

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Mitchell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am delighted to introduce to you, and to members of the Assembly, a group of students from Saskatoon. They are 63 grade 8 students from the Confederation Park School in my constituency. They are accompanied today by their teacher Mr. Mantyka, and Barry Colson, as well as by Loyal Schultz and Jane McLeod.

I'll be meeting with them following question period for pictures and for refreshments, and I'd like all members of the Assembly to join me in welcoming them here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goodale: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. it's my pleasure to present to the Legislative Assembly today a group of students, some of whom come from Limerick, Saskatchewan, and some of whom come from Nova Scotia and are visiting our province on a student exchange program.

The students are grade 9, 10, 11, and 12 students, as I said, half from Limerick, half from Whycocomagh on Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia. They are accompanied today by Mr. Ray Emde and Terry Emde from Limerick, their bus driver Mr. Herb McMillan from Limerick, and by Burton McIntyre and Cathy McMillan from Nova Scotia.

And I would ask all members to join me in welcoming not only our students from Limerick but their special guests from Nova Scotia.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. it gives me great pleasure today to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Legislative Assembly, a group of 28 students from Robert Usher Collegiate seated in the east gallery. These students are accompanied today by Fred Steininger, the teacher.

Of some interest, this group has requested an additional 15 minutes to watch the proceedings after question period when I believe we'll be proceeding to Education estimates. I hope that they find the decorum reasonably suitable during those estimates.

I look forward to having pictures with them at 2:45 followed by drinks and a question and answer period between them and myself. So please join me in welcoming this grade 12 class from Robert Usher, seated in your east gallery.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to add a word of greetings with my colleague from

Regina North, to the students from Robert Usher. Many of them live in Regina North East constituency and I want to, as well, extend my greetings.

And I also want to say, as we all know, student-sin grade 12, if not almost, are about to graduate. I would like to, on behalf of all of us, extend our congratulations to them on this achievement and wish them the very best in all of their dreams and endeavours in future years to come.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mrs. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. it's my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Assembly, a special guest sitting in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. we have with us this afternoon the Consul General of Italy in Vancouver, Mr. Gianfranco Manigrassi. Mr. Manigrassi is in Saskatchewan for the first time, and while in Saskatchewan he'll be meeting with representatives from Agriculture, Education, Trade and Investment, Parks, Recreation and Culture, and others.

I would welcome you, sir, to Saskatchewan. I hope you find your stay enjoyable, and I hope that the visit is fruitful between our province and your country.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Recommendations of Schwartz Report

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question, I believe, should be to the Deputy Premier, and it concerns the long-kept secret Schwartz report on the closing of rural hospital beds in the province of Saskatchewan. I have to direct this to you, Mr. Deputy Premier, in the light of what I think can only be summarized as pretty unsatisfactory answers by the Minister of Health on this report yesterday.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — My question to you, Mr. Deputy Premier is this: the Minister of Health yesterday attempted to represent the report as merely a discussion paper. If that is the case, how does the government explain the fact that the Schwartz report was kept secret for at least five months, if not more; only uncovered because of the reporters on the *Regina Leader-Post*; and by keeping it secret for five to six months, is this not really a confirmation of the fact that the agenda of your government is to close down large numbers of rural hospital beds in Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, I welcome this question, and I welcome it from the particular member, the hon. Leader of the Opposition, who had a good deal to say about the operations of the former government that was in power as he sat in the deputy premier's chair at that time.

Mr. Speaker, the words of the report, that portion of the

Schwartz report which refers to where anyone could draw any kind of a suggestion of a closure of rural hospitals, are the following. Mr. Speaker, and I just would like to read those or quote those just to put this into context. And I quote:

The report makes the observation that if one was to eliminate . . .

Remember now, Mr. Speaker, I'm quoting what it said in the report, from here.

The report makes the observations that is one was to eliminate all hospitals of 49 beds or less, 94 per cent of the population would still have access to a hospital within 50 miles.

That's what it said, and that was widely referred to in the press, and so on. It also goes on to say, Mr. Speaker . . . It also goes on to day, and I continue to quote . . . (inaudible interjection). . . No, Mr. Speaker. It also goes on to say that Mr. Schwartz was summarizing . . . Mr. Speaker, I'm having some difficulty with these folks over here not allowing me to answer the question. I wonder if I could have a little order, please.

Thank you, sir. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, the point I want to make here, the point I want to make as it relates to that portion that I quote him — and it's very interesting, Mr. Speaker — the report that Mr. Schwartz was summarizing was a report called the thrust group task force rural health policy report, which was commissioned in 1980 by the NDP. Those words that I quoted, that were widely quoted as having Mr. Schwartz as the author of those particular words, those words were in the 1980 report and reported in a summary in this report, of various reports that had been done.

And Mr. Speaker, one more thing, Mr. Schwartz . . . (inaudible interjection). . . No, Mr. Speaker, this is very important and pertinent to the issue.

Mr. Schwartz's summary goes on to say that in fact this is what was essentially suggested as one of the criteria by the 1961 Saskatchewan Hospital Survey and Master Plan Report, chaired by Dr. McDonald. This too! That commission as well was established by the NDP. All of those words referring to the hospitals' closing and so on, that Mr. Schwartz was summarizing former reports, where reports that were commissioned by them when that Leader of the Opposition was the deputy premier.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary of a new question either the Deputy Premier of the Minister of Health. I find it interesting that the government, whenever it gets caught red-handed or flat-footed with an initiative of its own, it seeks to somehow concoct an answer which dates all the way back, in this case to 1961.

My question to the Deputy Premier or the Minister of Health is this. You told this House yesterday, and you told the media subsequently, that the report was to be a discussion report only. If that's the case, why didn't you make it public at the time that the report was handed to

you so the everybody could discuss it rather than keeping it secret. And I say to you, sir, the logical conclusion is that you have an agenda to close down rural hospitals beds in Saskatchewan, and make no mistake about it.

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, as the member will know, the report, I said, was a discussion paper inside the health sector, not just necessarily the Health department — the health sector. As I said yesterday, Mr. Schwartz gave a very clear outline of his report at the Saskatchewan Health Care Association convention in a public speech. It was all done there. All hospital administrators and board members across this province were there, it was all part of it.

Mr. Speaker, another point. The two reports to which I have referred, both commissioned by the former government in another day, both commissioned by the former NDP government — one on a much earlier day, and one in 1980 — neither of those reports were public either. They were discussion papers, so the speak, Mr. Speaker. They were inside the health sector. Both of those were done inside the health sector to an understanding of what was going on. That's responsible. I don't say there's any problem with that. And there's no problem with this report being done for the purposes for which it done.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the difference is . . . there's a clear difference here.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I have another question to the Deputy Premier, but I see I'm not going to succeed in getting him to answer this question. And if I was the Deputy Premier in these circumstances, I wouldn't either, so I think he's very wise.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — I want to come back to the Minister of Health. We've heard the arguments that the Minister of Health advances — by the way for the first time today, presumably having been caught flat-footed and, as I say, red-faced in this regard.

But leaving that as an aside, Mr. Speaker, this government's record is a record of hide-and-seek. It's a record of making statements on the one hand and acting in an entirely different way.

My question to you, Mr. Speaker, is this, Mr. Minister: why don't you admit right out that you made a mistake in commissioning this report in closing the rural hospital beds that the report says that it's going to do? Why don't you wipe the slate clean, admit that you made the mistake, try to restore a little bit of credibility to yourself and this government, and then get on with the business of fashioning a proper health care policy for the farmers and the people of Saskatchewan? How about that?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, I said very clearly yesterday, and I say very clearly today, that the report was not commissioned to deal with the closing of rural hospitals; it was to deal with the changing role of rural hospitals — something that we are doing, something

which you never, ever, ever did. That member over there who is the Leader of the Opposition never dealt with it that way . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order, please. The minister's having some competition, and I ask the hon. members to allow him to continue.

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, we have responded to the changing role of rural Saskatchewan and the changing demographics in rural Saskatchewan with the building of integrated facilities in rural Saskatchewan, and I went through that yesterday.

Those folks have been opposing the integrated facilities in rural Saskatchewan. At no time did they build integrated facilities in this province in terms of . . . and further to that, Mr. Speaker, which is even immoral, I would say almost, to not build nursing home beds when that was the demand of health care. Through the years 1976 to '82 they built no nursing home beds in this province, in the rural parts of the province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that moratorium was not only poor policy, was not only insensitive, I suggest to you it was immoral, given the way that things were going in rural Saskatchewan with the demographics.

Mr. Speaker, one more quote that I would like to read to the House, which is very pertinent to this issue.

Mr. Speaker, in a . . . The following quotes are from a speech given by the now Leader of the Opposition in August and September of '85, and it was reported in the hospital products and technology magazine. Mr. Speaker, this speech was made to the Canadian Hospital Association by that member who just asked this question.

Here is the quotation, and I quote:

He did not pull any punches when he told an audience of hospital board members and administrators that if politicians try to cope with the sickness problem of our ageing population by building more hospitals or similar facilities, the costs will be prohibitive and the results disastrous.

He said the results of building more hospitals and nursing homes would be disastrous. And now he stand up here in his sanctimonious, double-standard way and says that we are closing hospitals, when in fact we are integrating facilities across this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — I'd like to remind the hon. member that his answers are getting excessive. And I realize that there's a great deal he could give in his answers, but I think I should remind him that there is a reasonable length and I'd like him to adhere to that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Health, whose answers are, as they say in *Alice in Wonderland*, getting curiouser

and curiouser as he goes along.

And by the way, I still subscribe to that speech made to the hospital directors, and so should you, if you believe in giving seniors independent living outside of institutions, which is the position that we have here.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — But my question, new question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Health is this. Yesterday, sir, you told the journalists outside of this House after question period was over that the new, yet long to be awaited, announced task force on health — which is now two months in the announcement, by the way, in terms of intent but not in terms of detail — you told the journalists outside the Assembly yesterday that this new task force report would still hear the views of rural people in rural Saskatchewan about the possibility of closing down rural hospital beds. In fact, you compared going to a hospital like shopping in a small town in a small community.

My question to you is this, Mr. Minister of Health: will you confirm that, in the light of that statement, it is a fact — I repeat, a fact — and a determined policy of your government that closure of hundreds of rural hospital beds is still going to be on the agenda? It may not surface directly through Schwartz, but it's going to surface directly by his proposed new task force on health. Isn't that the reality?

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, two things. I was pleased to hear the Leader of the Opposition, not pleased on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan, but from a purely political point of view I was please to hear the Leader of the Opposition confirm the NDP's policy of a continued moratorium, a continued moratorium if they were ever in a position of having to deliver these beds, Mr. Speaker. and, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to the . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order, order. We're once more having difficulty hearing the minister, and I would ask the House's co-operation.

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — As it relates to his representation of what I said as it relates to the closure, and what he says are the closure of rural hospital beds, not only is it a misrepresentation of the facts, Mr. Speaker, but it's a clear misrepresentation of anything that I said, either here or outside the House.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I have one last, final question on this subject matter, with your permission, sir, and this, Mr. Speaker, deals with the way in which the Schwartz report was handled by this government, namely kept secret from the public for five months-plus, rather confusing and contradictory defences of the report yesterday and today — and we'll hear some more as the future goes on — all of which, I think, indicates that we have little confidence that the future activities of the task force on health, yet to be announced, is going to be handled any more competently or any more differently.

Mr. Minister, my question to you is this: in view of your statements of the last few days, and in the light of some obviously well-motivated concerns by the public of your

party's intentions toward health care, namely, the introduction of premium health care premiums and also deterrent fees as suggested by some of the front-benchers, in view of all of this, will you clearly tell the House today, Mr. Minister of Health, that the terms of reference for this new, yet-to-be-announced task force on health will specifically exclude that body from a consideration of health premiums, deterrent fees, and the closure of rural hospital beds? Can you give us that assurance?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, the NDP, any time when there's a discussion of any kind of management or administration of the Department of Health, they will always refer back to what I call, and what has been called before, the "mediscare" tactics and so on, and they will always revert to that. And we see it again, the Leader of the Opposition reverting to his political rhetoric and his mediscare tactics.

Mr. Speaker, there is no intention — and I'll say it very clearly — there is no intention of the Department of Health under this Progressive Conservative government, under this minister for closing hospital beds . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order, order. Hon. members are once more interrupting the minister, and I don't think it's in the best interests of the House for me to have to continually interrupt, and therefore ask for the co-operation of all members.

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, it's clear that this Department of Health under this government has no intention, and I say it very clearly, of closing hospital beds in rural Saskatchewan.

What we have a very clear intention of doing, and what we have done through action — which is something that you never did — is introduce the concept of integrated facilities to deal with the true demographics that are out there, with the support of communities in rural Saskatchewan who are saying, what we're doing is operating in a way in which rural Saskatchewan hospital boards, rural Saskatchewan nursing home boards, rural Saskatchewan councils of the R.M.s and of the rural communities have asked for this kind of initiative, and we have responded in spades with that kind of initiative.

Mr. Speaker, I'll give the assurance of the House, we will continue to respond in that way because that's what they've asked for, and that's what we will be building. We are this year, and we will be next year, and into the next year after that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Task Force on Health

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, this will be my final question on this very important topic. Mr. Speaker, I say to the Minister of Health and to the members of the House and the people in the province of Saskatchewan, if you listen carefully to the answers the minister has failed to tell this House that the mandate and the terms of reference of the task force on health will exclude from its

consideration health premiums, deterrent fees and the closure of rural hospitals.

I say that they are going to be included and studied by that task force. That is a shame; that's a hide-and-seek game of this government. I say to the Minister of Health, will be now reconsider and clearly tell us that the terms of reference will not include those; and moreover, will you table those terms of reference so that we can study them before the task force is set up?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — Mr. Speaker, when the task force is announced, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will have an opportunity to see the terms of reference. Those terms of reference will be very broad to give that independent task force the way to look at it, there's no question.

But, Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear. Deterrent fees are not on the agenda, nor will deterrent fees be introduced by this government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hopfner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on this issue I have a question to the Minister of Health. Could the Minister of Health please inform this Assembly: what year under the NDP administration was the hospital in my riding in the community of Lashburn shut down for ever?

Hon. Mr. McLeod: — I can't remember the precise year, but I know I've been to Lashburn and heard the consternation of the people in that community about what the former government did to their hospital.

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Speaker, if the member knew his constituency well enough, he'd know the answers to those questions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Sale of Indian Artefacts to Alberta

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Economic . . . Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Parks, Recreation and Culture. The most valuable collection of privately owned Indian artefacts in the province of Saskatchewan was recently sold to the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation, with funding from the department of culture and multiculturalism within the provincial government. The artefacts were owned by a Mr. Doug Light and sold for substantially more than the \$200,000 that was asked from this provincial government from your department.

How can the minister stand by and allow a collection so valuable, of Indian artefacts, to go to another province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to address this in the House. It didn't come up in estimates last year, which kind of surprised me, because that member represents the very community

where this incident took place. And I don't remember . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to address it today. We tried very hard to come to an agreement with Mr. Light, yet every time we negotiated with him something changed, circumstances changed, criteria changed. We'd make the offer. He'd come back, counter offer. We thought we had a deal cut. We couldn't deal with him. The Alberta government had about \$130 million surplus in their lottery fund. They used it for a variety of purposes. This is one of them.

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Speaker, what the minister says is contrary to the facts, and the fact did come up in estimates last year, and the minister should come clean with that. The fact remains that the minister does not honour his responsibilities and allowed this collection to leave the province.

My supplementary is to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. In a recently commissioned report by your department, Madam Minister, called *The Heart of Canada's Old Northwest*, Battleford is recommended, amongst others, as part of a tourist destination through a certain corridor of the province.

Now the Fred Light Museum in Battleford has lost this valuable collection of Indian artefacts. Is the minister going to stand by and allow the Minister of Culture to send our tourists to the provincial museum and archives in Edmonton where the display is now on display?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mrs. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the hon. member has read the strategy report on the old north-west. It's an interesting concept, a concept that has gained wide support throughout Saskatchewan. Presently we are holding meetings to get input from the public and how that overall strategy can benefit the whole of the province.

Mr. Anguish: — Supplementary. The minister's own department acknowledges that there should be money available to make sure that artefacts and things that attract tourists stay in the department. Why do you allow a collection like this, and the minister to allow that collection to leave the province and send our tourists elsewhere?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mrs. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that at times some artefacts do leave the province. However, when you travel around our province — I can take my area as an example — we have many museums that are filled with priceless artefacts relating to the history of our province, and we would encourage the continuation of that type of thing.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister in charge of Economic Development and Trade. I would

say, Madam Minister, that when the question was asked to the Minister of Parks, he said he'd tried very hard on negotiations in regards to that. I might say that Peter Pocklington didn't have to try hard to get \$20 million in regards to the whole thing.

What I want to know from you, Madam Minister, is that you spend over \$20 million on advertising, and questionable advertising in the case of the Sitting Bull situation. But you will not provide dollars to work with Indian people, which states, according to your report, that you will work with Indian people to be able to deal and preserve the cultural heritage in that area. What are you going to do?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to respond to the hon. member on this particular issue because my department was the one which was negotiating with the Lights for this collection. Mr. Speaker, I want to make this very, very clear. The Lights, after we negotiated at some length, came back and made it obvious that they wanted to get into a bidding war, putting our treasury against the treasury of Alberta. It was that simple. They went back to Alberta and they said, we'll give you a better deal, in fact, than we can give the folks in Saskatchewan.

And when the member from Battlefords stands up and talks about tourism and artefacts and coming through there, Lights also made it clear that that museum was not making any money whatsoever, and they were looking for subsidies from our government just to keep them in business. And the member from Battlefords should turn to some of his other colleagues, especially from the North, and ask where and how the Lights acquired the collection.

Mr. Goulet: — Madam Minister, new question. Since you refer back to the Minister of Parks, you do have the dollars for economic development. One of the precise type of recommendations in this report was to integrate, you know, the tourism in relation to what was happening with the Indian community in The Battlefords area.

I would like to know what are your precise plans to be able to get back and work with the Indian people in that community and be able to get back the cultural heritage that rightfully belongs to them and this province?

Hon. Mrs. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to correct a statement made by the member in his previous question when he indicated that we spent \$20 million on a marketing strategy to get tourists into Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, that figure was misleading. Our whole tourism marketing budget is \$2.4 million.

With regards to tourism and what our province has to offer, Tourism Canada did a massive study a number of years ago, and that study clearly indicated that there are two things, two major things that attract people to an area: one is the culture of the area, and one is the history of the area. We, in Saskatchewan, are fortunate to be blessed richly in those both areas. I can look at a dig site in Saskatoon, the Wanuskewin site, the oldest known

habitated site in North America, 4,000 years older than King Tut's temple. Our province has a lot to offer.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think a point should be made: for the first time in the history of our province, we have entered into a tourist sub-agreement with the government of Ottawa to develop these type of things and to make sure these type of things stay in our province. That government, when they were in power, not once did they put any emphasis on tourism and what the impact of tourism does for our local communities.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Destruction of College Mathieu

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, all members of this House will all be too familiar with the tragic fire that destroyed the College Mathieu in Gravelbourg last Saturday. First struck a blow to the French community of Saskatchewan and to all the residents of Gravelbourg and surrounding area.

Mr. Speaker, this government has made clear its commitment to the reconstruction of this important and historical Saskatchewan institution. But another important institution is involved in this situation and that is SGI, which is the sole insurer of the college building and contents. I'm pleased to advise this House that on Saturday, May 21, SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) will make the first payment on that claim in the sum of \$500,000.

The cheque will be presented by my colleague, the member for Shaunavon, during the college's ceremonies honouring this year's grade 12 graduating class in Gravelbourg on Saturday. The cheque, Mr. Speaker, represents only the first stage of the government's plan to assist in the reconstruction of the college.

Mr. Speaker, I think that everyone involved is pleased that SGI was able to respond so quickly to this tragedy. I am certain that the college is assured of the commitment to building a new school by this prompt action.

Clearly, money alone cannot heal the grief and remorse at the destruction of a historical landmark and an excellent school. However, I know that this announcement will strengthen the resolves of the students and the teachers to rebuild an even greater education facility to serve the French community of our province.

Mr. Speaker, SGI adjusters are in the process of determining the full value of the property destroyed, and I am confident that this can be done completely in the future. In the meantime, students at the school . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order. Order, order. We're having some difficulty hearing the minister. Order, order. Order, order, order.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — It's rather disappointing to be talking about something so dear to the hearts of the students and the teachers and having the opposition interrupt all the

time, but I'll try to continue.

I want to say that in the meantime the students at the school should know that SGI's coverage will pay to transport the students to nearby schools, should it be deemed necessary by school officials.

SGI's quick response, Mr. Speaker, is another example of the sensitivity of this government and of the commitment of SGI to providing the highest level of service.

Mr. Speaker, this government is ensuring that the day is near when College Mathieu will again open its doors.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. First of all I'd like to say to the minister that I'm somewhat surprised that we have a ministerial statement on the SGI pay-out to College Mathieu.

It does, however, indicate that SGI, as a Crown corporation, a publicly owned asset, can respond very quickly to tragedies in this province. Had this corporation been a privately owned corporation, I'm not so sure that we would have seen the quick response.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — I'm not so sure we would have seen a ministerial statement in this legislature today. I'm not to sure that we would have seen an announcement of a pay-out five days after the tragic event.

So I think that the minister's statement today is an argument for maintaining SGI in the public sector, maintaining SGI as a Crown corporation. Because there will be other examples of tragedies in this province, we will have other catastrophes, and we will need a publicly owned corporation, a publicly owned insurance corporation to respond to the kind of catastrophes and tragedies that can hit the people of this province.

So I congratulate the minister and I congratulate SGI, a publicly owned corporation, in being so quick to respond to the horrendous tragedy that happened to the school at Gravelbourg and to the French people in our province.

I would urge the minister not to give away this publicly owned asset and to keep this publicly owned asset of SGI in the public sector.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Why is the hon. member on his feet?

Mr. Goodale: — Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the ministerial statement just made relates directly to an incident in my constituency, I wonder if there might be leave of the House for me to have the opportunity to respond in a few words to the minister's remarks.

Leave is granted.

Mr. Goodale: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and

I thank members of the House for their indulgence. Certainly of course the announcement of a very prompt payment from the Saskatchewan Government Insurance in respect of the College Mathieu fire is something that will be very welcome to the college itself, to the students, to the staff, to the board of directors, and to the community of Gravelbourg as a whole.

This has been a very serious blow in that community, Mr. Speaker, as I'm sure all members of the House would appreciate, and it is exceedingly important that government agencies and others respond in a prompt way in dealing with the aftermath of that tragedy. And certainly the delivery of the cheque as promptly as this coming weekend will be very welcome.

But I would want to say, Mr. Speaker, to the government and to all members of this Assembly, that in all of the circumstances of this case, much more is required than we've seen to date. The initial indications have been encouraging, but more indeed will be required to repair the damage that has been done.

And I would just suggest to the government, and I do so carefully and with all due respect, that showmanship and gamesmanship is no substitute for substance in respect of the rights and interest of College Mathieu and the people of Gravelbourg, and I trust the full measure of substance will be forthcoming.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Education

Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 5

Item 1 (continued)

Ms. Smart: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, my first question to you is that I phoned your office and told them that the library estimates would be up this afternoon. I would like to know if the Provincial Librarian is coming.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Chairman, and hon. member, I thank you for providing my official with that advance notice, and she should be here shortly.

Ms. Smart: — That's good. Mr. Minister, I'd like to begin the discussion of the estimates with the issue that was discussed in question period here a couple of weeks ago, but which I would like to question you on further, and that's the issue of the Wheatland Regional Library Board — the Wheatland Regional Library, and the executive director of that library, writing a letter on library letterhead to the president of the PC Party, Conservative Party of Saskatchewan. Enclosed with that letter was a cheque made out to the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan for \$30,000. And the address on the cheque indicated that the Progressive Conservative convention committee was the same address as the Wheatland Regional Library, 806 Duchess Street,

Saskatoon.

Now it's obvious to me in looking at the way this letter was written to the president of the party, and the fact that the cheque has the address indicating the PC convention committee was running out of the Wheatland Regional Library. I would like to ask you if you condone this use of the public's money to run the PC Party convention committee out of the Wheatland Regional Library?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well the hon. member asks me about an employee of the Wheatland Regional Library. And as I think the hon. member would know, the Wheatland Regional Library employees work for the Wheatland Regional Library Board. That board, not its employees, are not appointed by me nor hired by me nor this government. They are appointed by the various constituent municipalities. So if you have any questions relative to one of their employees, you might be best to put it to them directly.

Having said that, however, if you're asking me if this was a business of mine whether I would condone that kind of behaviour, I would not.

Ms. Smart: — Well I'm glad to hear that, Mr. Minister. But I'd like to know what you intend to do about the fact that the taxpayers' money, for which you are responsible, was being used in this instance. And I suggest to you by the nature of the fact that the PC convention committee's address was the Wheatland Regional Library, that there was a great deal of activity going on there, at the taxpayers' expense, in a publicly funded institution, related to the party that you represent in this legislature, the Progressive Conservative Party.

(1445)

Now it's obvious that the staff were not only typing up letters regarding the Progressive Conservative Party business, but they were also opening the mail, because these cheques that came in addressed to the PC convention committee at 806 Duchess Street, would have been opened by the staff at the Wheatland Library, paid for out of the taxpayers' money.

Now that is the money that you're responsible for. It's the party that you represent. And I want to know if you have any intention of disciplining the . . . or of making submissions to the regional library board regarding this, or in some way taking some action about the fact that the taxpayers' money is being used in this regard.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well I've already stated my position on . . . my view of that kind of activity. And secondly, you are a member who in this House has asked on more than one occasion that I respect the autonomy of boards, whether it be university boards or others. Are you reversing your position now and asking that I should interfere? Is that what you're saying?

Ms. Smart: — No, I'm asking you that you make representation to the Wheatland Library board regarding this issue. Because for all I know, they may be PC Party conventions being run out of school boards or wherever else in this province. This is a very serious issue to say that

the taxpayers' money is being used for this. The PC Party convention was obviously a big event, and it was run out of the Wheatland Regional Library offices with the taxpayers' money. What are you going to do about that?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — First of all I would repeat again, as I said earlier, if this was a business that I operated I would not condone this kind of behaviour. I have a fair amount of faith in the board. For all I know, it was an isolated incident.

If you're asking me if I don't have faith in that board or in other duly elected or appointed boards across this province, then I guess you and I will have to agree to disagree, because I do have faith in school boards, university boards, hospital boards, etc., across the province. I doubt that they condone that behaviour at all either.

As I understand it, the person that you referred to has apologized. And I have every faith that that board can discharge its duties honourably, and the expectations that they would have of their employees is a matter for them to deal with, and I suspect they have dealt with it.

Ms. Smart: — And I suspect that you haven't taken the time to find out enough about this issue, and it's a very serious issue, Mr. Minister.

The person involved dismissed this letter as a clerical error, that it happened to get typed on Wheatland Regional Library . . . the letter from him to the president of the PC Party. He said it was a clerical error.

That is not acceptable when he was using the Wheatland Regional Library as the office and the address for the PC convention committee. That was a deliberate decision made by this person. And it was not just one clerical error or one minor mistake.

Now you're the minister that's responsible for paying grants to these libraries to run their systems, and that taxpayers' money should be used to run the library system, not to run the PC Party convention committee.

And you have some responsibility, I suggest to you, to make some representation to the Wheatland Regional (Library) Board about this issue. Because you may want to dismiss it as a minor thing that happened, just a minor accident or a once-in-a-lifetime mistake, that this letter got written in this way and these cheques got made out and that the Wheatland Regional Library was being used as a PC convention committee.

But that's not acceptable to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, and you're responsible for the money that you grant to the regional libraries. And I suggest that you have some responsibility, since you're a member of this party, to make some representation to the library board regarding this issue.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — As I understand it, the board has accepted his apology. I have every confidence in those board members duly appointed by each of their municipalities. And if they are happy with the apology and the employee enjoys their confidence, then why

would I interfere? I've already told you about my view of that kind of behaviour, if that was my business, if you like. And I don't know as I can say much more without being repetitive.

Ms. Smart: — Well I think you could be more involved in this, because it's definitely an issue that is really almost . . . well it is immoral for a library employee to be using the public facilities in this way, and using the staff available to him in this way.

And there's another issue in connection with this letter that I would like you to address in the House today, and that's the fact that this letter, written on the library letter-head — typed up by staff, paid for by the taxpayers — to the president of the PC Party, suggests that the PC Party might like to get some money, some free advertising regarding the convention from the advertisers who also do other business with the party.

We in this House have said that that smacks almost of extortion and almost in a need for a judicial inquiry to look at this issue. Are you not concerned that there's staff in a public library system writing private letters on library letter-head to the president of the PC Party suggesting that:

I should observe that Smail Communications gave us a 15,000 dog and pony show for nothing. And perhaps Dome Advertising, with its far greater share of the provincial advertising budget, should be expected to donate the cost of this particular bill to the party.

Do you have any concerns about this? And, knowing, do you have any intention of making an representation to the Wheatland regional board about that issue?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I've already explained what my view would be in so far as the Wheatland regional board, their autonomous nature, and the confidence that their employees enjoy. And I've also given my comments about my view on that kind of behaviour.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Minister, I'm not satisfied with your answers. You suggest that this is an isolated incident, that just an unfortunate use of the wrong stationery.

This PC Party cell in the Wheatland Regional Library had cheques printed up with the same address as the Wheatland Regional library. Now you don't go to the bank or your credit union and you say, print me up one cheque because I need to have this address on it. You get a whole bunch of cheques, hundreds of cheques printed up.

The minister suggests this is an isolated incident, just an unfortunate clerical error that \$30,000 in one lump was passing through this particular office. That explanation doesn't wash.

I want to know from this minister, Mr. Chairman, what are the size of the grants that are paid to Wheatland Regional Library last year, and in this budget?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — For the year ended December 31, '87, the provincial operating grant was \$580,087.38; the provincial book grant was \$30,750.

And I want to add one other comment, Mr. Chairman, and I pick my words very carefully. This hon. member, is indeed he said that I characterized that behaviour as an unfortunate clerical error, if he says I said that, the record will clearly show I never, ever used those words, "unfortunate clerical error." And if he says that, then he is misrepresenting my remarks, sir.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Chairman, this minister is portraying this whole thing as being just an unfortunate incident that happened in a semi-autonomous body that he has no concern in — it's their business; they're going to handle it. The PC party is involved at the highest levels in this province in this particular incident. The minister cannot deny that. The minister says \$580,000 and \$750,000 was paid to Wheatland Regional Library. We're talking about over a million dollars, well over a million dollars.

This minister, Mr. Chairman, has a responsibility of stewardship for the taxpayers' dollars. I want to know what steps this minister has taken to ensure that his stewardship of the hard-earned taxpayers' dollars of this province, of over \$1 million in this case, is being spent properly, where he's sending it to Wheatland Regional Library? What communications has the minister had with Wheatland Regional Library about the responsible spending of the grants they receive, and what has he done above it?

I do not accept that fabrication you've given us up to this moment about this being an isolated incident, an unfortunate misuse of stationery. Of all the tissue that you've put up, this is the most transparent that I've seen in this House.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well if the hon. member is again trying to characterize my view of this situation as somehow it is unfortunate in a cavalier sort of sense, he again would be misrepresenting my view. And I would clearly state that if he is suggesting somehow that I condone this kind of behaviour, I do not, period.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Chairman, the minister hasn't answered the question. What are doing about it? We're talking about a million dollars, over a million two — \$1,200,000 plus. What are you doing about it? You're the steward of the taxpayers' dollars; what are you doing about it?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well your numbers are wrong. Just for the record, I read into the record and I'll provide them for you again. The provincial operating grant is slightly over \$580,000 and the book grant from the province was \$30,750. But the point . . . the same whether the money is \$580,000 or a million, and what we . . . we have the same expectation for accountability of those dollars for Wheatland as we do for every other jurisdiction.

And if you're somehow suggesting that somehow this accountability process, of which part of is audited

statements, and how they expended their money and their operations and their equity and the summary of financial statement, isn't somehow (a) satisfactory, or that somehow municipalities; appointed representatives aren't somehow men of principle, then you should transmit that to those appointed representatives. You can't have it both ways.

You can't sit on your hands in this legislature and say somehow that governments ought not interfere with boards and boards' autonomy when it comes to students caught in the middle of a faculty-management strike, and then now somehow all of a sudden suggest I should be in with a judicial inquiry in a board that enjoys equal autonomy. You can't have it both ways, hon. member.

You can sit there in a pompous, righteous sort of way, but it won't wash with me personally, to be honest with you. And you can try and make this some kind of political issue for your own gain. You can try that if you want. You can try and tar me with somehow condoning that kind of behaviour, and if you do, you are misrepresenting my view.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Chairman, the minister is trying to turn the sword away from himself, and he's having very little success at it. I asked the minister: what was the total grants that went to Wheatland Regional Library last year and this year? He gave me some figures that amounted to more than a million dollars. I say that's a lot of money being sent to that particular library. Now if he gave me the wrong figures, that's another problems which the minister has to straighten out.

The money sent to the library, I asked the minister, what have you done about it? He says, well the same procedures apply to all the libraries all over Saskatchewan. Well that's fine. We have no evidence that all the other libraries are running a Conservative Party con game out of the library office. And we want to know what you're doing about it.

Have you been in communication? Table the letters you've sent them. Tell us what you've done about this situation, a place where we're sending over a million dollars of taxpayers' money, where there's a \$30,000-a-crack Tory Party operation going on, with cheques printed out with the same address on the cheques as the regional library, the minister giving the impression this is an unfortunate incident.

(1500)

My God, the headlines, Mr. Minister, have you read the headlines? "Use of library stationery 'clerical error' — clerical. Can you believe that, Mr. Minister? I'm not trying to get some political advantages out of this, I'm saying you've got to clean up the mess you've got, and you'd better do it soon. And we want an explanation.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well I'll go through these points once again. First of all, and I read it into the record a second time in the event that you hadn't heard it clearly the first time, it is not a million dollars, it is something in excess of \$610,000 in total, point number one.

Point number two, you continue to use the words and suggest that I have characterized this as some kind of unfortunate clerical error. You, sir, know full well that I have never used those words. You have used them; your colleague has used them; I have not. That would be a representation if, in fact, that is your view, a misrepresentation.

The third point I would make is I would reiterate that I don't condone that kind of behaviour, never have, and never will.

And the final point I would make in response to the back-benchers: what am I going to do about it? I am satisfied, I have confidence in that board (a); and (b) it has been suggested to me, or made known to me, that the board has confidence in their employee and that the employee has apologized to them. Now if they're satisfied with that, and I'm satisfied with the behaviour of the board as principled individuals. I have no reason to cast aspersions on any of them, and if you wish to, you go outside the House and cast aspersions. They enjoy my confidence.

Mr. Brockelbank: — Mr. Minister, you won't get me in the position that I'm attacking the board of Wheatland Regional Library. I am quite clearly saying that the correspondence that took place in this regional library was between a regional library staff person and the president of the PC Party of Saskatchewan.

This just wasn't an accidental letter. It had a \$30,000 cheque in it coming out of the regional library. The minister has yet not answered what he's done to satisfy himself. I want to know in this operation what the minister's done to satisfy the taxpayers of Saskatchewan that he is a responsible steward of their taxpayers' dollars.

And it's a sensitive issue because the president of the PC Party and one of the people that works in that library staff are involved — \$30,000 operation that is not just a one shot, but something that has obviously been going on for sometime — with the same address as the regional library on the cheques of the PC Party. And the minister has yet to explain to this Assembly what the situation is.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well the board has my confidence, Mr. Chairman, and the same accountability check will be applied to that board now and in the future as is applied to all other boards. And when we're satisfied with their audited statements again next year, as we are this year, their cheques will be in the mail as usual.

Ms. Smart: — Mr. Minister, it is absolutely shocking that you have accepted this kind of a situation in the regional library and that you would let the taxpayers' money be spent for this sort of activity. And you stand up in this legislature and say you don't condone it, but you also say you can do nothing about it.

Will you describe for me, what sort of words would you use to describe this kind of activity, if you say that you don't describe it as a clerical error or as one mistake along the way? How do you describe it when the director of a regional library uses that building and that staff, paid for out of the taxpayers' money, to run the PC Party

convention committee, and to write letters to the president of the PC Party, of which you are a member and the minister responsible for the libraries? How do you describe that?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — The hon. member said that what I have said is shocking. It would be shocking if I had accepted, and did accept, what you have said. And I agree that this behaviour is something that no one can condone. I have said I do not condone it, and I have said that on numerous occasions, and I say it again now.

Ms. Smart: — That's not enough to stand in this House and say you don't condone it. What have you done about it? It's not enough to describe it just as some kind of bizarre behaviour. This was an activity that went on for some time, and it involves the top management of a regional library and the top person in the PC Party. What are you doing about it?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — If I didn't think that the board had the matter in hand with the employee, then there might be some basis for me to do something more. What that something more could or would be, would be probably be based on the provincial library act and that sort of thing. However, being that I am satisfied that the duly appointed representatives of the municipalities are (a) men of principle, and (b) have the situation in hand, I intend to do nothing more about it.

Ms. Smart: — Well I think you should figure out exactly how much money has been spent by the taxpayers to run the PC Party convention out of the regional library and see if you can't somehow retrieve some of that money, or somehow have some accountability for this kind of activity beyond saying that you don't condone it but you accept that there's been an apology.

That is not enough for this kind of activity. It's not acceptable. It shows the kind of corruption of the PC Party that you would have a director of a regional library, a card carrying member of the PC Party, and running the PC Party business out of the regional library. That is corrupt. And that is the money of the taxpayers of this province, money very badly needed to run regional library systems.

Regional library system across this province are desperate for funds, and here's one regional library who's using the taxpayers money to run your party's convention out of the regional library, and that is not acceptable — not acceptable at all. And I will give you one more opportunity to tell me what you're going to do about it?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Does the hon. member have no faith then, I take it, in the boards that have been duly appointed by the constituent rural municipalities? Is that what she's telling this Assembly — point number one. And point number two, I would say to you, hon. member, and to your party, this is another example of the double standard; this is another example of how you talk out of both sides of your mouth. On how many occasions have you chastised this government for interfering; for interfering with the bargaining process and teachers; of interfering with the operation of the university? How many times have you used that argument, hon. member?

And now all of a sudden, when it suits your purpose for some cheap political gain, I would argue, all of a sudden there's sanctimony dripping out of every pore. Why is that, hon. member?

And another example, we had another example today of your double standard and talking out of both sides of your mouth. When your party was in government in the '70s, you had a moratorium on nursing homes. And when your party was in government you had a moratorium on building integrated nursing home hospital facilities. Now all of a sudden, because of the story in the *Leader-Post* that talks about rural hospitals, all of a sudden — no, you would build hospitals and build more hospitals and build them in rural Saskatchewan.

And yet, what did your leader say, and what did your party do when you were in government? He said we'd build no more hospitals at all because they cost too much, and that was in fact what your policy was when it came to nursing homes.

So you have a double standard, hon. member, and you speak out of both sides of your mouth, I would suggest, on issues like autonomy and others. So you tell me what you're doing to tell the people that are duly appointed, principled people, I would suggest to you, that run that library? Tell us what you're going to tell them if they're such awful individuals and don't have control of the situation?

Ms. Smart: — I'm telling you, Mr. Minister, that you should take responsibility for the way in which these libraries . . . that library grant money is given to libraries, to spend it on the books and on running the library system, not on running your party's conventions out of the regional library system; and that you interfere far more in the way in which these institutions are run by inserting your provincial . . . your Progressive Conservative Party into the regional library system than any sort of thing that I could be suggesting.

And I'm saying you should be accountable for that and that you should explain to the taxpayers why you're allowing this to happen — that's what I'm saying.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — I don't know if I can add anything more, Mr. Chairman, without being repetitive and repeating myself probably for the eighth or ninth or tenth time. Perhaps this is at a point that the hon. member and I will have to agree to disagree on.

Ms. Smart: — Mr. Chairman, it's a very sad day that this sort of issue can happen within a regional library and be raised in this House and be responded to so inappropriately and so unsatisfactorily.

This is the man that says that he's really supportive of the information age, and yet he will allow this kind of disintegration of a library system to be used as a political party headquarters. That, within librarianship, within the public service, among the people that I know and work for, is one of the most unacceptable kinds of activities that a public institution could get into. And I'm not surprised that you support it by refusing to take any action regarding the funds that you put forward for the libraries.

And, Mr. Minister, the second issue that I want to talk to you about this afternoon is the issue of what's happening at the University of Regina Library. I want to talk to you about the proposal that the University of . . . it seems a bit ridiculous to try to talk to the minister when he's turned his back on me, so I will sit down until he's prepared to listen.

Mr. Minister, I want to talk to you about the University of Regina, scheme for the university library to sell off the library books and to lease them back, to sell them off to, as I understand, an investment company in Toronto called MedCan.

Now this is an issue again that I questioned you about in question period. It's a serious issue for the librarians. It was very much discussed in detail at the library association conference up at Waskesiu which I attended. The proposal has resulted in an editorial in the *Leader-Post* which I would like to quote to you because I think it's a very important editorial. The proposal is that the library of . . . the University of Regina Library sell off its books . . .

An Hon. Member: — Oh well, who cares about that rag? That isn't a bit . . . an example of serious journalism in that thing since I've been reading it.

Ms. Smart: — Mr. Chairman, if the minister is going to yell at me from his seat when he's sitting and I'm standing up talking to him, I wish you would bring him under control.

Mr. Minister, the proposal is to sell off the library resources for, as I understand it, some \$20 million and lease them back. The *Regina Leader-Post* says about this kind of proposal.

There is no free lunch. The extra cash in hand for the institutions means less tax money flows into the coffers of government, and it is generally the latter which is the major source of funds for hospitals, schools and public, non-profit bodies. In that sense, such lease-backs become a means of robbing Peter to pay Paul.

The only Peter that I can think would be worth robbing would be Peter Pocklington.

But I want you to respond to this proposal, because when I questioned you in question period, you said that you hadn't talked with anyone about it at that point. And I want to know if you have talked to anyone about this scheme and what your response is to it — whether you've expressed concern to the university.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well since this question was raised with me in question period — was it earlier this week or last week, Mr. Chairman — I have met with the president of the University of Regina and, as well, the chief librarian there, Ernie Ingles, and had some fair long discussion with them on the notion of a lease-back.

And I must say, after meeting with them, I think the proposal has considerable merit.

An Hon. Member: — Oh, for Heaven sakes!

(1515)

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — And the hon. member from Saskatoon says, oh, for Heaven sakes. And you see, Mr. Chairman, what these hon. members are really saying, when they decry and belittle the proposal that's being looked at at the University of Regina, is that they are trying to say that they are somehow smarter and know more than the president of the university and the chief librarian.

They are somehow trying to tell the people that they have it all, they know it all. I mean, I perhaps have hit a nerve here; I recognize that. They're trying to suggest that: well, we're smarter than the librarian there; we're smarter than the president and the board of governors; we know it all.

Yes, here's another example of something in the newspaper — and any other day, don't interfere with the autonomy of the board of governors of universities, but a little article in the newspaper or on the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) and — boom — raise it in the House, and are you prepared to interfere and stop this, and all this rhetoric that we hear.

When I first heard of this, I would frankly say I had some reservations. But after visiting with these individuals whose dedication to libraries and books is every bit as strong as the hon. member's, I would suggest . . . Ernie Ingles, I think he lives and breathes it. I think they're so very fortunate to have an individual like that out at the university.

The president, I'm sure he has the same sort of sense of what would be important in an arrangement like this. And they've satisfied themselves on every count. Will the books be there? Will the students have absolute rights to them? and in fact the proposal has much more to do than just with books anyways, but it's the books part that's made the headlines.

They see some fair advantage for them in entering into a negotiation like this. Now whether it will come to pass or not is another matter. But certainly it has some merit, and I for one wouldn't stand in their way from putting that deal together now that I've had a chance to talk to them — talk to people like librarians over there who, if there was any whiff of suspicion that this wasn't a good deal for the students or the university, he would be the first to be raising that. And I find exactly the opposite.

In fact I see this as yet another one of the measures that they have put in place over there, some rather innovative measures — the books for bushels, the deal they put together with UMI (University Microfilms International) last year. I think this library ought to be congratulated on what they're doing, not stabbed from behind with somebody who probably hasn't discussed it with them and is prepared to pick holes in it based on an article in the *Leader-Post*.

I ask you: have you met with the president and the officials over there? Have you talked to them about the iron-cladness of the guarantee for students that the deal

would have and at the same time see some obvious benefits for the university?

Ms. Smart: — Mr. Minister, this is the same sort of deal that the Ontario government said was completely unacceptable. And the Ontario government has moved to deny grants to universities that consider the proposal to sell off their library resources and lease them back from private investors.

Now there's several reasons why this kind of proposal is, in the eyes of many, many librarians, a completely idiotic idea. And I'm not surprised that the university is looking at issues like this as a way to get money, because you have chronically underfunded the universities to the point where you've driven them to look for money in all sorts of ways, which you describe as innovative but which are basically very destructive.

Now one of the reasons why these investment companies are eager to look at this buying of the books and leasing them back, is because of the tax credits that they get. It's a way to avoid paying tax. If they avoid paying tax, there's less money available to buy new books in the future. That's one reason why it's a dumb idea.

Another reason why it's a dumb idea is because you lose control of the collection. This is a collection that's already been bought by the people of Saskatchewan. They shouldn't have to buy it back again at the end of the lease term. There's all sort of reasons why it's a bad idea. There's all sorts of reasons why the Ontario government has moved against it.

It doesn't surprise me one bit to hear you stand up and demonstrate no awareness of these concerns, and no understanding of why librarians across this country are, in large majority, opposing the idea.

Now if you want to respond to what I've said so far, I've not asked you a question but I will give you the right to respond.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well the hon. member has described this deal as idiotic, as dumb, has even suggested that some of the officials that might look at it, characterized them in an unfortunate light, I would argue.

She also suggested that the university would lose control of the books, which is untrue. I doubt that the hon. member has talked to any of the officials, because those kinds of questions are germane enough, and if the answers were "yes" to some of the, I too would be worried. But long before I would be worried, librarians like Ernie Ingles would have been in shock. Any deal that would have jeopardized that collection in a real and tangible way, neither he nor the president nor the board of governor would have gone for. These are intelligent, sensible, responsible individuals.

Ernie Ingles, who you have some doubts about, in fact his peers do not. He's been the president of the Saskatchewan Library Association for the last year, highly regarded across Canada, in my view, making a mark for this province and that university across North America, I might even be prepared to say.

So I think there's nothing . . . and as far as why Ontario and the Ontario government might be against it, I doubt that they're against it for the reasons that you would suggest — because anybody who supports it is an idiot or that it's dumb. I would suggest the reason the Ontario government is against it is strictly financial. It's an Ontario company, and guess who would lose provincial tax revenue if somebody was to have some tax advantage in the deal, where the company is indeed residing in that province, being Ontario. I would suggest maybe that is where their concerns are.

Ms. Smart: — Well I'm sure their concerns are the tax base. It would be both federal and provincial, and it's an issue that you should be concerned about too.

Mr. Minister, I should also remind you that I've been president of the Saskatchewan Library Association and I have served in that capacity myself. And I know from talking to a lot of people that there's a great concern about this proposal to sell off the books at the university.

Also, there's a concern about the proposal for Bushels for Books. My point that I want to make to you is that both of these schemes indicate the chronic underfunding that you have given to the university and to the university library. You've described the Bushels for Books program as innovative.

The director of the libraries has been described as getting the idea from Brazil where the government schemes to trade cocoa to aid its universities. Now the government in Brazil, as I understand it, is a lot different from the kind of government we have here, and it doesn't surprise me that universities in Brazil would be having trouble getting public money because my understanding of the Government of Brazil is a dictatorship. We have here a democracy. We have here a government where these kinds of resources are publicly funded, where the universities are publicly funded and supported, where they're paid for by the taxpayers' money.

What Bushels for Books proposes is a barter system for the province of Saskatchewan to pay for the resources in the university library. It's basically a barter system. It's a cute idea for one year. It's interesting that the wheat pool has participated in it. But if you start having farmers bring bags of grain to pay for library books one year, what are you going to have the next year? are you going to have people dragging cows into the library to pay for their books?

Mr. Minister, I would like you, because we're talking policies of funding libraries basically, we're talking about a policy . . . You see nothing wrong with a private company buying a library's resources and allowing the library to lease them back; I've established that. You think that's a good idea. You think it's a good idea to start a barter system for funding libraries, where people who have something to contribute will be hauling it into the library in exchange for permission to use the books and as a way of paying for books.

I want to know if this is a policy . . . Is this a policy change that you're prepared to establish? Are you prepared to

think through the implications of what you're touting as an innovative way to fund the libraries?

I suggest to you that funding libraries on some kind of a barter system is a primitive system and, far from taking us into the 21st century, it's dragging us back to days long gone. But if you want to bypass the money system in this province as a way of funding things, will you please let us know so that we know that the policy for funding the universities is going to be based on something different.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Chairman, the hon. member used the word "shocked" earlier. I have to admit I'm shocked, amazed, and disappointed at this attack by a person who herself says that she was a president of the Saskatchewan Library Association. I'm surprised, dismayed, disappointed, and shocked at her attack on the University of Regina and its library and its officials.

She says there's concern about Bushels for Books. Well if there is, she is the first person that has raised it with me in this province. I'll tell you that. Most others have seen that as another example of some pretty creative thinking and some pretty innovative thinking. It's not somehow that you take grain in and, by doing that, you're allowed to use the books at the library. Give me a break.

It's an innovative scheme where once again rural Saskatchewan, farmers, farming, who play such a dominant role in our economy, can help with an institution who itself is giving back to this economy.

And in the pamphlet on Bushels for Books, it gave an example, some of the research that's going on that will help farmers and farming in this province — linear tracking devices for fields, planting and those kinds of things, biological research in terms of using insects to our benefit as opposed to having to use chemicals.

Here is an example of the marriage, again, between one of our major educational institutions and agriculture. In fact, I'm advised that if you examine the history of this province, there was a time, Mr. Chairman — and I'm sure you may even remember this — there was a time when you could deliver wheat; if you didn't have money, you could deliver wheat to pay tuition.

Well now, yes, maybe Mr. Ingles got this idea from Brazil in cocoa plantations, but the concept in a sense was there earlier when people recognized that, yes, we didn't have much grain . . . or we didn't have much money, but we had lots of wheat, and they could deliver that on account and it would pay their tuition for their children.

I say to the hon. member, and I say to her party, you have no sense, you have no sense of the Saskatchewan way, the marriage between urban Saskatchewan and rural Saskatchewan. and what is good for rural Saskatchewan can indeed be good for the university, and what's good for the university can be good for our farmers. That's the Saskatchewan way in this province, hon. member. That's how we do things in this province. There is no concern, there is congratulations.

And I'll tell you — and I suspect some of my colleagues will do the same thing — when I have the next quota

come up, I'm going to deliver some wheat in the truck down there in Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, and I'm going to earmark some of that grain for the Bushels for Books program because I think it's deserving of our support, not our condemnation.

And the attack, this vicious attack you're mounting on the University of Regina library and its officials, I think it's shocking, that's what I think your attack is.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you. I want to continue the line of questioned by the member from Saskatoon Centre as it pertains to the privatization of the University of Regina library.

Mr. Minister, can you tell me whether or not the university of Regina has purchased any books yet with the Bushels for Books program that has been carried on in this province?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — I discussed this program briefly with Mr. Ingles when he was in yesterday, and my recollection was that that there had been no books yet, but that was of no concern to them at this very moment in that it was early in the program and they were just gearing up some advertising to go out to farmers and to elevator agents and those sorts of things. And in fact I made the observation myself that since they'd announced it, at least in our area, we really hadn't had any quotas particularly, that even if people were aware of it, that they'd been able to deliver against.

And you know, I think this is a bit . . . you're being a bit cute here, and cut by a half I might add, by trying to suggest . . . by trying to use your privatization rhetoric and like it to a Bushels for Books program. That's pretty transparent, I would argue, a good try but one that the people of Saskatchewan will see through and that I see through. And if you want to, as well, mount an attack on the University of Regina and the officials there, fine, but it's pretty transparent, I would argue, Mr. Chairman.

(1530)

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Minister, this is the first time that I've ever been called cute, so I really do thank you for that compliment, Mr. Minister.

Now, Mr. Minister, you've advised the House that we no longer . . . or we don't know yet whether any books have been purchased from the bushels for Books program. Mr. Minister, can you tell whether or not there are people in this province that donate books to libraries, particularly university libraries, and in particular, the University of Regina library?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Minister, how do you think the people who have donated books to the university of Regina library will feel one those books that they have donated to the library, at no tax advantage to themselves, I suspect, those books become the property of some Ontario company and are no longer the property of the

University of Regina and, therefore, the people living in the Regina and area?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well I don't know as the hon. member fully understands — and I can understand your apprehension because the same kinds of questions went through my mind before I had a chance to . . . and in fact those were the kinds of questions I had answered by Dr. Barber and Ernie Ingles when they were in. Yes, the concerns, the normal kinds of concerns — will somehow this corporation in the middle of this deal walk off with the books? — you know, or any of the kinds of concerns that one might have relative to a book collection.

And the reality is, they've covered all of these off, it's an ironclad deal; it's a win-win situation. The deal in fact is only about . . . it's about half books; the other half is computers and software and steam valves and you name it. Yet somehow it's the books that have made the headlines, okay?

And the reality is that there'll be no loss of ownership of the books; they'll be there for the students; there's a complete use. It's an ironclad deal.

And I guess what I would say to you, not only am I satisfied but I have a fair amount of faith in the judgement of guys like Ernie Ingles and Dr. Barber, and they're satisfied that it's ironclad. It's a win-win situation for the university; it's a win-win situation for the library; it's a good deal for the students — just like the donation of about a million-plus by UMI was a good deal for the students, and a good deal for that university.

And that library over there is getting just quite a reputation, certainly in some categories of their collection. And they are no more interested in seeing that jeopardized than you or I. The deal is ironclad.

And I don't know how much more I can tell you, except that it may be worth your while, if you have lingering concerns, to visit with the president or the librarian. And I'm sure that they would be put to rest, because they could probably explain them even more eloquently than myself.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Minister, I'm surprised that you would say the deal is an ironclad deal because, as I understand it, they haven't yet made the deal.

Now I just want to talk about why it is the University of Regina would be interested in privatizing their book collection. The reasons that they are looking at this kind of process, as other institutions are doing across this province, is because you people are underfunding them. You people have consistently underfunded post-secondary institutions in this province.

Now we have a situation in Saskatoon, for instance, where there are journals that the university library can't purchase because they simply don't have the funds to do that. So I understand full well why the University of Regina, why Dr. Barber and the chief librarian would be looking at ways and means to get some cash into the university, because they have some cash flow problems.

The issue here is not Dr. Barber, it is not the chief librarian, it is not the University of Regina; the issue here is yourself and your government. Your government is ideologically committed to the whole notion of privatization. It is a concept that is totally foreign to the province of Saskatchewan.

And I note here that you call it public participation in this little pamphlet: *Questions and Answers — The Saskatchewan Way*. It is no more the Saskatchewan way than Oliver Letwin is in terms of this province. The mixed economy, public ownership, private enterprise and co-operatives — the mixed economy is the Saskatchewan way. And, Mr. Minister, that public participation, as you describe it, privatization, is not part of the tradition of this province.

Mr. Minister, we have had several people raise with us this problem. The University of Regina is cash starved; it's looking for ways to fund its operations, a la the decision to look at the possibility of privatizing the University of Regina library collection.

Who are the winners? You say it's a win-win situation. The winners are not the people of this province, who have paid for that library collection, the winners are not the individual donors who have donated to that library collection; the winners in this situation is the company that's going to own that library collection and lease it back to the University of Regina.

And how do they win? They win because they buy the university library collection and then the University of Regina rents that collection from them over a long period of time; they wind through the tax system, and by being able to do that, the people of this country lose revenue from the tax system. The only winners in this situation are the company and I guess, to a certain extent, the Government of Saskatchewan.

So the public loses in two ways; they sell off a collection that is already bought and paid for; the public loses because this company is able to take advantage of the tax system, and by being able to do that, the people of this country lose revenue from the tax system. The only winners in this situation are the company and I guess, to a certain extent, the Government of Saskatchewan.

The Government of Saskatchewan is not collecting revenues in this province that are available, and consequently individual institutions, like the University of Regina, have to look at other ways to fund their operation. Mr. Minister, you will be able to have privatization in this province by the very reasons that you are unprepared, totally unprepared, to fund the institutions and all of the services that go with those institutions that provide services to our people.

And it seems to me, Mr. Minister, that, just so it's very clear, we are not being critical of the University of Regina — not whatsoever, no whatsoever. They have no alternative. They have no alternative; they have to look for ways to find revenue, and the reasons they have to do that is because your government is not prepared to fund post-secondary institutions in this province. They're not prepared to do that.

The losers in this situation are the people of the province

because we give away a valued collection of books; we give that away or we sell it off, and then we lease it back. Why, on earth would you sell off something that you already own? The reason you do that, in the University of Regina's case, is because your government refuses to properly fund the University of Regina, along with a whole host of other post-secondary institutions in this province.

Isn't that the real reasons why the University of Regina is privatizing their library collection — because your government, you, Mr. Minister, who are responsible for post-secondary education in this province — because you people refuse to adequately fund those institutions that serve our people?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Speaker, I'm going to call the hon. member on her bluff here, and her rhetoric that she tries to slide by the people, two points that are very significant here. First of all, we see now some back-peddalling on behalf of the hon. member. She knows that they have — and her colleague, particularly, the library critic, has seen ... for the most part, mounted a pretty vicious attack on the U or R today — described this scheme, this proposal, as idiotic, described it as dumb.

Now the hon. member gets up and attempts to salvage this by saying, we're not trying to be critical of the U or R. but I'll put this on the record: the reality is, Mr. Chairman, we did not go to the U or R with this scheme; they came to us. And you know why they came, Mr. Chairman? Out of courtesy.

It's entirely within their autonomy to make this operational decision — entirely, entirely within their domain. So did we go to them? No, they came to us out of courtesy. And now that they've mounted this vicious attack, they're trying to back-pedal, Mr. Chairman.

Point number two, and I ask you, Mr. Chairman, and I ask every member in this Assembly, and I ask everyone out at the university who's been involved in this: has this ever, has anybody else ever in this province or in that university or in this Chamber, other than that member, described this proposal as privatization? No.

She is trying to scare the people of Saskatchewan, trying to put this label on it. That's cheap politics; it's nothing more than cheap politics. And nobody else has used that word at all because it doesn't have a place here. That is all she is trying to do, Mr. Chairman — nothing more, nothing less — sensationalism of the worst kind, fear mongering of the worst kind, scare mongering of the worst kind.

First they attack the university for being innovative and creative, first they attack the university for being innovative and creative, and then they try to put this black mark on it — that they view, at least, as some kind of a black mark — privatization. Well I'm telling you, Mr. Chairman, I'm calling her bluff here and now, and she will not get away with it.

Then she uses the other thing. The issue, she says, is not what the universities were doing; it's all my fault, the government's fault, in underfunding. Okay? Once they

see that they've lost the arguments that they've tried to scare the public — by saying the public won't have access to the books if this deal goes through, or the public will have to pay for the books if it goes through, or the public will have to deliver wheat just to get the right to use books — after they find that all those arguments have been dismissed for good reason, Mr. Chairman, then they say the sold saw of underfunding by myself and this government.

Well what is the record on funding of universities by this government? And I challenge the hon. member to dispute these facts. The reality is, over this last half decade, there is no other administration in western Canada whose increases to universities, operating and capital, that have exceeded this government's commitment, this premier's commitment, the minister's commitment in this province. There is none other. And the hon. member says she doesn't believe that. She doesn't believe that.

But don't buy, don't buy me just saying so, Mr. Chairman. I happened to be reading the *Toronto Star*, April 17, 1988, and they had an article in there, Mr. Chairman. The headline was, "University no longer promised for all. And they had a chart in there, the head of which said, "What we spend on universities," and its estimates for full-time students. And the source of this chart was the council of Ontario Universities.

Now the hon. member and her colleagues would have us believe that somehow the government, the Progressive Conservative Government of Saskatchewan, since it's been in power since 1982, has somehow not funded universities acceptably. I have consistently said that our record is second to none in western Canada, Mr. Chairman, second to none. They consistently do not believe me.

So what did the Council of Ontario University study show, Mr. Speaker? if we're so underfunded, are we in 8th or 9th or 10th place across the country when you line up the provinces? Are we . . . and the hon. member from Saskatoon Westmount says yes. Well once again he is wrong. He has been consistently wrong. He never does his homework. He too tries to scare monger, doom monger and fear monger the people . . . (inaudible interjection). . . That's right, he does it.

Well if their arguments are correct, Mr. Chairman, if their arguments are correct, then Saskatchewan should show up in 7th or 8th or 9th or 10th place on this chart — right? — if they're so underfunded.

But here is this third party, independent third party, the Council of Ontario Universities, and what does it show? Where is Saskatchewan on the chart relative to funding per full-time student, Mr. Chairman? We are in second place, Mr. Chairman, second place. And I'm proud of that and that's as it should be because that's the kind of commitment we have to universities and to post-secondary education in this province.

(1545)

An independent third party, the Council of Ontario Universities, Saskatchewan proudly in second place. I

might add, ahead of Manitoba, ahead of Ontario. Ahead of B.C., Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland, Mr. Chairman. Ahead of all of them and I am proud of that, Mr. Chairman.

And they can consistently in this legislature misrepresent the facts, and it's time you were called on some of this. We're tired of this fear mongering. You consistently get away with misrepresenting the facts in this legislature and we're calling them. from now on, we're going to call them and call them every time. Those are the facts.

We heard it yesterday in kindergarten to grade 12, they tried to mount up the same old arguments for the last 20 years and they were wrong, wrong, wrong. Today, you try and say universities are underfunded and you're wrong, wrong, wrong again.

I don't mind, Mr. Chairman, engaging in some rightful debate in these estimates, but if we're just going to go through these same old saws with the same old misrepresentation of facts, I'm telling you the public of Saskatchewan are not well served by Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

We spent the first hour in this legislature on this examination of library estimates, Mr. Chairman, of an employee of an autonomous board. I would suggest to you that there are much more substantive issues as it relates to libraries in this province than that issue. Important enough, Mr. Chairman, but if that's the best they can do, I say to you the public are not being well service. That's what I would say, Mr. Chairman.

And as it relates specifically to the libraries and the funding at the university libraries in this province over the last few years, what do we see. In library acquisitions alone, we see over a million dollars in expenditures at both universities, Mr. Chairman, and you'll see more in the future I am sure of that.

Ms. Smart: — Mr. Chairman, I'm sure that my colleagues are going to have a lot more to say about the situation at the universities in these Education estimates. I will get back to looking at the way in which the minister in charge of libraries has given grants to the libraries, and I'm referring under that item to the grants for the regional libraries and the two municipal libraries, the Regina Public Library and the Saskatoon Public Library.

In 1983 to '84, the grant amount of moneys for those libraries was \$5,109,760, between 1983 and 1984 and on until now . . . last year the regional libraries experienced a 10 per cent cut in their money. And now in 1988 to '89 the amount of money on the grants for libraries is \$5,197,700.

Now, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, this is \$87,940 more, six years later. Six years later the regional libraries get a little over one and a half per cent increase in their budget. I told you last year when you gave a 10 per cent decrease to the regional libraries and the municipal libraries, that that would be the base amount for this year's money. And I was right. So there was a huge slash last year, but between now and six years in the past, the total increase has only been a little over one and a half per

cent of money.

Now, Mr. Minister, you may not be aware of it, but the inflation rate alone has been over 31 per cent in the inflation rate, and one and a half per cent increase in the amount of money that you've given to the regional libraries in the grants to the municipalities.

And just to put that amount of money in perspective, let's look at what the increase was in cost of books from 1973 to 1976. As a background to 1977, where we say it's 100 per cent index, by 1983 it had gone up to 141.6 per cent from 100 per cent in 1977. And by 1986 it had gone up to 162 per cent. That's 62 per cent increase in the cost of books. And it has gone up more this year. the cost of children's periodicals has gone up 181 per cent since 1977, according to the information I've had from the Legislative Library. And the cost of general interest periodicals has gone up 74 per cent since 1977.

Now, Mr. Minister, I put it to you that giving the libraries, the regional libraries and the municipal libraries, a little over one and a half per cent increase in the last six years is not a move into the 21st century, but it's a helluva big move backwards.

Stand up now and justify to the taxpayers and to the librarians and to the people in the rural areas why you have seen fit over the last six years to give the regional libraries one and a half per cent increase when the cost of living . . . the inflation rate has gone up 31 per cent.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Chairman, I'd want to see the hon. member's arithmetic, because she's saying, as I heard it, a one and a half per cent increase over some several years. And as I read the blue book this year, there was a 2 per cent increase this year alone. So I'd have to go . . . I'd want to understand your arithmetic a little bit better.

But all of that arithmetic aside, the essential point I think the hon. member is trying to make, Mr. Chairman, is that we're underfunding the libraries. And I, like every other citizen in this province and, I suspect, every other municipality that contributes to it, I'd like to say . . . I'd like to be able to give more to libraries too. I think that's a powerful service in rural and in urban Saskatchewan, and I, too, would like to be able to give them more.

But if the hon. member, Mr. Chairman, is trying to suggest that somehow, with the several millions of dollars that libraries have across this province to spend, that somehow that there are no books out there because of inadequate funding in the hon. member's mind, that the usage has somehow gone down in the face of this so-called underfunding, the opposite is true.

In fact last year, the two years which we have most recent numbers for, '86 and '87, there was nearly a 9 per cent increase in circulation across this province in our regional library system.

Now I say, yes — could they use more money? They could always use more money. Book collections could be added to, etc., etc. we could always use more money.

But I say the fact that, given what they had to work with, which is still a fairly princely sum, that circulations have gone up, libraries obviously haven't been shut down, usage hasn't gone down. People are using them more than ever, and I say that's a tribute to the stewardship of these boards, but perhaps, even more importantly, the work of the faculty and staff of these libraries across this province. And I say, we should be applauding them for what they have done. I think they've done just extremely well, and I expect to even see bigger and better things in the future.

So yes, we'd like to see them have more money; I am among those. But if you're suggesting that somehow, with the level of funding that they have, that usage is going down and they're not being able to buy books and programs are being cut right, left and centre, you're wrong on every account.

In fact I just this morning ran into somebody who'd been down at a conference in Weyburn — a writers' conference. It's been a tremendous success, and that's with the writer in residence down there.

Yes, you know, it's very easy to stand in your place there and say: spend more, spend more; do more, do more, do more; spend more here, spend more there. But the reality is, it's always a balance between, you know, increasing taxes, cutting back on other programs of lower priorities or letting the deficit rise.

This time in this budget, because we think libraries and education are important, education and libraries did get, were one of the winners in the budget, and did get some of those, a large share of those tax dollars, those new tax dollars, that were raised. Hopefully we can even do more in the future.

Ms. Smart: — Well I'm not surprised that you have trouble with arithmetic, Mr. Minister. It seems to be something you haven't learned very well.

The figures that I look, I took out of the *Estimates* that were prepared by your government's Department of Finance. I took the figure from 1983-84 for the grants to the libraries and I compared it with the figure of 1988-89. And you can do that too; it's fairly simple.

It's also true that it's a 2 per cent increase over the base amount of money that you gave the libraries last year, but that's an 8 per cent decrease still in terms of what they had three years ago.

And that's not enough money when the circulation's going up and they need the resources — and you want this province to go into the information age and you want it to go into the 21st century. You're not demonstrating it in terms of the amount of money that you're giving to the regional libraries and to the municipal libraries.

I have a specific question to ask you regarding the city libraries. I would like to know what percentage increase of the provincial grant will the public libraries — the Regina Public Library and the Saskatoon Public Library — be getting this year. What will they receive?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Mr. Chairman, 2 per cent.

(1600)

Ms. Smart: — Thank you.

Now, Mr. Minister, I want to turn to the Saskatchewan Library for a minute, and I want to compare some of the figures in the budget estimates. In 1987 to '88 you had in the budget estimates that there were 41 person-years at the Saskatchewan Library; and in 1988 to '89, when the budget estimates came out, that figure's changed to 47 person-years. Can you explain that, please?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — It's a transfer . . . It's actually just a bookkeeping measure. Those six positions were last year shown under finance and administration, and now they show under this subvote.

Ms. Smart: — So does the 47 person-years include the total staff of the Saskatchewan Library, including the administration?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Smart: — Can you explain why the amount of money in the estimates for these 47 people is down this year than last year? According to the estimates, you had \$1,332,500 last year for that staff, and this year it's reduced by a few thousand dollars. Can you explain that?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well I am advised that, for the most part, it's due to deletion of one time severance costs; I think we had a couple of early retirements. I think that's the basis for it as I understand it.

Ms. Smart: — Do you still have the same number of persons employed full time, or are these 47 person-years now more part-time people and contract people?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — No, it's the same number of person-years full time.

Ms. Smart: — Mr. Minister, in August of '87, during our last estimates, I asked you about the Saskatchewan library board, and you said that your expectation would be that you would have a Saskatchewan library board. You told me that cabinet has not yet considered it, but that that would be your expectation that we would have a library board. Will you please tell me what's happened with that?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well just a few weeks ago, or maybe even less than that, I sent out invitations to regional libraries, and SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association), and SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities), the city libraries to send nominations into myself for that board.

Ms. Smart: — Well I asked you about it nearly a year ago. What's taken you so long to get around to naming a new library board? Most of those appointments were up last summer.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well when you asked, at that time, there were incumbent members whose terms expired since we last did estimates, I'm advised.

Ms. Smart: — Yes I know that; they've been expired for quite a while, and it's taken you a long time to get around to even sending out letters inviting for the names for the new library board. Why have you taken so long? Is this a policy that you're stalling on appointing a library board?

And I want to also ask you now, Mr. Minister, whether you're going to have an annual report for the Saskatchewan Library for 1987 to '88? I got the '86-87 one. But I have some concern, in disestablishing the Saskatchewan library, whether there's going to be an annual report this year.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well, Mr. Chairman, yes, there's going to be one. And in fact we were under the . . . we though we have tabled it, but . . . we're rechecking that, but certainly there will be one.

Ms. Smart: — You tabled the '86-87 report. I haven't received an '87-88 report, and those are years that I am asking for.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — And the hon. member from Saskatoon South says, that's enough time. Well if it was, I'd like to know what annual report he ever tabled 45 days past the year end.

Ms. Smart: — Mr. Minister, I want to just know whether you're going to have an annual report. I'm not asking you to table it right now, but it was one of the issues that concerned me last year when you disestablished the Saskatchewan library. I had a concern about whether there would be a library board and whether there would be an annual report forthcoming. Because the library is now subsumed under the Department of Education, it's not standing on its own. I gather that you've assured me that you're going to have an annual report.

I have another question about the Saskatchewan library. I'm concerned in the annual report that I did get for '86-87, to look at the statistics regarding the reference service. Now according to these statistics, the total reference questions have gone down quite a bit from '85-86 to '86-87. So have the total computer searches; they've gone down from 980 to 886. The computer searches with the public library have dropped down for the Saskatchewan government, and also for others.

Now when we're talking about the computer search component of the Saskatchewan Library we are talking about one of the innovative programs, one of the programs that brings the library into the information age. And I want to know, why the decrease in the use of the computer searches, and whether it's the intention of the Saskatchewan library to continue to decrease the number of searches that they do for people, under some rationale that it can be done at the regional libraries, because that's a specialized service? It's one that was quite valuable,

one that deserved to be promoted and funded, and I would like to know what is happening to that program.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well I know on the surface, Mr. Chairman, and hon. member, that when you look at the statistics and that the total reference questions have gone down from 16,000 to 13,000, that on the surface that could look like something horrific.

The reality is in that apparent bad news it is really good news, because what is happening there is that more questions and inquiries are being handled right at the initial point of entry; that is to say, they're not having to go forward to Regina to be answered. More issues are being handled right in the Weyburns and the North Battlefords of the world, or even, for that matter, I suppose, right in the bookmobiles in some instances. So although on the surface it could look troublesome, in reality it's that more are being handled at the first point of entry.

Ms. Smart: — Well I didn't understand that the regional libraries were already hooked up to computer searches, and that was a particular service that I was questioning you about in detail. I'm please that more work is being done at the regional library level, but it's all the more of a concern because you're not funding them.

Mr. Minister, I have three more questions I want to ask you quickly. One is about northern library services. I want to know: what are the plans for developing northern library service in greater detail?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well, Mr. Chairman, relative to northern libraries, there's been some fairly exciting stuff under way there. And as a result of now, I think, something in the order of a couple of years of consultations with people in the northern part of our province, and very shortly what you will be seeing is the . . . or a sort of northern library book collection moved truly into northern Saskatchewan, out of Regina, out of that building here in the north end of Regina, and truly into northern Saskatchewan, in fact into La Ronge.

But even more exciting than that, you're going to see that library system link into our regional college, our Northlands Career College, into the public system and into the school system. So you'll have, if you like, a fully integrated system.

Now this won't all happen overnight, but the move certainly is planned for very soon. And I suspect in the year and two and three down the road when these estimates are examined, you'll hear continued exciting things about this — putting library facilities and resources truly into northern Saskatchewan and hooking into that school and regional college network that's going to be so important.

And . . . (inaudible interjection). . . Did I hear the hon. member say, ask about the money? Well I'd be happy to report on that, and that's what I was getting the numbers for particularly.

The budget has been in the order of a hundred thousand dollars and, on an annualized basis, because of some of these initiatives you're going to see that go up to

something in the order of 260-265 thousands of dollars. And for one who likes to get into the mathematics of 2 per cent increases and 8 per cent decreases and 9 per cent increases or not increases or cutbacks, I think you'll . . . Even by your mathematics, going from 100,000 to 260,000-plus is significant.

And I might add, last year, you may recall, Mr. Chairman, because we saw the North as an area of higher need, we doubled the size of the book grant that was available to those communities relative to the rest of the province, so that we could help them catch up, if you like.

And, as well, another initiative that's come out of Education that's been particularly important for that area, and other areas of the province I might stress, is the whole literacy initiative and the literacy grants that have been made available to communities in northern Saskatchewan.

So a lot of exciting things, and I would suggest to you, Mr. Chairman, that this is just the tip of the iceberg in so far as what you're going to see in the weeks and months ahead. And I am particularly proud.

I had occasion to visit our provincial library headquarters here in Regina and meet staff and officials there, and including those who have been working on this exciting initiative, and I can tell you that they are excited, and I think all people in northern Saskatchewan will be excited, and indeed all people in Saskatchewan should be proud of the work and the initiative that's gone into this project, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Chairperson, I'll be directing my questions, of course, to the minister on a couple of areas, one in the area of finance, you know, for northern schools, and also the proposed task force and its implications in regards to curriculum, and so on.

But first, in the area of finance I was looking at your figures on the foundation's grant on the . . . you know, on Creighton, Ile-a-la-Crosse, Northern Lights, and uranium, and notice that, particularly in the case of Northern Lights, the figures are \$17,982,260 for '87, and '88 it'll be \$18,119,120.

Now when I looked at the April 27, 1988 news release by the Northern Lights School Division treasurer, these are the comments that he makes on the paper, and maybe the minister could provide us with information that would contradict that information on the paper. And this is the information anyway.

According to Percy Chin, treasurer of the Northern Lights school board, the board won't be any richer for the increase. He says that in fact they end up with less money than last year to operate their programs. That's because the government's contribution to the board's total budget has been reduced by \$300,000 over last year. Then over the next column it also states that the amount by which the government has reduced your grant is . . . leave a shortfall of \$400,000 which is . . . which the board has had to cut from his expenditures.

I was wondering, Mr. Minister, whether or not you would

elaborate for me on what appears to be a discrepancy of information as what I see in the foundations, and also the statement by the Northern Lights School board secretary-treasurer.

(1615)

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Okay, the hon. member, Mr. Chairman, raised some questions about operating grants for Northern Lights School Board and as well some question on the task force. Maybe I'll deal with that first.

I've tended to look at this in two stages, and I think you and the other hon. member have been involved in some of the meetings with my former legislative secretary, the member for Regina Wascana, who's largely spearheading much of our northern education initiatives.

We dealt with the governance issue, the Scharf report, and then subsequent to that Jack Lloyd as the special superintendent — or whatever his title officially was — in terms of looking at that whole governance question. And I think substantive headway has been made there with the move of the school board now, or the proposed move, out of Prince Albert.

But in so examining that dimension, it became apparent to me that there were some other, perhaps in many ways in terms of the children and the parents who live there, every maybe more substantive issues than governance and administration, and it had to do with some very substantive educational issues such as high drop-out rates and post-secondary education opportunities and those kinds of things. It's for those reasons that I put the northern task force in place. So I would just share that with you.

Relative to the Northern Lights School Board, what I would advise you is this year over last year the budget numbers look like this: 17.9 million roughly last year was the provincial expenditure; this year, 18.1. that would be on the operating side.

As well, you may be interested to know — and this is for the most part due to the mining activity in the location of new companies, etc., in La Ronge, the assessment has gone up substantively. In fact, it will provide for nearly a \$7 million increase to their coffers just on the assessment base increasing alone; in fact that's nearly a 20 per cent increase for them. So there's a substantial amount of money available to . . . in terms of increase in their budget, it's going to be well over 7 million overall, it looks like to me, between those two sources.

Over and above that, the task force I mentioned — I'm not asking for that to come out of this money — I'd earmarked \$50,000 out of our operational funds for that. And as well, because there are some capital costs associated with moving out of Prince Albert and into La Ronge and into the sub-offices, perhaps Beauval for sure is one, we've earmarked something close to \$700,000 to accommodate that. And as well, I can tell you, although these numbers have yet to be agreed upon, there will be substantial funding to facilitate in the move itself.

So yes, many issues ahead of us relative to northern education, but I feel very good about what's gone on over

the last year in terms of getting some substantial issues dealt with in terms of governance, and I think the funding is there to accomplish some of the board's objectives. And I hope that that northern task force can provide us with some additional direction on how to deal with some of the other substantive issues relative to northern education.

Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Minister, I attended a meeting with the urban municipalities about two weeks ago, and the same type of concern was raised there in regards to the assessments that you were talking about. It's not only in relation to the mining company but there's reassessment in regards to the communities.

The the greatest concern that was raised was that there was a 17 per cent increase in regards to the mill rate. If you compute the figures, there is a six mill increase, you know, from thirty-four and a half to 40.5. You know that six mill increase is a 17 per cent increase to the local taxpayers in northern Saskatchewan, and very especially strongly affecting Creighton and La Ronge and the other communities as well.

And so, you know, the real question that was raised by the people is: why is it that they're paying a lot more out of their own system at the school level, while a lot of tremendous resource development is taking place in the North, and that only a smaller amount, you know, from that development accrues to the local level? The people are asking, why such a huge increase for us in the North? Why does the mill rate . . . why could not the government look at a formula that would offset such a huge increase of 17 per cent? Could the minister comment on this?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Just to go over the issue raised relative to mill rates and assessments and what not, since some of the . . . because of the history and past practice, some of the same general comments one might make relative to the rest of the province aren't applicable here.

As I pointed out earlier to you, the assessment base in '88 over '87 went from 39 million 372, to 46,289 roughly — a 17.57 per cent increase. And incidentally, for . . . (inaudible interjection). . . that's right, for Northern Lights. Incidentally, in Ile-a-la-Crosse, the same number there was a 25.56 per cent increase and assessment base. And Creighton had a 20.6 per cent increase.

And why those numbers are relevant, because past practice was that our formula that we used didn't apply to the entire assessment base, perhaps because probably common sense would tell us that it probably was . . . you could have applied it but it probably wasn't realistic.

Now we have moved to the same as the rest of the province for the most part. And hence you see the point you have raised. Now if anyone doubt, does that mean to say that the provincial government somehow doesn't have the same commitment to northern education, I think the other number that's useful to share with you is, if you look at the last, say from '82 through '87, the government grants have increased by 67 per cent, would be point number one.

And point number two that's very relevant, has there been

the economic development to broaden the assessment base and to broaden it in such a way that it's realistic to tax it and tax it in a normal sense, if you like? And the answer there is yes. And I say yes because of the fact that we've seen assessment, for example, in La Ronge, or in Northern Lights, that area, go from 39 million to over 46 million in one year. Other communities have shown . . . or the other boards have shown ever larger increases.

So good things are happening — yes, lots of work ahead of us. But good things are happening for the most part.

Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Minister, in regards to the assessment, in regards to the revenue base for the North, what people in the North at that meeting were raising and what a lot of school boards have raised is that in terms of the revenue, we shouldn't be relying so much, you know, on increasing to such a great extent 17 per cent of the mill rates, that indeed while part of the assessment takes it from the taxation and the lease arrangements with the mining companies, the true amount of dollars that accrue from the mining companies is not taken into real consideration.

I'll give you an example. The royalty structure in the North in regards to mining is exempt from that assessment, and that's where the largest amount of dollars come in. Last year the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation doubled their amount of money that they got out of the North from \$30 million to \$60 million profit — double the amount. And that's what they took from the North.

The question is that double the amount — I mean, we haven't got . . . the school boards are crying for more money in regards to programming at the school level, which you yourself recognize that needs to be done.

So I'd like to clarify the financial aspect that the people are saying, look, fine we'd like to pay for part of the increase, but not at 17 per cent. That's way too high. Why won't you take a quarter of a per cent from the royalty rates of the mining companies and that'll give you the couple million that you require, you know, at the school level. That's all you would require. A very little . . . just a quarter of a per cent. And when I look at the . . . so that's what people are saying. I'd like to move on to another issue because of the time factor.

Some educators are concerned in regards to the task force. I mean, I know it's just starting, but it's very important to relay the feedback to you in regards to what is happening. Some people are concerned that there is . . .

In regards to the failure of the school system at the . . . with the great numbers of drop-out rates are still high at the elementary and high school level — that some of the focus has been on adult education, quite a bit in the initial stages this past year. and some of it . . . some elementary and high school teachers are worried about the filtering of adult education principles in regards to dealing with an elementary and high school question.

They're a little bit concerned about that aspect and they feel there is too much of an adult education, theoretical and practical view, which a lot more should be directed at

the various levels — you know, primary, middle years and junior high and high school levels in that we need to have that significant impact and input by the teachers. And the teachers are saying aren't we moving a little but too much to the adult education direction? They want to have a refocus at the elementary and high school level.

(1630)

We'd like to hear from you in regards to what your officials have told you, as to where you see the input. And what assurance can you give the teachers in northern Saskatchewan that you will indeed have that real consultation that is implied by the task force, that you will indeed have great concern, you know, to the elementary and high school level? I'd like to hear your comments on that.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well I thank the hon. member for raising these points with me and then providing me with this kind of feedback, because it is indeed useful for me.

And I might even go so far as to add, Mr. Deputy Chairman, I might go so far as to add that I would like to thank the hon. member and his colleague from Athabasca for their helpfulness over this past year, relative to the northern governance issue and northern education, and on those occasions when you've met with my Legislative Secretary and passed on your views. And I thank you for that helpfulness.

First of all, in terms of . . . I know what you're saying, that over this last year, certainly because of the reorganization in post-secondary education and the development of the Northlands Career College, I think a lot of legislative attention, perhaps wrongly to some degree — there was an over-emphasis in a lot of the discussion that went here on post-secondary education versus K to 12. It wasn't necessarily right, but that was sort of what people chose to talk about, I suppose, and what people chose to report on.

But let me be clear. This task force is for kindergarten to grade 12. The views of the teachers will be very important to us and the educators very important (a) because I have . . . some were on the task force to start with, and specifically I asked that they consult with educators. And I will leave it at that. I know they have a busy agenda ahead of them.

The other point I would want to make is to just give you another example. I think I may have shared it with your colleague from Saskatoon South yesterday. He was making the case that, for example, a school board, one particular school board in the province, because of the equalization formula, had seen the provincial share of their operating funds go down. And of course Northern Lights No. 113, the exact opposite has been the situation because of equalization formulas, albeit a modified situation, in the North.

And what we have seen over the last six, seven years in the North is that the provincial share of the funding went from 66 per cent to 80 per cent. And so there you see a very good example of how a formula, albeit in this case modified, can work and work right and fairly and

equitably, and all the rest of it. And it's the same formula, of course, that your colleague was attacking yesterday.

Now as it relates to royalty rates, you always have to find the right balance between the public purse getting its share and yet if not being so high that you drive away, or it's a disincentive to investment. Yes, one could raise royalty rates, whether it's for oil or uranium or whatever, so high that you would end up with no activity, and then it wouldn't matter at all how high the royalty rate was, because if there's nothing coming out of the ground, you get no gain. The policy . . .

An Hon. Member: — Oh boy, that's brilliant.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — And the hon. member from Quill Lakes says that's brilliant. And it has been . . . that is an established fact and the numbers are there to show it. It's a pretty straight-line relationship.

The numbers are also there, as I read into the record, to show that this policy has been working right. Because it is because that industry has been very much a part of an explosion, if you like, in northern economic development, that you've seen the assessment bases rise like they have. And although the simplistic answer might be to raise it a quarter of a point, or whatever the hon. member suggested, is that it is because of that policy that we see the assessment bases rising, not by a quarter of a point, but by 17 and 20 and 25 per cent, and largely because of the mining development and the very progressive policies of this government.

Mr. Pringle: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Minister, I've been looking forward to talking to you for about 10 months, Mr. Minister, and so I'm delighted to be here. I only have a couple of questions. But I'd like to make a few comments first if I may.

An Hon. Member: — We prefer multiple choices — true or false.

Mr. Pringle: — Well whatever you find the easiest — multiple choice? — I'll give you some of those then.

Mr. Minister, on a very serious note, education was a very important issue in the Eastview by-election, Saskatoon Eastview by-election. In fact it was a central issue.

I knocked on 14,000 doors over the last 10 months, so I'm well aware of the concerns about your leadership, or lack of leadership in education. Mr. Minister, we have some 2,000 teachers in Saskatoon and almost 20 per cent of them live in Saskatoon Eastview. We have many, many students who go to the university and to the technical institute and they're also concerned about your leadership in education.

In fact concerns about education, Mr. Minister, are right up there with concerns about this government's financial and economic mismanagement, concerns about your dismantling of the health care system. And the concern about education is right up there with your record level tax increases and your poor job creation performance records, and of course, up there with concerns about government waste as well — the \$34,000-a-day famous

example is something that's a big concern in Saskatoon Eastview; and of course the record level patronage of this government. One example, where we of course spent \$30,000 on an untendered private school study that didn't tell us anything we didn't already know. And that's the kind of waste and mismanagement that people in Saskatoon Eastview are concerned about. In fact they're . . .

An Hon. Member: — You're just new. Don't get off the track right off the bat.

Mr. Pringle: — Yes, I'm new here, but as I said, sir, I have a new mandate. You couldn't get a new mandate today; I guarantee you couldn't get a new mandate. It was no fluke in Saskatoon Eastview that you lost your deposit. It was no fluke.

Mr. Chairman: — Order, please. Order. I'm calling for order, please. I'd ask members from both sides of the House to try to contain their enthusiasm just a little bit here while the member is making his comments, please.

Order, please. Order.

Mr. Pringle: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do appreciate the applause I'm getting from the other side though. As I tried to say, it was no fluke that you lost your deposit in Saskatoon Eastview. I hope though that . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Pringle: — I hope that that was a humbling experience for you. I hope that was a humbling experience for you. It pointed out the need of this government to listen, to seriously listen, because there are some major concerns about your record and no where is that more evident than education, Mr. Chairman. I'll repeat, education was an issue in this by-election, I would say to the member from Meadow Lake.

The people of Saskatchewan are used to good government. They're used to honesty and they're used to working co-operatively, and that's something that we found out that hasn't been happening in education, as was so eloquently put yesterday by the member from Saskatoon South. This government, particularly in education, particularly with this minister, says one thing and does another. Chart your own course, Mr. Minister, without co-operation.

You mentioned yesterday that you've met with some thousands of students and many teachers, trustees, but you failed to listen, and that's what people are concerned about.

You talked about your commitment to education. Last year the budget was cut by 1 per cent; this year the increase is less than inflation. Again you attempted to portray that the increase was much more than it really is. It represents another cut to education. You talk about . . .

An Hon. Member: — Is that a slur on my integrity?

Mr. Pringle: — That's right. I'm talking about your integrity, Mr. Minister. You talk about co-operation, then

you force or impose your own view on school boards and teachers.

There are many example of this: your amalgamation of the community college system with technical institutes, your centralized control of those systems, the way you've handled the core issue. These are concerns that people have in Saskatoon Eastview.

We are used to in this province to having a high quality education system; that's one of our trade marks. It was the best in Canada; now you say we've slipped to second best. Well I agree with you; we've slipped. Young people are our future. I've heard you say that, and sincerely believe that you feel that way, and I hope that you will start responding with more concrete action in the Department of Education.

The residents of Saskatoon Eastview and Regina Elphinstone, Mr. Minister, have said no to your record in education, and I'd just like to review some of that record. I know you deny it, but we stick by our strong view that you are continuing to shift education costs to local governments through tax increases, reduced programs, whether it be special education programs or band programs. We know, the people of Saskatoon Eastview know, that those programs are being reduced, and we also know that the school board is less than happy about the increase that you gave them this year.

The people of Saskatoon Eastview have said no to your changing funding formulas, no to reduced capital projects. They said no to putting the University of Saskatchewan into financial crisis.

You talked earlier today about the per student ... 7,200-per-student cost, that Saskatchewan ranked second. We used to rank higher than that, Mr. Minister. In 1982 we funded the university through the grant of 9,016 per student. We've reduced that since 1982 down to ... our figures show 6,907 per student. That's a 23 per cent per student decrease, Mr. Minister.

The residents of Saskatoon Eastview have said no to your tuition fee increase, an average of 45.5 per cent at the University of Saskatchewan since 1982.

One of the issues that came up repeatedly when I talked to students during the by-election, Mr. Minister, was the situation that the library — there was a poor selection, there were not enough books to go around with the increasing numbers of students over the last few years, and the stress and anxiety created in trying to get sufficient books and resources to prepare essays and prepare for exams.

Mr. Minister, what they were stressing to me is there's already enough stress and anxiety about your tuition fee increases and your cutting down on summer job programs and quotas and so on, thanks to programs of your government ... (inaudible interjection). . . I know he's not paying attention. That's one of his problems — he doesn't pay attention to the people of Saskatchewan.

The residents of Saskatoon Eastview, Mr. Minister, have said no to quotas on College of Arts and Sciences. I know

the member from Swift Current said at the time that these people probably wouldn't get jobs anyway. It's that kind of arrogant attitude that the people of Saskatoon Eastview were concerned about, were trying to give you a message in this by-election.

Students have also expressed concern to me, Mr. Minister, about the complexity of the student loan program and the way the students are forced to go increasingly into debt under that program. Also there are concerns about the changes to the bursary program.

Residents are concerned about, as I indicated earlier, the amalgamation and the way you did it, of the community college system and the technical institute system and your centralized control.

We're also concerned, Mr. Minister, about the way you treat people: the way you fired the technical institute staff — the manner in which you did that, the cold-hearted manner in which you did that; the way you phased out central office people in the manner in which you did that, 1,100 training spaces in the technical institutes in this province. People know about that and they're concerned about that.

We're also concerned — as I indicated earlier, 20 per cent of the teachers in Saskatoon live in the riding of Saskatoon Eastview, and they're concerned about the way you treat educators; about the way you make fun of them, about the way you pit faculty against students, and the way you try and, as was demonstrated yesterday, try and have some sort of a survey that pits rural people against teachers.

(1645)

The people of Saskatoon Eastview are concerned about that kind of lack of integrity, Mr. Minister. Teachers are concerned that you've painted them as being greedy when they were really concerned about the quality of education.

Also we're very concerned ... As I indicted earlier, Mr. Minister, we have may, many students in Saskatoon Eastview, and they're very concerned about your summer job program that ... It was made clear yesterday that you're not going to reinstate some of that funds that you cut from the 1986 employment opportunity program, and you created 6,000 fewer jobs last year for these students that you did the year before.

With the money that this government has allocated this year, you're also going to create 6,000 fewer jobs than you did in 1986. That's a 38.1 per cent decrease from 1986, Mr. Minister, and students are concerned about being able to return to school in the fall.

I could go on and on, Mr. Minister, but I won't. Okay, in summary, what I would like to say, though, Mr. Minister, is that your approach in education, your approach in education — and you can call this rhetoric if you like — but is not appreciated. Your lack of leadership is not appreciated by educators.

Parents are concerned about the disarray that education is in. And you force your own agenda on people. You do not consult, even though you say you talk to people. They feel that you don't listen. Basically you're shifting the burden from provincial funding to the local level; there's no question about that.

You're cutting back; you're phasing out program; you're forcing school boards to be the bad guys in doing that. You say one thing and do another, and you pit one element of the school system against the other. That's a summary of your record in education, Mr. Minister. No wonder people of Saskatoon Eastview and Regina Elphinstone were upset about your record.

Mr. Minister, you talk about us — as does your government — about us being resistant to change. We're well aware, Mr. Minister, that society changes, that new realities emerge, new challenges face us, and that new techniques and solutions have got to be found to the new situations. We're well aware of that.

But certain fundamental principles, Mr. Minister, never change. And that's something that you need to realize about Saskatchewan. You talked earlier today about the New Democrats not understanding the history of Saskatchewan. I think we understand it fairly well.

The fundamental principles never change, Mr. Minister — principles of co-operation, which you need to learn something about; principles of openness and competence in government. Those principles are as important as they were 20 years ago.

Yesterday you were told, you were reminded, Mr. Minister, that it was us that initiated the review in education, not you. Okay? So remember that.

An Hon. Member: — Like the closure of hospitals, eh? You initiated that, eh?

Mr. Pringle: — Well we asked you questions about hospitals today and you didn't answer them. you didn't answer the questions today about closing of hospitals. If you'd like to talk about that tomorrow ... (inaudible interjection). . . Yes, they liked that, yes. When we asked you questions on hospitals, close those. We're on education right now, Mr. Minister ... (inaudible interjection). . . They're not voting for you this time, I don't think.

An Hon. Member: — I was in Carnduff, biggest meeting in this history of Carnduff, 400.

Mr. Pringle: — The member from Souris-Cannington says that they're not voting for us. I think you'll find it different next time, sir.

As I tried to say, Mr. Minister, your record in education is dismal, and I want to ask you a question ... (inaudible interjection). . . I'll maybe wait till the Minister of Education listens, because I want to ask him a question now. I know he hasn't been listening and I know he's going to pay for that, because residents of Saskatoon Eastview and other ridings are listening. They're not

impressed that you don't listen, Mr. Minister.

I want to ask you: when will you make a real commitment, sir, to education in this province, and back up your rhetoric with concrete, constructive action, including consultation, which is one of the failures of your leadership in education, and sufficient money to do the job? When will you make that commitment, sir?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Well our commitment is there today, it was there yesterday, and it'll be there into the future.

And the hon. member talks about what he found when he was knocking on doors in Eastview. Well I'll tell you one thing I bet he found for sure, Mr. Deputy Chairman, and that was students at the door, saying when it came to choosing between students; lives and their rights to have their exams and finish their courses, did the ND stand behind the students, Mr. Chairman? No, sir, they did not. They abandoned the students and they are the ones that talk about a commitment to accessibility to education. They denied those students accessibility in the worst form, Mr. Chairman, by denying them the ability to write their exams . . . those students caught in a labour dispute between two parties.

I expected to hear more from the hon. member. I welcome him to the examination of *Estimates*, and that was a very good speech, and now maybe we can return to an examination of *Estimates*, or if he wishes, I'll be happy to get into an examination of patronage that he got into, relative to this party versus his.

I'd be happy to get into that. I've got a 10 or 12-page list here, and after you get past the first two or three pages, then you've got an entire page almost of Koskies. If that's the biggest issue in his mind relative to education, I'll get into it if he wants to.

An Hon. Member: — Let's hear it. Come on, let's get into it.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: — Oh, the hon. Leader of the Opposition wants to hear a little bit about patronage. Well you know, the seat I came from, the seat I came from, was elected here, was formerly held by Auburn Pepper. He was a fine gentleman, and had a daughter, Janet. Guess what? She was appointed secretary to the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan. And her husband, Harvey, had a princely salary of \$4,450, was an OC (order in council) appointment — \$4,450 per month, an OC appointment to Revenue.

Doug Archer, Pat Atkinson, Chris Banman, Curtis Bowerman, Frank Buck, George Burton, Zennie Burton, Eric Klein, Don Cody, Russell Eaton, Vic Ellis, Don Faris, Margaret Fern — that's a common name — Carla Funk. Well look at this one. Can you imagine this one? We got the member for Moose Jaw North — Moose Jaw North who was the NDP candidate in Moose Jaw North in April '82, now the MLA for that area. Guess who was at the patronage trough in the NDP years? Okay. And guess where he got an honorarium from — the Department of Education. Well, imagine that. This squeaky clean group over there that the new member from Saskatoon

Eastview, in his first debut here in the legislature, who does he choose to defend? His colleagues who have been at the trough in years past in a very substantive sort of way.

You know, we expected more of you. You're a new guy. We though you wouldn't sort of get caught up in that backwards-looking group there. They'll drag you backwards into the future if you stick around that bunch too long, let me tell you.

And I say the same thing to you as I said to your colleague yesterday, who you've just turned out to be just an echo for, we're going to bring this NDP Party and these NDP members into the 21st century whether you like it or not. And if we have to bring you kicking and screaming into the 21st century, you're going to come, let me tell you. We're going to bring you whether you want to come or not.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The committee reported progress.

Mr. Speaker: — Order. Order. I think the debate has concluded and we're trying to conduct the business of the House and I would ask for your co-operation. You can discuss the other issues later.

MOTIONS

House Adjournment

Hon. Mr. Berntson: — Mr. Speaker, I move, by leave of the Assembly, seconded by the member for Weyburn:

That notwithstanding rule 3, of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly* of Saskatchewan, when this Assembly adjourns on Thursday, May 19, 1988, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, May 24, 1988.

Leave granted.

Motion agreed to.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.