. — they're saying, Mr. Minister . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. The hon. member is getting into quite a lengthy preamble, and we've had two or three problems. I ask him now to simply put his question — just put his question.

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Minister, what we need is a long-range plan for resolving the problem of child hunger in this province.

My question to you, Mr. Minister, is: when are we going to see a long-range plan from your government to resolve the urgent problem of child hunger in this province with expanded school lunch programs, an increase in the minimum wage, and an increase in social assistance rates so that families have the resources to feed their children instead of having to go to you for hand-outs on an individual basis?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: — Mr. Speaker, I asked him for the names of needy people; he gives me the name of a deputy director who probably makes \$60,000 a year. I need the names of those people in need.

I've met with the Regina school-boards . . . I'll give you a name — Margaret Fern, three-time defeated NDP candidate in Regina South, on the Regina school-board. She starts a study on hunger. She has never sent me a name either. The NDP — none of them will send me a name of those people in need. I have met with the school-boards in Regina, and we are working on some pilot projects to look into the problem.

But let's not throw around the names of adults. Let's throw around the names of needy — and don't throw them in the House; send me a list; I will keep it confidential; I will help those people. But don't come here and play political games with people, treat them like numbers and mould them for your political purposes. These are people. Send me the names in confidence and I will assist them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Farm Finance for the Future: Committee Report

Hon. Mr. Hardy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've taken the liberty of forwarding a copy to the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, and I wasn't sure who the critic would be. I sent it over to the member for Saskatoon South, but he'll forward it to the proper person, Mr. Speaker . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. The minister is about to give his ministerial statement but cannot

because of interference, and I'd like the co-operation of the House to allow him to do so.

Hon. Mr. Hardy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise this afternoon to inform the members of this Legislative Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan that I will be making public the details of the *Farm Finance for the Future: Committee Report*. We believe it is extremely important to the people of Saskatchewan to have the opportunity to study the report and its recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, I first want to extend my appreciation to the nearly 4,000 Saskatchewan farmers and business men who participated in our public meetings and who provided our government with their valuable input and advice hearing the farm finance issue. I also want to recognize the excellent work put forth by the MLA committee.

Members of the committee travelled to all areas of our province, listening and talking to thousands of farmers. Mr. Speaker, I believe it is significant to note that members of the farm finance committees are farmers. They understand agriculture, and they understand the challenges confronting farmers today.

As well, I want to thank the 200 representatives from Saskatchewan farm organizations, financial institutions, agri-business, educational institutions and government for participating in our two-day farm symposium we held here in Regina.

We had to look at the agriculture programs in place now that have been made possible by our government, and talking with farm producers and listening to their concerns. This has been a process to which our government has been committed from the beginning.

Mr. Speaker, I'll make mention of a few programs just so you know what we looked at as we made our recommendations. The livestock cash advance program. The program alone saves Saskatchewan farmers an estimated 22.4 million in interest costs each year.

The livestock facilities tax program, which was established in 1986 to provide tax credits to farmers; this new program provided 2.6 million in tax credits to 1,200 farmers in its first year.

The production loan program provided 1.1 billion in low-interest loans to 57,000 Saskatchewan farmers, and at the advice of farmers, we have provided a 10-year repayment option. As well, Mr. Speaker, we established the Agricultural Credit Corporation to provide additional low-interest loans to Saskatchewan farmers.

There was other programs that we had to look at as well, Mr. Speaker, which included the feeder livestock loan guarantee, the livestock investment tax credit, and the farmers' royalty refund, to name a few.

In addition to this, Mr. Speaker, the efforts of our government has resulted in the special Canadian grains program which provided 447 million in deficiency

payment to Saskatchewan farmers in 1987.

Plus we've established a 200 million agriculture development fund for a variety of agriculture research projects and, as you know, the Prime Minister met yesterday, talking about extending that.

We have undertaken initiatives to enhance rural economic diversification and to improve the delivery of services to rural people. We've also continued to promote our agriculture industry at a national level.

We must continue our efforts to provide more secure access for farm products to the U.S. markets through the Canada-U.S. trade agreement. And we must continue to urge governments in the United States and the European Economic Community to address the problems of excess subsidization which has resulted in critically low prices for our grain. This is a very, very important issue to 68,000 farmers out there, Mr. Speaker, and I believe it takes some time to say why, and why the recommendations were made.

As a result of the farm finance public meetings, the MLA committee has provided a number of debt financing recommendations to address Saskatchewan's farm finance situation. Our government has already responded to three of the ideas gathered at the public meetings.

First, I'm pleased to say that our government has responded by extending The Farm Land Security Act to provide legislative protection for farmers facing foreclosure. Second, we acted quickly to extend the counselling and assistance program for farmers to provide operating loan guarantees to farmers so they can have their spring seeding. Third, as I mentioned earlier, we have provided extended repayment period options on the production loan program from three to ten years for farmers.

Some of the other recommendations contained in the farm finance report include: further protection with respect to the home quarters should be available to Saskatchewan farmers in the event of foreclosure. Mr. Speaker, this would be in addition to the extension of The Farm Land Security Act; the amalgamation of all Acts pertaining to debt protection, for easier understanding and utilization; a hot line, Mr. Speaker, is recommended to allow farmers easy access to legal direction in regard to their debt protection legislation; further mechanisms should be considered to strengthen debt mediation and to facilitate debts set aside in adjustment arrangements between farmers and lenders; the provincial government should impress upon the federal government the need for long-term loans of 25 years at interest rates at or below 8 per cent for both existing and new loans; the provincial government should enable retiring farmers to leave as much of their capital in agriculture as possible, and to introduce a program to buy guarantees on mortgages or agreements for sales supplied by retiring farmers or other individuals to beginning or expanding farmers; the provincial government should continue to place priority upon solutions to the problem of low market returns to Saskatchewan agriculture; the provincial government should develop an equity financing initiative, on pilot

basis, which meets these requirements:

1. The farmer's control of the production and marketing decisions must be safeguarded.
2. The farmer must retain long term security of tenure.
3. The farmer must have the right to repurchase land from the equity partner on a timetable which meets the farmer's financial capability.
4. The equity capital organization should be controlled by Saskatchewan residents with emphasis on local community level participation.
5. The organization should be privately driven with governments only facilitating the start-up capital and regulatory framework, and
6. Government should not offer incentives to attract outside equity capital unless farmers are assured of fair and corresponding benefits.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, an information and consultation process should accompany the implementation of this pilot project.

During the farm . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. This is already a very lengthy ministerial statement, and I would just remind the hon. member that it's not really acceptable to give speeches in ministerial statements, but to present material briefly and factually. I'd like to bring that to his attention so that he can kind of wrap up his remarks as soon as possible.

Hon. Mr. Hardy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate what you're saying. It's just such an important issue out there to Saskatchewan farmers, I was trying to address the emphasis of our thing.

I'll end by saying, Mr. Speaker, that solutions to farm debt are not easy, and it will take co-operation of everyone, between farmers, lenders in agri-business and government, both provincially and federally, and further program initiatives are necessary.

And I'm pleased to present this report to the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Mr. Speaker, I want to make a brief statement in respect to the very lengthy statement by the minister. I imagine the farmers of Saskatchewan are jumping with glee after they heard that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — That was one of the most profound agricultural statement of nothingness I've ever heard. The truth of the matter is that you have said nothing. You propose basically nothing, and you have solved nothing,

and you don't intend to do anything.

I'll tell you, Mr. Minister, your little road show was a flop; your road show was a flop. It cost the people of this province close to a half a million dollars for you to come back and tell them that you're going to set up a hot line to solve their debt crisis.

And the other thing you're going to do, is you're going to amalgamate all the debt legislation. Well isn't that helpful; it's easier to get at, to watch to see how their farms are being taken from them.

And then you're going to further protection with respect to the home quarter. Well I'll tell you what the Tories are doing federally and provincially. What they're cutting out is a little section of a few acres on the home quarter, separating that and leaving those people that small portion of their buildings, and you're taking the rest of the home quarter. That is the plan that is in operation today. And it's not protection, it's the destruction of the home-quarter rights, which you should be giving to the farmers.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — Isn't this impressive? The provincial government should impress upon the federal government the need for long-term loans. Now isn't that a tough approach? Now that is really fighting for farmers of Saskatchewan — we should try to impress the federal government to give long-term loans. Isn't that wonderful, Mr. Minister?

Who wrote this report for you? That would be the question, because you must not have been out and seen rural Saskatchewan. And now one slippery, sleazy part of this report is this . . .

(1045)

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. I won't ask the member to withdraw that type of a statement. I realize that there was another member in the House that made a similar statement a couple of days ago, but I would like to bring to the attention of all members that the term "sleazy" if not unparliamentary, is certainly bordering on it, and I would just ask all members to refrain from using these types of inflammatory . . .

Mr. Koskie: — I would not want to border on being unparliamentary, and I will be glad to see whether you called the other member to order in an important address of agricultural crisis.

And what they have been doing here, Mr. Speaker, is they went out on a road show, and they said, what we're going to do to the Saskatchewan farmers to get them out of debt is, we're going to have outside investors come in here from Hong Kong and from eastern . . . from West Germany . . .

An. Hon. Member: — East Germany!

Mr. Koskie: — Well maybe. You might even do that, you might even do that. Foreign investment is what your

solution to . . . have outside investors own the land and turn our farmers into share-croppers — tenants. That is the proposal. The farmers of Saskatchewan rejected the overall proposal of equity financing, and what they're doing is . . . said, let's open the door. And they're going to have a pilot project.

That is the essence of what you offer the farmers of this province. I say it's a disgrace. You should apologize for the expenditures that you've made on this road show. And I'll tell you, we will go to the farmers across Saskatchewan with this report, and I'll tell you, we will get support from farmers.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ROYAL ASSENT TO BILLS

At 10:47 a.m. His Honour the Lieutenant Governor entered the Chamber, took his seat upon the throne, and gave Royal Assent to the following Bill:

An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of Money for the Public Service for the Fiscal Year ending on March 31, 1989. / Loi portant octroi á Sa Majesté de crédits d'administration publique pour l'exercice se terminant le 31 mars 1989.

His Honour retired from the Chamber at 10:49 a.m.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Trade and Investment Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 19

Item 1 (continued)

Mr. Mitchell: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister, I don't need an answer to this now, but I would appreciate being provided an answer, and that is with respect to your staff in your office, having to do with this Department of Trade and Investment. Would you provide me with the names of your staff and their positions, their date of hiring, their present salary, and the dates and amounts of any salary increases they may have received over the past 12 months.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — I'll undertake to send that to you.

Mr. Mitchell: — Now, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Minister, last year your government talked a lot about diversifying the economy and then, due to your own fiscal mismanagement leading to restraints on your side, we found that industrial incentives and business support programs were drastically cut.

And in place of all the trade and business programs which were cut, your government announced a new, economic diversification and investment fund of \$22 million. And last September I asked you about that fund, and you told us at that time that a large proportion of this so-called new

fund consisted of the final pay-outs of grants under the previous and abandoned program such as the industrial incentive program. I think you said that 95 to 98 per cent of that money was to retire these obligations which had already been undertaken.

Now I would like to repeat my request to you to account for those grants from the fund in 1987-88 for which your department was responsible at that time, and some of which is carried over into this year's estimates. These were the industrial development grants and the export development grants. Were all of the funds voted for each of these types of grants in '87-88 spent? And if they were underspent, by how much? And for each classification, exactly how much of the funding was for new programming, entirely new programming, and how much was paid out under old programs like the IIP (industrial incentive program) and the small business interest reduction program and the export development fund?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — If you could . . . Perhaps I could ask for some further clarification so I understand, so the officials will understand, what figures you are looking for. You are talking about last year's budget under the various incentive programs for business, whether by way of export or by way of diversification.

And as I understood the question: how much of that money in last year's budget was (a) spent, and in what areas was it spent with regards to new programs versus old programs? Is that fair to say what your question was? I will attempt to see if we can get that for you; it's perhaps not quite in that form in the briefing book. So if we could go on, I will try to get that information back to you.

Mr. Mitchell: — Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister. Obviously all of the money allocated in this year's economic diversification and development fund is to be distributed under new programs. Presumably all the old IIP programs have been . . . or grants have been paid out by now.

When we were discussing this question last year, you stated that the programs which were phased out needed to be evaluated and needed to be replaced. And you made quite a lengthy statement about that.

I might mention, Minister, that I realize that some of this has now been hived off to another department, that the whole thing has resulted in a kind of confused situation. So I recognize when I'm asking these questions that I'm outside of the bounds of trade and probably outside the bounds of investment, although it's hard to tell that until we hear from you just what the mandate of your new department is as it relates to investment.

But my question for you is: what is the current situation? Is there a new program which indeed replaces the programs which were phased out? The last we heard of any new program guide-lines was that they were expected early in the new year; we read that in a clipping in the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix*.

Can you tell us when the criteria for the new export development program and the industrial incentive

program, when the criteria will be available, along with the guide-lines and the application forms, when will they be available to the business community and to manufacturers and exports?

Further to that, will the industrial incentive side of it be along the same lines as the previous IIP, which you seemed to be critical of last year? Will this assistance be targeted, and have you consulted the business community about the structure of these grants?

Just to put that point a little further, Minister, before I ask you to answer, can we expect a more careful and cost-effective program which will be tailored to the problems that our business community is facing, and will the export development grants be available on a cost-shared basis? Is any aspect of it cost-shared? I suspect that these decisions have all been made by now, and I'd like to hear from you, Minister, as to what the situation is.

(1100)

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — With regards to the first part of your question which related to the industrial incentive grant, or some program somewhat similar to that, those in the reorganization of the departments, that particular grant, that particular program, even though being phased out, was moved with economic development over to the Economic Development and Tourism dimension of it.

And as I indicated, I think last year, that while that program when it was measured up, let's say versus a lot of other program or assistance program that governments across the country or the federal government or previous governments have done, actually measured fairly well. But there was still . . . you always still face the question where you're giving grants out to people that would have proceeded in any event. And that's always a difficult line to draw. And that's being reviewed now. I think that's coming before cabinet in the near term.

With regard to the export development grant, I can advise the hon. member of the following: that the department has just . . . there's just a new deputy minister in the department, and over a very short period of time we are again reviewing that. We have consulted a great deal with the people involved in export, and that program we would hope will be in place within the next month or so.

I might say that what we're looking at or tend to look at would be a cost-share program. And that would be as a general rule. Now there could be exceptions to the rule, particularly if you find some very small companies, almost infant companies, who maybe have a specific product that could use some assistance to access some foreign market with that, in which case they might stand in a different, perhaps, light than others.

But those that would traditionally look to expand their market, I think the view is that government should perhaps assist them in ways that they can, but the main initiative still must come from the company itself, and they would in fact be doing a fair amount of that.

The problem we had before is not unlike the problem I referred to in the IIP, is if you ended up simply covering

the cost of various companies to go to trade shows here, there, and the next place, the question became: was that the most effective way to spend those dollars? And if you ended up with sort of a standardized program, you ended up perhaps again financing people that were going to go to trade shows in any event, number one, or people going to trade shows, number two, and question whether or not you got value for your money of financing that trip to a trade show.

Mr. Mitchell: — Now I'm going to ask you to be a little more clear about what this means in connection with the administration of this program.

The question that I want to ask is: are you planning a program which is going to be administered against a certain set of criteria and in accordance with certain guide-lines, where people will be able to look at that set of criteria and guide-lines and determine, at least subject to approval of your department, that they are going to be eligible, or on the other hand are we talking about a kind of wide open sort of fund without any set and objective criteria, where you'd sort of have a lot of discretion as a minister to either support them or not support them?

And I ask the question because I recall in our discussion last year, at one point you mentioned that model, which I think . . . which you referred to as a Manitoba model, I think, where you'd have a kind of open — a pool of dollars, where you could, with the approval of yourself or the approval of cabinet, just have money to give away whenever something sort of looked good to you. Which direction are you going, Minister, and when are you going to go there? I mean, when are the details of this going to be announced?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Two observations. When will the details be announced? I indicated, I think, that it would be . . . our target period would be a month to six weeks. Point number one.

Point number two. We have developed several models, and I might say that each of those models have criteria or guide-lines to them. The question becomes, in each case, what degree of flexibility do you have in those particular cases? And I think that we would want to have some level of flexibility, otherwise it tends to be business men or businesses learning how to access government funds, and perhaps then you have a question of whether you get value for your money in the best possible way. We have a finite amount of money, and we would like to target that the best way possible.

I think if you referred to last year, I indicated in the province of Manitoba they have a pool that is pretty much at the discretion of the cabinet as to whether this one is approved or not approved. That is also true in many other provinces. And so it is a balance, and all I'm saying is that they will be coming down soon, and when they do come down there will be guide-lines and criteria.

We would not want to confine ourselves to the type of situation perhaps you find with the DRIE (Department of Regional Industrial Expansion) offices of the federal government, where they are so cluttered with red tape very often that (a) they take a long time to get an answer to

the business individual, number one. And then number two, it becomes who is qualified the best to fill out the forms in order to get the grant. And that's the type of thing we want to guard against.

Mr. Mitchell: — It was last year that you and I had an extended conversation about the sins of the federal government in the past, and particularly Axworthy and how he dispensed his largesse, and in the result focused most of it on his own constituency.

And you and I agreed that that was a horrible thing, and that one of the essential requirements of these grant programs is that they be administered against a set of criteria and guide-lines in order to ensure that nobody's playing political games, that nobody's treating these funds of money as a kind of slush fund where you would have so much discretion that you could exercise in favour of your political friends and against your political enemies.

And I'd like your clear assurance, Mr. Minister, the clearest possible assurance that the criteria and the guide-lines that you lay down with respect to this program are, while not cluttered with red tape, are at least going to be precise enough so that your . . . we can have assurance from that, that your government is not going to be playing political games with respect to the expenditure of this money.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Yes, I think . . . I'd like to answer the question this way. Remember what we're talking about here is the assistance to exporters, primarily, and not assistance, let's say, to a business looking to expand in the province. So our prime focus here is going to be on assistance to people seeking export market.

And the dilemma you face is the following: if you're to look at the market that is . . . that Saskatchewan business would maybe attempt to access, it would tend to be the U.S. market, the Pacific Rim market, and some into the European market.

So you have those three identified markets as your largest potential market, perhaps some into some of the other countries, but not big in the sense of those other three.

You then have, on the other side of the equation, assistance in the field of agriculture, in the field of resources, in the field of manufacturing, high technology, that type of thing, services. So you can appreciate that there is a large number of elements there with a finite amount of money.

The problem we have in Saskatchewan, let's say compared to Alberta who would have money for export assistance perhaps 20 times greater than ours, we do not have that amount of money to commit to those programs. Therefore, the trick becomes how do you use it most effectively? So I think, in response — and I recall very well the conversation we had last year — I think it would tend to be fair to say that if it's a new product developed, or there's some chance of some penetration into the U.S. market, what we would like to do is co-ordinate the best we could, in this sense, that if we are giving assistance let's say to a particular agriculture sector to access into the

western United States, for example, for that assistance we would also like some intelligence back that could perhaps be of assistance to other people looking at similar or related type export so that we are co-ordinated as best as possible.

What we would . . . and you look at various models, one being direct assistance to, let's say, a group of industries. Let's take the farm machinery manufacturers, for example. Could you work that with a group, as opposed to simply a contribution to Flexi-coil, for example, or to Leon's Manufacturing, or something like that. So I think that you can appreciate that's the type of policy line that we're hoping to develop.

Mr. Mitchell: — I'm glad you raised the subject of the commitment of Alberta to the export industries in that province because it's a question that I want to raise with you. You've often spoken of the importance of finding and developing market niches and international trade connections, but as I observed last year, we witnessed cut-backs to the trade development program, and I wonder if I could get from you what you calculate to be the total figure on funding for trade and export development this year? And I see what's in your estimate and I estimate — at least in total — that your department will spend about \$2 million altogether, at least on trade-related matters, and there's another 1.6 million in the economic diversification and investment fund. And while I'm glad there's an increase instead of a decrease, it certainly doesn't compare to the efforts made to promote trade in other provinces.

Alberta, as you've observed, spends many times more than that — perhaps 10 or \$12 million annually on trade and market development, and they've consistently outperformed us in trade with the Pacific Rim countries, the Asian and Pacific countries. British Columbia also spends about \$12 million annually on trade promotion and Saskatchewan has just not made anything like that kind of an effort.

And you yourself, sir, have repeatedly, repeatedly across this province, stressed the importance of trade to our economy, and so have I — probably in stronger language than you have — and the necessity for us to continue trading and to expand our trade beyond the agricultural and the raw resource areas where we've now been trading and to attempt to find other market niches which we have previously not occupied.

It seems to me, sir, that this is not an adequate effort, either in absolute dollars or compared to the effort that's being made by Alberta, which is a province only slightly larger than Saskatchewan, or British Columbia. The effort in these provinces are of a much higher order, and they already enjoy a much better penetration into the very important Pacific Rim market which is such an important market for the future.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Let me make two observations. One, when you talk about the Pacific Rim and how much more successful Ontario or Quebec or in Alberta has been in that market than has Saskatchewan. If you are to look at federal trade numbers of Canadian trade into the Pacific Rim, you will find that of all provinces in Canada,

the province of Saskatchewan exports more real dollars into the Pacific Rim than does any other province. That's a fact.

(1115)

Here's where that fact breaks down a bit. One, the largest export that Canada has to the Pacific Rim is obviously in the grain sector. And the second largest export is in the mineral sector, primarily coal from B.C. and Alberta, and potash from Saskatchewan, potash and uranium from Saskatchewan. Those are the largest markets that Canada has into the Pacific Rim.

Where we in Saskatchewan, again we have perhaps one-thirtieth of the amount of money than an Alberta or an Ontario or a Quebec spent, and Quebec has some 49 offices in foreign countries — 49. Ontario has something like 30; Alberta probably 20. And we have three. Now I don't think it's a wise expenditure of a finite amount of money that we have to expand our number or offices to 20, for example. And I question whether they get total value for what they're spending on those.

Obviously if you are out into the world with many more offices, many more trade officers, then I think that you are going to probably do a better job than somebody that's only out there with two or three. It is our hope and wish, and certainly our bargaining position at this point in time, that we make better use of the federal offices, either the embassy or the trade offices of the federal government.

We are also exploring with the other western provinces the potential of being able to co-ordinate some of our offices, perhaps even share some of our offices, and in that sense being able to expend a little bit more money in a more broader sense.

With regards to the expenditure, your numbers are in fact correct in the sense of . . . about \$3.6 million devoted to trade. But I think you must also appreciate that you have a great deal of money in trade which we would hope to co-ordinate with, let's say SMDC (Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation) sales around the world. You have a great deal of money being spent through Canpotex, through the markets of the world of which, indirectly, I suppose, the Government of Saskatchewan makes its contribution through Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

You also have SaskTel International who is making an effort into the selling of technology, certainly into the PRC and to other parts of the Pacific Rim and some into Europe. You have Agdevco (agricultural development corporation), which is a small trading company in Saskatchewan, owned by the government, that again would have a budget of, I suspect, a million dollars, whose pure and only purpose, quite frankly, is to enhance that trade.

So I think that there's two things you have to look at: one, is the department would co-ordinate, or at least co-ordinate information from those various bodies or institutions or corporations — co-ordinate the flow of information so that we're not trying to trip over each other or duplicate things that we are doing, and at the same

deploy our dollars in the most appropriate way we can.

So I don't think the hon. member is asking that we up the expenditure here by some 10 or \$15 million. I would not suspect that it would be his argument. Clearly we would like to have an extra \$10 million here. We would do a better job with \$10 million here. We would do a better job with \$10 million, but as we always know, that there are priorities for dollars, and I would guess that if you sat around the table and 10 million to our department versus 10 million to another department, we might not come first.

Mr. Mitchell: — I'm interested in what your numbers are with respect to our trade with the Asian countries. We call them Pacific Rim, but I think Asia would be a better way of targeting what I'm talking about. I don't think we should take the time now to do it, but you can if you like, but I'd be satisfied if you sent me your numbers.

I have numbers from the years '84 to '86, and I'm looking at the '86 figures right now and it seems to me, from those figures, that Alberta is just whipping us into the ground on trade with the Asian countries. In some of them the numbers are quite startling, although when I look at Japan, we are second, we are behind Alberta, but proportionately probably not.

But the problem there again, Minister, as with most of these Asian numbers, is that we're talking about our resources, our natural resources, and our agriculture — nothing wrong with trading those, Minister — but the point I've been trying to urge on you last year and this year is that it's just not sufficient to sit back and sort of go with the obvious and build on our natural advantages. We've got to get beyond that if we're going to make this province get up and go.

We've got to start using some imagination and some initiative and find ourselves some market niches and opportunities that just aren't so obvious. And that takes a good effort on the part of all Saskatchewan people, including the Saskatchewan government. So that I would like to see the numbers that you have and put those in the context of the amount that we're spending on our trade effort, as compared to what our sister provinces in the prairie rim are spending.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Let me try to give you the numbers that I have to the hon. member with regards to the top 10 export markets, so we can put into perspective, from Saskatchewan.

Our largest export market is the United States, and we would see that market in 1987 at 2.4 billion, which is an increase of 37 per cent — 2.4 billion. The second largest market that we then have is Japan at 490 . . .

An. Hon. Member: — These are 1987 . . .

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — . . . '87, \$491 million, and that's an increase of 36 per cent.

The third largest market is the PRC, the People's Republic of China, 451 million. That's an increase of 7 per cent. We then go to the following: Soviet Union at 298 million — and these are not necessarily in order of importance:

Brazil at 111 million; United Kingdom at 72 million; France, 139 million; Cuba, 102 million; Algeria, 73 million; Italy, 77 million; all other countries, a billion.

So what we're seeing is a significant increase in our market to United States, to Japan, to Brazil; a smaller increase as it relates to France and Cuba; significant reduction — 38 and 19 per cent, respectively — to Algeria and Italy; and a reduction to the Soviet Union.

Now those last three reductions tend to reflect a weakening market in the grain market, particularly as you relate to something like Cuba, where we lost a goodly part of that market last year, and even more this year, to the EEC (European Economic Community) subsidized grain into Cuba, as well as the EEC subsidized grain into the Soviet Union, along with American subsidized grain into there. So there is increase.

If you're to look at Japan then, as to what we are increasing or decreasing in Japan, the largest increase is in canola, and as you know, the canola producers of Saskatchewan make two trips a year to Japan, and we assist them in that. That tends to fall outside the realm of the Canadian wheat board. With regard to our potash, our increase has been 32 per cent; our pulp has been 156 per cent increase. So the Japanese market on those products has certainly increased.

Now you make reference to the fact that we have to break down some of those barriers, or I think that's what you are getting at with regard to some of those other markets, and I totally agree with you. Japan — we have the following problem with Japan, I suppose: is for a small business — or a Canadian or a small Saskatchewan business — even a large business, by Saskatchewan standards — it becomes very difficult for them to go to Japan for this reason. And if you just make one trip to Japan or two trips to Japan, you're not likely to get too many orders, and therefore you have to be constantly into that Japanese market; and of course that is very expensive, into the Japanese market, if you have to go on an ongoing basis.

Number two, there is a great deal of protectionism in Japan. The rules and regulations, or restrictions on imports — all the hoops and curves you have to go through to get the product into Japan is very difficult.

Let me give you an example. A chap trying to export water, pure water, purified water in jugs into the Japanese market, even becomes difficult to do that, which you would think would be senseless. Our canola, again you can't put canola oil into the Japanese market, only the raw canola. Firm government rules and a whole lot of other barriers or artificial barriers being put up. They're not really tariffs, but they're barriers.

And all Canadians are trying to crack that same big market, but it is not easy, and it's something that we must constantly work on. And I agree with you, you have to find the niche market far more than simply the bigger markets.

Mr. Mitchell: — Can we go then to the mandate of your department, as you understand it, Minister. I refer to the objects and purposes, which use general terms, but I

would like you to outline for the House how you see the mandate of your department and how you see its priorities.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Again, I will take a bit of licence here in the sense that this has not totally been approved in the sense of the official stamp of the government as to what we would look at doing.

I would see the mandate of our department being in the following areas. First of all, the main focus is going to be on the area of trade. That means trade policy and that means trade enhancement. What we're talking about in terms of trade policy is the two most obvious cases are the free trade agreement with United States and the details of that, whether legal, quasi-legal, or whatever.

And number two, the ongoing negotiations at the GATT where for the first time provinces, all provinces and particularly some, are quite involved in the development of Canadian policy or Canadian trade offset the GATT. And it's an area that I think has received very little public attention in the sense of the media, but some very large issues loom as to a potential solution at the GATT and the ramifications of the GATT on policies of the Government of Canada, but also policies of provincial governments.

And that's a large issue right now, and clearly, I think, from a trade point of view, the largest issue that we face; also the largest issue, I would argue, that the Canadian government faces. So we have that.

The second dimension that we would see as a mandate would be: how do we enhance trade into other areas? And that is what I've talked about before with regard to how do we access the three big markets: the EEC market, the American market, and the Pacific Rim markets.

So what we would hope to be able to do, both through policy development and dollars, would be to identify where we should be going in a general way, and then allow the private sector, along with some assistance from us, to be able to use their wherewithall to try to penetrate those markets.

That's, I would say, overall what we'd be looking at from a trade point of view, and that's a fairly large undertaking.

With regards to investment, I think what we have to look at there, and our primary mandate there is going to be: how do we attract outside investment to Saskatchewan? And that's primarily what our mandate is going to be there.

That obviously will phase into other programs and other departments, whether in Agriculture, whether in Economic Development and Tourism, whether in Energy and Mines, or a variety of other areas of government. Our job is to co-ordinate that investment coming from outside of Saskatchewan. We would seek investment from other provinces, or companies in other provinces. We would seek investment from investors outside of Canada.

(1130)

And that, for the most part, is the largest group, right now,

looking to invest in the world, for the most part is the Pacific Rim countries, which is Japan, Taiwan, Korea, and Hong Kong. That's where the largest pool of money is. That's where the money that is flowing into United States and Canada and into Europe is coming from.

To a lesser degree, investment from United States, and then the growing area of potential investing is from Europe. And I would see the day, perhaps in Saskatchewan, where you would have your largest foreign investment would be Pacific Rim, followed by the Europeans, followed by the Americans.

Overview of what we're attempting to do as the two departments were originally put together . . . or the two levels of the department were put together.

Mr. Mitchell: — I'm not certain at all, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, that I understand how the objectives that you've described with respect to investment are going to translate into day-to-day activity within your department, or yourself.

First, I could observe that it is . . . it seems clear from all that I've heard, including what I've heard today, that the promotion of investment is of lesser importance — it's clearly the number two priority in your department. And I note there that the administration of the IIP program has been moved to another department, and in that regard is the promotion of investment still part of your mandate?

We talked last year, when you were the minister of Economic Development and Trade, of the dividing line between you and the minister who was then responsible for small business and whatever he was responsible for. And I think at that time your description was that you were responsible for the big business, you were responsible for the big business, and he was responsible for the small business. You were responsible for the larger enterprises and the manufacturing sector, and he was responsible for small business.

Now the administration of the whole program seems to have gone over to him or to the minister currently responsible. And what does that leave you with? And given that the large percentage of the funding under IIP went to what I would call large businesses, it's ironic that this program is now going over to the department of small business and moving away from your department where one would have thought it would have remained lodged.

So what we've had here, Minister, point I made last year and I can make again with increased validity this year, with a higher degree of validity, is that what we've seen during your six years is six years of trial and error about how you're going to go about relating to and supporting the efforts of the private sector. And it seems clear to me that you still haven't made up your mind.

I have expressed my frustration earlier today, and on previous occasions, with the way these programs keep changing and we can't keep track of. Nobody can keep track of how these grant programs relate to each other, and what happens when there's a change-over, and what the change-overs mean in terms of government policy.

And you know from your own consultations how this has been confusing to so much of the business community in Saskatchewan. It may be that the big movers and shakers that you talk to have a clear grasp of it, but the other people, the vast bulk of the business community in this province, just haven't been able to keep up with what the government has in mind as reflected by its almost bewildering series of reorganizations and its bewildering changes to the grant programs as they go along.

Can you explain this, Minister, and try and make more clear, just try and make more clear just what it is that your department is going to be doing as regards outside investors that you're talking about — the flow of money from Japan and Europe and the like? Help to wipe away or to blow away some of these clouds of confusion that have arisen over the past and which continue down to the present day.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well let me make two observations. Number one, we would see exports and investment being of equal importance. I think that it would be fair to say that we have devoted a fair amount of time to the free trade agreement between Canada and the United States, and that's taken a fair amount of time. We are devoting perhaps less time to the GATT; nevertheless, we are involved in the GATT and spending a large degree of work on that.

Investment, I think that we would tend to look at in the following way. We need foreign investment in this country, and foreign investment is coming to this country and it is . . . you know, are we going to get our appropriate share of it? That's point number one.

There's a lot of existing companies in Saskatchewan, as there are in Canada, that require additional equity, and can they get that equity in the Canadian domestic market or can the Saskatchewan firm get it in the Saskatchewan domestic market? And so our assistance would be in providing how they might get further equity, perhaps out of Hong Kong or Korea or places like that.

And the other one is joint ventures — you know, you look towards joint ventures. As I say, our focus would be on . . . if you look at the Marubeni-Hitachi plant in Saskatoon, as an example, that's the type of thing that we would wish to look for, as to how we might be able to attract that Japanese firm here, initially to provide services to, let's say, some Saskatchewan projects. But if they are of a scale that they are there, and of a quality that they are there, we are very confident that they will also be able to find additional markets, both in Canada and outside of Canada, functioning out of Saskatoon. That type of thing is where we would be looking to assist in the investment.

The other department, when you talked about IIPs or venture capital and that type of thing, falls in the other department. For the most part they are going to be looking at incentives for local businesses to start, perhaps attracting in a business from Alberta into Saskatchewan, looking very often for their equity or their investment coming out of the domestic market or domestic investment environment of Saskatchewan, or the prairie region, or perhaps some out of Canada as a whole.

So while it's never clear . . . as you know, having been in government, you can never make clear demarcations from department to department. There's always going to be one that phases into the other. And I think the whole question is . . . and that's not wrong; that's clearly something that has to be managed in the sense that you don't end up with territorial wars, one department to the other.

It would be our hope that we would, in that sense, co-ordinate investment, co-ordinate all trade matters, but that's not to say we would do all the trade questions. There's other areas that would be also working in trade as well.

So I appreciate your question, and I would hope you would appreciate the logistics of how it has to be done as well.

Mr. Mitchell: — But I want to lecture you again, Minister, with respect to this habit that your government has fallen into of constantly changing the nature of the program and the way that they're delivered and the people who deliver them. The reality is that so much of the Saskatchewan business community just doesn't . . . isn't aware of what the latest game is or what the rules are with respect to the game, because they haven't yet come to understand the past game. I mean, they're still really trying to understand the game before that.

You've been a moving target with respect to your assistance to the Saskatchewan business community. You've been a moving target because you change the nature of the program, and your bureaucratic arrangements for delivering those programs have been in a state of flux for a long time.

And to us on this side of the House, and to a large part of the business community, they can't understand what you're trying to do. They don't know what signals you're trying to give off, and they don't know what your objectives are.

Too often it seems to me that a reorganization will take place just so that a certain minister gets a certain increased amount of programming, and that of course would be the most foolish reason for reorganizing the administrative arrangements for delivering any kind of a program.

But in the result, you have created such a bewildering and obscure system that no one can come to understand it. Now I don't think anybody cares how bewildering it is in the business community as long as it stays stable long enough for them to find out what the rules are, what the criteria are, what the guide-lines are, and they can then make their plans as to how they can fit into it. But in some cases, by the time they get that knowledge and find out, working with your people or with other consultants, how to plug into the system, you've changed the system.

And what I'm lecturing you about here, and I'd like your response, is: slow down, stop for a while about making these changes; create some stability in your relationship with the business community so that they can start to work with government in order to assist them in the efforts

that they're trying to make; and stop changing the . . . you're almost playing musical chairs here, and the programs are changing so often and in such an obscure way that we on this side of the House, who are following this on a day-to-day basis, just can't keep up with what you're doing.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well you make an observation that, is there constancy within the department? There probably has been some confusion; I will not argue that that does not exist. I think that probably exists not only here but in many other places as well.

Let me make a couple of observations. Number one. I think in the area of business and how you deal with business, and what assistance you give to business or what advice you give to business or how you can interface with business, is going to be a constantly changing thing. So I think necessarily that a policy put in place five years ago or 10 years ago for business assistance, you very often find that it's not maybe appropriate for today. I think that in fairness would be . . . if you compared that, let's say, to some of the programs on the social side of government, that that argument would not be near as needing the flexibility or the changing of policy near as much. So I think that would be fair to say.

If you then go to business and if you say you've been and talked to a lot of business people, you'll find also a changing view out there or a differing view out there in the business world. I dare say, if you asked a lot of business people as to what they would see the best thing for government to do, it would be: don't do anything for us by way of grants or programs; just cut our taxes. All right?

Others would say, no, I don't want that simplistic way because we do need some help; we're a fledgling industry, or we can't afford to access into some of the more expensive foreign markets, and we need some help in those areas, and we need intelligence in those areas.

It is our hope, as I've set out to you, it's our view, that the model that we have now and the defined area to deal with primarily in trade, which goes outside (a) the province and outside the country, and investment as well coming back, that it is fairly defined. And it is our hope that we can communicate that to the business community and to consult with the business community. In fact, not only consult, but perhaps involve the business community in how we deliver our programs, or perhaps do it in a joint way very often with the business community so that you have that concern that you raised lessened to a degree. Of course, you always have a problem there, as you have a wide divergence of businesses out there, that what one might like, the other one doesn't. So I take your point under advisement.

Mr. Mitchell: — I want to go back to this question. I was talking about earlier about the program, the grant program that you're going to be announcing the guide-lines about. You're going to be announcing the guide-lines and the criteria within six weeks or so, and I had asked for a clear assurance that those criteria and guide-lines would be sufficiently clear, that they would be understandable to the people who would be interested

in applying for them, and so that it would be administered on an objective basis, and free from political decisions.

(1145)

We talked about this last year, Minister, in conjunction with the western diversification fund. And as I told you about a half an hour ago, we talked about Lloyd Axworthy and what he had done in Winnipeg, and I agreed last year that that was a bad thing. And we agreed that under the western diversification fund it would be inadmissible if the federal minister, Bill McKnight, were to administer that western diversification fund in the same way. And I think we now have enough evidence in, to know the concerns expressed last year about the administration of that western diversification fund were well grounded.

Let me just give you some aspects of the experience so that, when you're drawing your criterion guide-line for this grant program, you will have that experience clearly in mind, and you'll stay away from it because your fund ought not to become any kind of a political slush fund. I cite John Bulloch, the president of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, and you were pleased to cite to me the day before yesterday, and I cite him to you now. And he has stated that the western diversification fund is close to becoming nothing more than a political slush fund — I get so angry about that concept that I can't even say the words, Minister — a political slush fund to feather the nests of provincial governments.

He goes on to say that the small-business community has had to stand by while western Canada becomes a pawn for short-term political advantage. Now those are not my terms. Those are the words of John Bulloch of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. And this was precisely the danger that you and I were discussing in your estimates last year, and the worst has happened, according to Mr. Bulloch. And, Minister, you must be at pains to assure, to ensure that that does not happen under the grant program that you're going to be administering out of this department.

So I would like you to stand and give the House the clearest kind of assurance that your criteria and guide-lines are going to be clear and objective to the point where your fund will not become a political slush fund which you will use for political advantage.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — I would give you this assurance that our fund will not be handled like the western diversification fund. And if it was . . . I won't go any further than that.

The reality is the western diversification fund has put virtually no money into Saskatchewan, to speak of. And the problem that we are experiencing with it, and I think many businesses are experiencing with it, is the fact that it is still being driven by so much red tape and rules and criteria that you end up becoming frustrated with not being able to get something done. It takes six months to go through the bureaucratic hoops.

And so I think from looking at the western development fund, or western diversification fund, that's the greatest

criticism that I see, and I think one of the criticisms that John Bulloch was making is exactly that.

Now that's not to say that we would not hope to access some of that. I think the statement yesterday by the Prime Minister in Saskatoon with regards to the agricultural biotechnology facility in Saskatoon is perhaps an area where we could access a fair amount of that money. I would hope that nobody would see that as a political slush fund. I would think all sides would hope that in fact the federal government would see their way clear to see the University of Saskatchewan as the most appropriate place for that type of an institution to be, and to use their money that way.

But I take your point with regards to the fund. It's going to have some rules and criteria, but I would hope that it would not be constrained so much that it would end up that perhaps it can't effectively and quickly deal with some assistance to development that we so desperately need in this province.

Mr. Mitchell: — Well thank you for that, Minister. We share, apparently, very similar views with respect to the administration of that fund. I notice that of the Saskatchewan applications, only about 6 per cent of the total applications have been dealt with, and those people have had to wait for up to six months to find out whether or not their applications are going to be approved or not.

I want to touch briefly on the question of trade offices and in particular, Minister, what has been the recent experience with our increased export trade, or our . . . the export trade being generated from our Vienna trade office. Its track record has been just really, really bad news.

Now I realize that technically this department is . . . or this trade office has been administered by Agdevco, but you are the Minister of Trade, and that albatross of an office has been operating for a long time with practically no results at all. And I wonder if, at least in a general way, you could comment on that office, whether you intend to keep it going, and what its recent track record has been.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well again I don't want to get into a lot of that, because that falls under Agdevco. I can say, though, that the Vienna office is primarily used as a launch into the eastern bloc countries. So it's done a fair degree of work in the area of red meat, etc., into Bulgaria, certainly a hope that we can get further product into the Soviet Union and Soviet bloc countries. So we're not directly involved with that.

Perhaps that's an area that we hope to become more involved in as time unfolds, so I perhaps would be able to give you a little better update on that in perhaps six months time. But right now it's not under our jurisdiction, and it would probably not be proper of me to be the one responding to it.

Mr. Mitchell: — I have two related questions with respect to other trade offices. First of all, are there plans under way to fund two new trade offices in the United States in this year's budget, and if so, what are the details of that?

And secondly, with respect to the Middle East and South and Central America, our trade profile there has been very low in the past; the numbers bear that out. Have these areas been examined for potential so far as a trade office is concerned?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — I think you asked three questions. With regards to the U.S. market, we are looking clearly at the California market. The economy of California is the sixth largest economy in the world and, therefore, I think is something that . . . and we have a proximity there. It's something that we are going to develop.

We have not yet taken a decision whether there would be an office there or we would simply perhaps have private companies in there and perhaps give them some assistance in doing that. We haven't taken that decision yet. Many provinces have offices in California and Denver . . . or in Dallas. Again, there's a fair cost to that, and we haven't taken that decision. Clearly that's a market, though, that we would identify in red meat and a variety of other areas that we think we could penetrate.

With regard to the Middle East, there's not a great deal of trade in the Middle East, and that's still a rather volatile part of the world. It's not a big area of trade for us, and where we do have trade in the Middle East, it's primarily in the area of grains, handled for the most part by the Canadian Wheat Board, and therefore we wouldn't see the Middle East as a large, growing market. They're in the market these days for guns, perhaps more than anything, and we don't produce them, so we don't see that as a big market.

South America is an interesting market. Clearly Brazil is the largest market. It is bigger than all the other markets put together in South America. It's an area that we would look to develop through Agdevco perhaps more than this department. And while it is a large market, again it is — primarily buys primary product like grains and potash. Our potash . . . We have increased sales of potash substantially into that market now.

A couple of problems there is if you go to Brazil, as perhaps you have, the protectionism in Brazil as well is very, very strict; in the sense of anything they produce there, they prohibit the importation of similar products from any other country. And that's a very restrictive rule in a country like Brazil, which is obviously the largest economy in South America. So that's an area that we can penetrate in small bits and pieces, but I wouldn't see it as an area that we would look at putting a trade office in.

Mr. Mitchell: — Now, Minister, we've got this document still outstanding, this trade deal. And we spent about two and a half hours on it the other day, and you made an offer to me at that time to go through this agreement clause by clause, and I want to do that. But I'm reluctant to put the House through the two or three weeks that that might take, and yet I am most anxious that that happen and that the public have an opportunity to hear us talk about it.

In that connection, Minister, may I extend an invitation to you to join me in a tour of the province and do exactly that in six or eight of the large centres in Saskatchewan. We could have a debate; we could ask each other questions;

we could answer questions from the audience and really bring the detail of this agreement home to the citizens of the province. Can I invite you to do that with me?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Perhaps I would make a . . . I'll respond to that in a couple of ways. I've been to 59 meetings in the province on that trade agreement. I spent a great deal of my time doing that.

There are some further . . . With regards to what is unfolding right now with regard to the trade Bill, both in the United States, the federal government has announced that it intends very soon to introduce the legislation to parliament so one could clearly deal with that.

With regards to the next, over the next few weeks, it's somewhat difficult, in the fact that I have some other responsibilities to also be in the House, certainly doing the session. I would not think that you'd want me not being present in the House to answer questions, whether it's on Justice or other related things.

With regards to debating, I would certainly welcome that at any time. I think that very often when we look at this trade agreement — and I say this as honestly as I can to you — is too often when the agreement is being discussed or debated, quite frankly the debate has never been very detailed, and I think that perhaps we do a disservice to our population.

My guess is that it has probably been more detailed in debate in Saskatchewan than it has probably been in any other jurisdiction of Canada. Nevertheless, there is a lot of detail in there that I think is worthy of discussion and debate, and I would certainly welcome that.

The format very often drives people in this type of discussion on this trade agreement to strong rhetoric on both sides, and to avoid getting really down and talking about what the agreement actually means and the two various interpretations on a clause by clause basis, because clearly there are, there are two sides to the argument on it.

But very often the detail . . . Let me get into what I'm talking about. If we were to talk about the details of the agriculture sector there, it can become very detailed, and it can be certainly of interest to a particular group in the farm community — whether it's in the feathers industry or whether it's in the hog industry or the red meat industry or in the grains sector, and that type of thing — and I think that's worthy of debate.

As it relates to the resource sectors — whether it's potash or uranium, that type of thing — that deserves debate as well, and discussion. How the binational panel will function, I think that's something that is worthy of discussing, and a whole host of other things.

The reality of politics in this country and in this province is that very often because the media is not interested or not capable of understanding the arguments that it never really gets argued, and therefore the general population does not want to go through the details. It's like you and I debating the regulation 1061 of the Income Tax Act. While it might be important to a lot of people, you're not

going to draw much of a crowd if you want to get into that kind of an argument.

I think it's worthy of discussion, it's worthy of debate, and I would certainly welcome that, given my time constraints that I have.

(1200)

Mr. Mitchell: — Well I thank you for that answer, Mr. Minister, and I'll be in touch with your office to try and negotiate the very things that you're talking about, and hopefully we can get the debate out into the public in a way that is most beneficial to them.

I was very critical of you the day before yesterday, and on other occasions, for the way in which you've been selling this agreement, for the way in which you've been explaining it to the public — you and your Premier and others — and arguing you to start telling the Saskatchewan people what's in here. And I think that debates between you and I, or whatever the format is for these meetings, would be very, very productive, and I welcome it, and I'll be in touch with your office about it.

In light of that, I'll leave a number of specific questions that I have under this agreement for that format, and I thank you for that answer. I'm finished.

Item 1 agreed to.

Items 2 to 5 inclusive agreed to.

Item 6

Mr. Mitchell: — A question here, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister. This is investment services, which is the junior half of the department, I think, and it shows that in 1987-88, which is last year, there were person-years of 13 — 13 person-years, and that has not changed this year, and yet we find the estimate for personal services to have been more than doubled from 256,000 to 574,000 — the same number of people getting more than twice the money. And what does that mean, Minister? Have we doubled everyone's salary, or have we imported a bunch of new, high-priced help, or what's the answer?

While I'm on my feet, let me leave a second question with you under this same item, and that is other expenses have increased from 187,000 to up to about 460,000, which is an increase of about 300 per cent. And while you're on your feet, could you explain what's included in that increase?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Let me try to give you a bureaucratic response to your first question. That's exactly what it is.

I'll try to explain it in this way. When the two departments were adjusted and changed, when Economic Development and Tourism was adjusted, that part of it changed, there was certain expenditures and people transferred over to Economic Development and Tourism and no longer in this department, and of course, with them went the money to pay for them, etc.

Transferred back was a number of vacant positions, so the PYs (person-years) were transferred back with us. But because they hadn't spent money on that last year, the money wasn't sent back. And so we were not terribly interested in having a bunch of vacant positions that we would not be able to fill, and therefore Finance topped that money up, and that shows the increase so that we could in fact cover those positions that weren't otherwise covered.

Mr. Mitchell: — And is the explanation the same for other services or other expenses that have increased by 300 per cent?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — That's the explanation I'm given as to why that is, as well.

Item 6 agreed to.

Item 7 agreed to.

Item 8 — Statutory.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Minister, the item following is your estimates on Justice. I'm going to be asking you for your staff complement of your office, and I wonder if it would be more convenient for you to do it as a unit, so I raise the issue now in these estimates.

In particular, Mr. Minister, I'm going to be asking you for the number of staff, broken down into Justice and this department; salary being paid presently, and salaries being paid at the beginning of the year; other perks and benefits; out-of-town trips and travel expenses.

It may be more convenient for you, Mr. Minister, to give us . . . because you may not have your office neatly broken down into Justice and this department, so I'd . . . I want them for both departments, and I leave it to you as to how you give them to us, Mr. Minister.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — I'm advised that it's easier because, through the departments, they calculate it separately, so I will . . . I know you're trying to get at it, and I will try to provide them both to you at the same time so that they're together and you know what it is.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Minister, so far as you can, I would appreciate the information for Justice before Monday. We'll be resuming your estimates Monday, and I'd appreciate what you can give us by Monday.

Vote 19 agreed to.

Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Economic Diversification and Investment Fund Vote 66

Item 8 agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — The last item, I think the hon. member — maybe perhaps you could refer to the page. I think it's under the development part that would relate to trade, that we spoke about before with regard to trade development. Page . . .

Mr. Chairman: — It's page 27, Item 8, under Trade and Investment, Export Development Grants.

Mr. Mitchell: — Yes. Just confirm, Minister — this is what most of our debate this morning has been about, this very thing.

Before we leave the Trade and Investment estimates, I'd like to thank the officials for their presence here today and on Wednesday, and for the assistance that they gave this committee in its work.

Mr. Chairman, I'm on my feet. I should also thank the minister for the way in which he has responded to our questioning, including particularly his agreement to join me in a tour of Saskatchewan to discuss this nefarious free trade agreement.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — I'm just happy that the Deputy Premier was here to hear that compliment to me, thank you.

Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Justice Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 3

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Perhaps I could introduce my officials. The deputy is Brian Barrington-Foote; assistant deputy minister, Corrections and Justice Services. Terry Thompson; executive director of public prosecutions, Ellen Gunn; director of administrative services, Kathy Langlois; executive director of court services, Gary Brandt; executive director of public law and policy, Bob Richards; co-ordinator of legislative services, Doug Moen; director of policing, John Baker.

Item 1

Mr. Shillington: — You have talented people, Mr. Minister. It's amazing that you can't do a better job of running this department than you do.

Mr. Minister, I want to begin with one of your most prodigal wastes and that is the money which you fork over, apparently without any question, to the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation.

I want to say, Mr. Minister, that last year the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation spent 23 per cent more than the old department of supply and services spent, and they're doing virtually the same work. This year the spending is up another 18 per cent, a full \$21 million.

What I'm curious about knowing, Mr. Minister, is how many Renaissance hotels are there around the province? How on earth can the expenditure go up by 20 per cent per year when you apparently claim to be reducing the size of the public service?

Mr. Minister, your government is spending 21 per cent more on the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation this year than last. That, I think, is the largest increase in expenditures in the entire government. It's

clearly a political boondoggle, Mr. Minister. It's clear you are shovelling taxpayers' money into the pockets of your friends at a time when it's needed in so many other areas.

You don't have any money for a drug plan for seniors; you don't have any money for a dental plan, but you got untold sums of money for your friends through this political boondoggle, the property management corporation.

Mr. Minister, your particular department, your particular department has increased as well as everyone else, Mr. Minister. How, Mr. Minister, do you account for the increase, which I think is 21 per cent, in your department? Are you using 21 per cent more space, Mr. Minister, or is this simply your contribution to Conservative friends such as those who own the Renaissance hotel and those who sign sweetheart deals with the government?

(1215)

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — To the hon. member, if he wishes to get the details of where that increase is coming from . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, I will attempt to be patient with the hon. member. Where the money is being expended, is being expended as following: the largest part of it is being expended on a new correction facility just outside — a Regina correction facility, the new federal-provincial, where you have additional spaces there.

The second dimension as being involved, the main dimension being involved, is Echo Valley camp which is going to be a new camp, again, for corrections. And virtually the whole other area involves either further expenditures to other facilities by way of capital repair or to upgrading and repairing of court-houses, and those court-houses being in the city of Moose Jaw, for the hon. member from Moose Jaw; the Regina Queen's Bench member from Moose Jaw; the Regina Queen's Bench court; and two other ones, one being Pine Grove Correctional Centre and the other one being Besnard Lake camp.

So virtually all of that that the member wants to begin his debate with is for new facilities or improved facilities in the area of corrections. Now I think if you want to debate whether we should be spending money in the area of corrections, I always thought it was your view that we're not spending enough. So we are spending it, so that's what we're doing with the money, and that's where it's going, and that's why the money is higher this year than last year.

Mr. Shillington: — Am I correct, Mr. Minister, that those new facilities are not yet built?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well if you're to look at the Regina Correctional Centre, the new facilities out there are virtually completed, and that's the largest part of it. And perhaps it would be, if you have some time some day, to go out and have a look at them. And they're fairly new facilities, and they are, for the most part, completed.

The other stuff would be ongoing in this fiscal year, and would be expended in this fiscal year.

Mr. Shillington: — I suppose it's too much to ask that you give us a breakdown, specifically how much you're spending, how much of that increase is being soaked up by the correction centre and how much is being soaked up by the renovations to a few court-houses.

Quite frankly, Mr. Minister, I don't think the renovations to those court-houses amounts to a hill of beans. That sounds like a very minimal amount of work.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Clearly the largest amount is in the area of corrections. What I'm saying is that there's two primary things that we're doing: (a) the largest part — and that's what I said — is in the area of corrections; a much smaller part, but the second largest part, is in the area of court-houses.

Mr. Shillington: — Will the minister undertake to give me the breakdown on those increases? How much is for court-houses and how much is for the correction centre?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — We will arrange to send that to you.

Mr. Shillington: — I also want to deal, Mr. Minister, with the land titles office, Mr. Minister, it is just not satisfactory to have the land titles office in this province running two to three weeks behind. That is just not a satisfactory way to run a system. It imposes serious difficulties for people who deal with it.

Mr. Minister, an associate of mine from our office, from our law office, and a number of other people who are out in B.C., everybody — and this is six weeks ago — everybody was enraged in B.C. because the land registry system in Vancouver was running seven days behind. All I can say is, the bar in this province would be delighted if it ever caught up to that point.

Mr. Minister, the reasons why the land titles office runs an unacceptable time behind, I think, is fairly obvious if you look at the annual report which your department filed. And these figures are obviously for '87-88 . . . '86-87 because that's the date of the annual report.

An. Hon. Member: — Because '88 isn't finished yet.

Mr. Shillington: — That's right. The member from Souris-Cannington is contributing brilliantly to this discussion, and I do trust you'll stay around.

The work-load, Mr. Minister, during that year, went up by 10 per cent; the staff complement went down by 3 per cent, and I think that's the source of the trouble. I think you need more staff in the land titles office so that work is processed in a timely way, Mr. Minister.

There's nothing we can do but put up with the system, and I suppose, therefore, it's acceptable. But, Mr. Minister, it is just not acceptable to be running the land titles office in the fashion in which you're doing it. It's just taking too long to get that work through. It's the subject of constant complaints by the bar.

I know the public tend to blame the law offices rather than the government, and therefore the political pressure on this item may be minimal, but this is a very poorly run

section of your department. I'm not casting any aspersions on the staff; I don't think there's enough of them. I think your annual report, which shows a 10 per cent increase in work and a 3 per cent decrease in staff, tells us precisely where the problem lies.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well if you would . . . I will give to the member the turn around time in our various land titles offices across the province. The turn around time in The Battlefords is three working days; turn around time in Humboldt is the same day, if the member wishes to listen — the same day in Humboldt; Moose Jaw is five-day turn around; Prince Albert is one-day turn around; Saskatoon is now to one-day turn around; Swift Current is one-day turn around; Yorkton is the same day; Regina, where the problem is, is 10-day turn around, and that's the one we're working at.

We have been putting in additional staff of late into that to try to address that question and hopefully catch up the backlog, and we've been working on backlog. If we get that caught up, then I think that we'll do okay. I acknowledge that the turn around time in the Regina land titles office is problematic, and has been for a long, long time. I grant you that. And we're hoping to address that.

One of the problems we had was on the early retirement. A lot of the people on early retirement happened to come out as well, come out of that, that particular land titles, who were able to do it perhaps maybe more effectively or quicker than people who are now being put in to train, and that type of thing.

I acknowledge your question. I think you also would acknowledge that Regina has the biggest problem relative to other land titles.

Mr. Shillington: — The problem, I think, is Moose Jaw and Regina. Moose Jaw may be up to five days now, but it hasn't been five days consistently.

Mr. Minister, I acknowledge there's not a problem in some of the small land titles offices. I called Humboldt — this was about a month ago — and said, I've a piece of work, but I need to know how soon you can process it. And not realizing that I was out of town, he said, oh, I think it'll take us about a half an hour, which someone from Regina is not used to framing the question in quite that fashion. I meant, what time of the month, now what time of the day.

Mr. Minister, the problem, I think, is in Moose Jaw and Regina. For whatever reason, those land titles offices are running behind. Moose Jaw may be five days now, but it's been a good deal more than that. Those land titles offices need more staff, and they need it permanently.

I know the minister will probably get some people in and they'll get caught up, but the first time there's another rush — and these things tend to come in waves — it'll get behind, and well be two and three weeks behind, and everybody will be complaining.

Mr. Minister, you need more permanent staff in those two offices, and temporary help during times of trouble don't solve it — it's a Band-Aid and it's inadequate. You need

more people in those land titles offices, and you're going to go on having a problem with them until you get them in there.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well, as I indicated to you, that we have more staff being now allocated to Regina. I think the hon. member would also recognize that you don't necessarily look only to continuing to add more people as a solution to that particular problem. I could indicate to you that we will very soon be putting out for tender the concept of automation in the land titles office. And we would hope that that would go a fair distance as well to be able to accommodate and speed up that process so that a lot of the more technical things or clerical things could be done by machine, and leaving therefore the people working there to review it, to verify, and that type of thing.

And I think that in the end a lot of other jurisdictions have moved to that and have found significant savings and increased time, and that would be the area we would, I think from a long-term point of view, look at as a solution as well.

Mr. Shillington: — Just on that point, it strikes me as being relatively simple to permit searches of titles by remote computers. We have in our office a program, difficult as can be to use — it could be simplified — but it's a program which allows us to search the company records at the companies' branch. It takes me a few seconds to search any company name. And for a nominal cost, I might add, it costs us less to do it that way than it does to send someone down to the land titles office or the companies' branch to pick up a search.

And that's been going on for some time. It strikes me as being relatively simple to permit searches of the land titles office records by remote computer terminals. That, I think, would take a fair load off the staff if they didn't have to deal with the routine searches.

I grant you, it may be somewhat more difficult to allow a sort of a remote registration, but the searches, it seems to me, is relatively straightforward. I can't believe it isn't being done elsewhere, and it would take a fair load off the staff, particularly in Regina, which is such a huge land titles office. It must be by far and away the biggest office in the province.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well that's fine to say that you have a remote terminal in your office and you can access the land titles office, but if the land titles are not computerized, then how do you access? You can phone your terminal down to the person working there and say, search this title for me, and he then phones it back to you. What we're talking about in the automation process is automating the land titles so that you would come to the day where you would be able to take the remote terminal in your office, access directly into the information bank in land titles, hold the title out so you could see it right across your terminal and then, I agree with you, that's exactly what you want to do.

But in order to do that, you have to computerize the land titles.

Mr. Shillington: — All you have to do basically . . . I don't

need a lecture, Mr. Minister, on how computers work; I've a working knowledge of that. All you need to do is to get your titles in the data bank. That's really all you've got to do, and it isn't an enormous chore. The companies' branch did it a long time ago and, Mr. Minister, this is not an impossible chore for a government which cares to solve some problems, instead of trying to find victims. It would be, I think, relatively easy to get your titles. It's a big chore because there's a lot of titles, but in a conceptual sense it's a relatively simple thing. Put your titles in a data bank, we can all search them, and the traffic in those land titles offices will clear out a great deal.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well I can say to the hon. member, he might say that it's a simple job — Alberta is now doing it, we are looking to do it, and the information we have from them — well it's a simple job. You're talking about a great deal of titles in this province, and you have to have them all onto the computer. You're looking at minimum 12 to \$15 million to do this. So I mean, to suggest somehow that this is just an easy job you can do in your spare time, I think would be exaggerating a bit.

Mr. Shillington: — Look upon it, Mr. Minister, if you might, as an investment. I think the land titles office will . . . the land titles office, first of all, makes money. You're taking a fair amount of money in from those land titles offices — a lot more than you're spending, I believe. It seems to me, Mr. Minister, if there were no staff time involved in doing the searches, you'd have still charged \$4 for the search. I don't think anyone would complain. In fact, the companies' branch, I think, charged me more than that to search a company. You'd have still charged your \$4, there wouldn't be any staff time involved, and I think the net revenue to the province would increase considerably if you automated it.

What we have now is a very, very archaic system whereby somebody runs back, picks up a piece of paper, runs back and gives it to them. It's very, very time-consuming and I, Mr. Minister, I really worry when you say you're studying it. For some two years you studied the problems with another section of your department, farm land security. What we got this morning was a report saying, gee, it is an awful problem, and that's all we got out of a couple of years of work. You don't give me a whole lot of confidence, Mr. Minister, when you say you're studying it. I don't have a whole lot of confidence it's going to be solved within an acceptable time frame.

(1230)

Mr. Minister, I want to deal with something . . . I want to say, incidentally, I plan to leave what I think is the overarching issue in your department, the Farm Land Security Board, to Monday. I say so because I want to read — although I think there's nothing at all in it — I want to read that report which we got this morning.

So I will be dealing with that on Monday, Mr. Minister, and I would ask you to come with your officials, prepared to give us the statistics on that board's operation, because I don't think they do your government any credit. Now you be prepared to argue that Monday I just give you warning that that is the subject I'll be dealing with, and I will not deal with it till Monday.

Mr. Minister, I would also like to follow up on a question asked earlier in question period, which I think you didn't do justice to, that is the cost of the translation statutes. This relates to Bill 2.

I think, Mr. Minister, since you have made an enormous issue out of this, I think you owe it to us in this Assembly and to the public of Saskatchewan to give us a breakdown. Anyone can throw around figures; I think you owe us some detail. I don't necessarily need that now, Mr. Minister, but I do think that when, if ever, Bill 2 comes up, you should be prepared to give us a breakdown of what you think it's going to cost us. A lot of people have expressed some real scepticism about your \$15 million figure.

I would say as well, Mr. Minister, that when you give us that, we also will want to know what the federal government was prepared to contribute, because they say they were prepared to be fairly generous with you. I don't think your skittishness over French language translation has anything to do with cost; I think you just haven't got the nerve to do it.

So, Mr. Minister, I'll ask you that question now. You may take notice if you like, and give it to us when you deal with the Bill, because I assume it will be your department that'll be largely handling this.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Now let me deal with . . . let me deal with the three questions that he referred to.

He indicates that he doesn't want to have a study with regard to computerization of the land titles. I didn't say we're doing a study; I said we were very soon going to put it out to tender to begin the process of computerizing land titles. If he would listen to what the response is to his questions, then he would save himself some time.

With regard to the land titles and the functioning of land titles in the province of Saskatchewan, last year we were able to increase the productivity of land titles by 20 per cent, and that's to the credit of the people who work in the land titles' system. Twenty per cent increase in productivity, I think, is something that should be commended.

Third, with regards to The Farm Land Security Act, I would welcome that debate with the hon. member. Many of the areas of my constituency are involved with problems of farm debt, and I would very much like to debate the hon. member with regard to that issue.

With regard to Bill 2, one would hope Bill 2 comes forward very soon, probably next week I'm sure, at which time I would clearly be prepared to debate all dimensions of Bill 2 with the hon. member. We will talk about how it will cost and what it will cost.

To the hon. member, if he has been listening to that debate — and one wonders sometimes in the sense that he never asks any question in question period — but he has been listening to that debate, the issue for us in this province is not a question of money — that's clearly part of it. There's other issues involved in Bill 2 that we have

stated ourselves clearly on, and we'll be prepared to debate that.

For the hon. member to somehow say it's only a question of money and that's all we've hung our hat on, I think he was being: (a) he's not reading the debates or reading the newspapers; and (b) I'm glad to see him, for the first time, pose a question with regards to that issue he's been somewhat silent on, surprisingly, over the last two weeks.

Mr. Shillington: — What the subject needs, Mr. Minister, is a little less debate and a few more facts, and that's what I'm asking you to bring with you. I grant you, you will be prepared to debate it. What I'm asking you is: will you be prepared to give us the facts which we've been asking for, for two weeks?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well, Mr. Chairman this is the first time he has asked me a question with regards to this. I can assure the hon. member I will be prepared to give him the facts, and I can assure the hon. member I will be prepared to debate him, and I would anticipate that the debate will probably run a week to 10 days. And so one is clearly going to be prepared for a long debate in this Assembly, and I think that's proper that it should be. The members opposite are opposed to it; government obviously supports that position. And I look forward to that debate over the next 10 days to two weeks.

He will be provided with information; he will also be provided with the arguments as to why we're doing this, and why this is a reasonable and responsible and pragmatic way to deal with the issue.

Mr. Shillington: — I want to go on to the question of corrections, Mr. Minister. First, let me say that it's somewhat disheartening to see an enormous increase in corrections with little increase in funding in areas which might go to preventing the problems which corrections are supposed to deal with. Mr. Minister, I think it's fair to say that you've spent your money in a curative sense and not in a preventative sense.

Mr. Minister, there are a number of programs, mostly in Social Services — where corrections once was and where it might perhaps logically still be — there's a number of programs in Social Services which are intended to alleviate and reduce the rate of incarceration; those have been all cut.

I don't expect you to respond, unless you wish as such, because it's not, strictly speaking your department, but there is a cross-over here. It appears the government has put a fair amount of money in corrections, and you have nothing for the kind of imaginative, preventative solutions which we once had and which were cut under your government.

Mr. Minister, I'll stop and let you comment on that, if you wish.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well, I mean, let's look at corrections. And I'm not going to get into details of what's in Social Services; that's not appropriate, as you know full well.

With regards to corrections, you can say, why don't you manage it better? The reality is the court is where you have or do not have people going to correction centres. It's up to the court to send those particular people to that particular institution. That's point number one.

Point number two, we had in the ... which was a very successful program in corrections, which was the early-release program. It allowed people out earlier than perhaps some of the judges wished, allowed them to perhaps been more productive with their time than being in a provincial corrections centre; we identified which ones were most appropriate — many of them involved in drunk driving or that type of thing. And of late the court, as you are full aware, in Prince Albert basically struck down that whole program. And that program we believe to be a very, very good and competent program, and if you were to read, most people writing about the issue believe the same.

Now that's subject to appeal in the court and I suppose it's improper for us to go into a great deal more detail than that. Although it strikes me that if we are going to be hamstrung on not being able to do those types of programs, what you're going to find is having to build more and more and more jails whether we like it or not.

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Minister, I don't wish to give the impression that you're not ... that I think you're spending too much on corrections. My point is, and I restate it and then leave it, is that if you spent some more money on social services trying to prevent some of these problems, you wouldn't have the growth industry you have in corrections.

And I want to deal with ... just, Mr. Minister, for a moment, with the growth industry. I refer you to page 25 of the annual report. The prison population, according to that report, has gone up by 32 per cent since 1982. Now that is considerably more than the Canadian or North American average.

It's clearly something that needs to be redressed. And I think the problem here is that you've cut those programs in Social Services since 1982, and I think that's why you're having more people in jail because you're doing a lot less to try to prevent it.

Let's take, however, the 32 per cent increase in corrections. The staff, Mr. Minister, has simply not kept track, has simply not kept pace. In the five years since ... covered by the annual report, your prison population went up by 32 per cent; your staff population went up by three per cent.

Now this year there's another 10 per cent increase, so the total of the two is 13 per cent. But you still have a situation, Mr. Minister, where you have a 32 per cent increase in the prison population and, up to this point in time, a 3 per cent increase in staff. My guess is you've probably had a similar increase in the amount of physical facility.

Mr. Minister, we hear reports of facilities being totally inadequate of people not being incarcerated because there's no place to put them, and if there were, there'd be

no staff to look after them.

Mr. Minister, if you thought it appropriate to take away the programs in Social Services which might have prevented it, the very least you've got to do is spend a great deal more on corrections, both on staff and physical plant and facility, to accommodate this growth industry which you've got going.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member referred to, I think, the fine options program as one we had cut back on. I can tell the hon. member that when the NDP were in government in Saskatchewan — you can listen to this — 50 per cent was the number that were being incarcerated under, you know, as opposed to the fine option program — 50 per cent. We have reduced that to 35 per cent — 50 per cent down to 35 per cent. All right. Now that's a significant decrease, I think.

With regards to the prisons, we have spent 15 and a half million dollars in the Regina Correctional Centre. That gives 200 more spaces — 15 and a half million dollars for 200 more spaces. That will be open and in use this month.

Now I think what that tells you is that for 200 additional beds in a new facility at a cost of 15 and a half million dollars is a significant amount of money. And so that if you're suggesting somehow that we continue to build more and more facilities, you have to recognize that they do cost a lot of money.

Now if you come to the program of saying, well let's maybe then have — we can deal with it on two ends: send fewer people to jail or those that are in jail perhaps have their stay there for a smaller, shorter period of time.

I think the hon. member, as a lawyer, recognizes that it's somewhat difficult for a government or a department like this to instruct the court as to how many people we want to have in jail at any given time. And it's going to be the court that makes the decision as to whether this person should go to jail. Is now the court saying, well we're going to restrict on the early release program. And that obviously adds further pressure to the number of people that are going to be in an institution at any given time. So both of those pressures are clearly at work.

With regards to are there more people going to jail today, here? Of course there are — clearly there are. And that is not a simple problem either, and I would think the hon. member would not try to make that into some type of a simple program that if we simply add a couple of other programs in the field of Social Services, that would not happen.

And I think that he would be open enough to recognize that society is in fact changing and that there are pressures on society as to why that is happening. There's perhaps a variety of reasons. But clearly, it is happening. There's more incarceration, more people being sent to jail, and that's a reality.

(1245)

Mr. Shillington: — Mr. Minister, the largest single contributor to this growth industry you have in prisons

has little to do with an increase in crime in the traditional sense and everything to do with a lack of alternate facilities.

Any number of different groups, mental health people, tell me that their clients who used to go to other facilities now go to jail. Why? Because you've cut the funding for the other facilities.

Mr. Minister, if you're not prepared to use your imagination and develop at least — never mind your imagination, that would be asking the impossible. If you're not prepared to maintain the programs which you found in place when you took office, if you want to cut those, if you want to cut funding to mental health and the other groups, then the very least you have to be prepared to do is to build the jails that you need to have to hold the people.

It is a financially — it's financial insanity and it's socially destructive to be taking away other facilities which are low-cost, and relying instead upon jails which are extremely high-cost facilities. That's financial nonsense and it's socially destructive. But if that's your path that you insist on taking, then the very least you have to do is to build sufficient number of jails.

Mr. Minister, you spoke with enormous pride about 200 additional facilities. I can tell you that this graph, which is so helpfully included, and it'll probably be missing from next year's annual report, that's been the course around here. As soon as we find something useful in the annual report the information is out next year. But for this year, at least, we have it.

The graph suggests, Mr. Minister, the population of the jails has gone up by 300. The bottom line, Mr. Minister, is that your facilities are outdated before they're even built. Your population has gone up by 300; you're building another 200 spaces. Mr. Minister, you're behind the eight ball before the ribbon is ever cut on the thing.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well I think the hon. member has raised several points with regards to the fact that we should be . . . what he's saying is, we should be building more and more jails. If the hon. member wants to get into some of the statistical reasons as to why you see more and more people incarcerated, the fastest growing offence leading to incarceration is property offences — robberies, that type of thing.

An. Hon. Member: — Right, and it's hunger.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — It's not hunger. The biggest part, and you can ask any criminologist that you want, the biggest problem is in the areas of alcohol and drug abuse — without question. Without question the problem is in drug abuse and alcohol abuse.

The hon. member asks that we do something about it. When we set about to do something about it — the Minister of Health with regard to Whitespruce, where we've put a lot of money into it, and a good program — and the hon. member is not even prepared to stand up and acknowledge that that is a good program. He will not even stand up and recognize that.

The fact is, is that there's more and more property offences, and the reality is more and more of those property offences are drug related. Now that's something that society must come to grips with. It's not good enough to say, well let's just disregard that, that's not a fact. It is a fact, and it's a fact here, and it's a fact in other areas. And that's something you have to come to grips with, and it's not an easy problem to solve.

Whitespruce will go a ways to help that problem. Whitespruce is not going to eliminate that problem either. That problem involves a whole lot more than simply saying, yes, we need something else. It has to be concerted effort by government obviously, and by various groups that have done very good work in this field, whether they're non-government agencies or what.

It also requires a concerted effort by our school system where you see a great deal of drugs still being used in our school system. And how do you deal with that?

So the member opposite does not wish to deal with some of the factual realities that we face of people going into incarceration. That's his problem; he does not want to deal with that, and he would rather want to get into some political diatribe as to why he would see everybody going to jail.

Mr. Shillington: — It's a fact, Mr. Minister, that the rate of property crimes in the city of Regina doubled within nine months of the time you introduced welfare reform. A hungry man is a dangerous man; he has nothing to lose but his hunger, and that's why the rate of the property crimes is up so dramatically, Mr. Minister.

Mr. Minister, the largest single contributor to increasing alcoholism is the ads which you have on television, and the greatest contribution you could make to solving the problem is to get those ads off the television as we have been asking you to do for years. Those solutions, Mr. Minister, lie within your grasp, and it isn't going to cost you a nickel. But you won't do it because you're in the hip pocket of the businesses who want to advertise, Mr. Minister.

Mr. Minister, I want to deal with another area that you've really excelled in, and that's maintenance enforcement. Mr. Minister, I want to say in fairness that the notion of having government assist — basically wives, but spouses — assist them in enforcing it was conceptually sound. But as so many times as happened with this government, what is conceptually sound is destroyed by incompetent administration. Mr. Minister, the maintenance enforcement is, once again, unacceptably behind.

I had a client, Mr. Minister, go over to maintenance enforcement in Regina with an order. She was told that it would be 18 months before they got to deal with it. So she came back, and I had to deal with it at her expense. Mr. Minister, I don't think this is anything but more staff. I think all you need are a few more staff in the area of maintenance enforcement and you could solve the problem.

I know you will have the assistance of the member from Weyburn, who no doubt could contribute to this, if only the minister would listen to him. Mr. Minister, when I sit down, if you wish to ask the minister a question, I cede the floor. I know that you're keenly sensitive to this problem in Weyburn, and you'll want to ask the question.

Mr. Minister, maintenance enforcement was conceptually sound. It was a good idea. It was done in the '50s, and the department should always have been involved in maintenance enforcement. Unfortunately, you're fouling it up by incompetent administration. This section is unacceptably behind in their work.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well the hon. member . . . if the hon. member would read his budget he would find out that in fact it's almost doubling the amount of money going into that program. And I can also advise the hon. member . . .

An. Hon. Member: — So you admit you've fouled up in the past.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: — Well the hon. member sits there, Mr. Chairman, and he's not even prepared to take enough time to read what is in fact being done. He sits out there and makes false, rash, uninformed criticisms, and then sits down. It's in fact almost being doubled, Mr. Chairman. The time is being reduced almost on a monthly basis. We've put a lot more money into this. We made a bigger commitment to this, and that's in the budget. That's one of the new initiatives in the budget, and the hon. member hasn't even read it.

With regard to his allegation that somehow the only reason that you have an increase in a number of people going to jail is because people are hungry out there and they're out breaking into places, that is absolutely unfounded — that is absolutely unfounded — no evidence to suggest that whatsoever. And the hon. member is simply again, like he always does, stand up and make some wild statement not based on fact, not based on statistics, not based on anything else.

Then he goes and says, well the other problem you have is because there's booze advertising and therefore booze crimes are up. The reality is, consumption of booze is down. The consumption of liquor in the province of Saskatchewan is down, Mr. Chairman. What is not down though, is the consumption of drugs and the use of drugs, primarily by our younger people. And that is up, and that is one of the major areas contributing to further crime in this province.

And we're trying to deal with that at a national level, we're trying to deal with that at a provincial level, and I find it incredible that the member opposite does not even recognize that it's a fact and an issue — doesn't even recognize it to be a fact and an issue. I find that shameful from the member opposite, that he can at least have the decency, at least have the decency to do a little research and have the honesty to deal with the issues of the day, rather than simply drawing stuff out of a comic book like he is usually accused of doing by everyone, and we would get on far better with debating some of the issues present in the justice system today.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 12:57 p.m.