

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
June 21, 1982

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

NOTICE OF MOTION

HON. MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on Wednesday, June 23, 1982, move first reading of a bill, An Act to provide for the imposition of Taxes on and the Collection of Taxes from Certain Purchasers of Certain Fuels and for the repeal of The Fuel Petroleum Products Act.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to introduce to you, and to the members of this Assembly, 20 grade 8 students from Haley. They are seated in the Speaker's gallery. We welcome you to Regina and hope you have a good visit in the legislature. We hope it is educational and we wish you a good trip home. I ask all members to welcome this class. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and to the House, a group of students from Transcona School in the Elphinstone constituency of Regina. They are a group of grades 5 and 6 students, 34 in number. They are with their teacher and chaperone, Mrs. Joanne Friesen. I trust that they will enjoy their stay in the legislature this afternoon and get some understanding of the procedures of the legislature and take it back with them as they continue their studies this year and next.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I greet them and ask all other members of the House to greet these students from Transcona School.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to you, and to the members of this house, the grade 4 students from Lakeview School in Lakeview constituency who are here with their teacher, Mrs. Becker. I will be meeting with them at 2:35 p.m. outside the House and I would like this house to welcome them to this Assembly.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, if I might add a note, because I will be addressing the legislature shortly after, I have asked my colleague, the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, to greet the students on my behalf.

QUESTIONS

Increase in Minimum Wage

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Labour. Is the minister in a position to make an announcement on an increase in the minimum wage to be effective either on July 1 or on some other set date?

HON. MR. MCLAREN: — Not at this time, Mr. Speaker. I am receiving briefs from the various associations and groups in the province at this time and a decision will be made in the not too distant future.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister can give us any indication of when a decision might be expected. I say this because there has been a tradition of giving employers six weeks notice of any increase in the minimum wage. Obviously that notice cannot be given if an increase is to be effective on July 1 and I would ask the minister whether or not he can give any indication as to whether there will be an announcement today or this week or some other time that he can name at this time.

HON. MR. MCLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, the answer is no. I can't. We will have it in the course and, as I say, just as quickly as possible.

Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Layoffs

MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the chairman in charge of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. It would appear that the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan is going to be a leader under this new administration — a leader of layoffs, it seems. There has been a recent announcement of some 1,200 employees being laid off during the summer months. I would like to ask the chairman when the decision was made and by whom.

HON. MR. MCLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the hon. member, when you have potash pushed to the peaks of the storage brings and potash on the ground covered with tarps, you have to make the decision to lay the people off. I consider the question rather odd. Considering the number of people who had to be involved now, I wonder why the administration opposite didn't lay 200 or 300 people off last summer when the potash industry was heading into this situation, so the number affected would have been considerably smaller by this point in time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Speaker, as the minister may well know, when the announcement to lay off 1,200 employees was made, some of the unions indicated surprise at that announcement. In fact, the president of the Cory mine United Steelworkers of America when interviewed said, "Layoffs came as a surprise because we had been told we would be consulted." I would like to ask the chairman of the potash corporation why he did not, in fact, carry out consultations with the local employees and the head of the unions at the potash mines.

HON. MR. MCLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, I would agree with the member opposite that it was not handled in the proper manner, and we have already contacted the people involved expressing our displeasure with the method of not letting the unions know. This has been taken care of.

MR. KOSKIE: — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the minister could indicated to this House whether the layoff notices given to the employees are for a definite duration, of if they call for a return date to work?

HON. MR. MCLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know how I can answer that question, it will depend upon the market conditions, and when that potash inventory is reduced. It may happen within two weeks. People will be called back to work as it becomes necessary. I have no idea how long this is all going to take, although there are signs of improvement already in the marketing of potash.

MR. KOSKIE: — I wonder if the chairman of the potash corporation is in fact monitoring the number of layoffs in the private sector, and if he could indicate the degree of the layoffs in the private sector.

HON. MR. MCLAREN: — Could you repeat the question? I didn't hear the last part of your question.

MR. KOSKIE: — I wonder if the minister could indicate to the House whether or not he is monitoring the number of layoffs that are going on in the private sector, and whether he would indicate if the same massive layoffs are occurring.

HON. MR. MCLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the member opposite that the other potash mines have been carrying out a slowdown in their production for a number of months, and the indication I have is that some of these mines are going to be back to full production shortly after July 2.

Grant to World Assembly of First Nations Conference

MR. YEW: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to address my question to the Minister of Urban Affairs. From July 18 to July 25, the World Assembly of First Nations conference will be held in Saskatchewan. This is one of the most important conferences ever to be held in Saskatchewan, with up to 9,000 delegates expected to attend. The conference organizers through the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians have asked the Saskatchewan government to help meet the costs of this conference through a grant of \$500,000.

My question to the Minister of Urban Affairs is: has the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians been notified of any decision on this matter?

HON. MR. SCHOENHALS: — Mr. Speaker, it would indicate that the hon. member opposite has not done his homework. This area is under the Department of the Attorney general, and I would defer the question to him if that's possible.

HON. MR. LANE: — In response to the hon. Member, yes, we've had discussions with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians. We will be indicating to them in the next day or so the amount of the proposed grant, an amount which I believe the federation will find satisfactory.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. YEW: — Will the minister inform the members of this Assembly what it is prepared to do to ensure that this important conference does not now have to be cancelled?

HON. MR. LANE: — I think I've already given the answer, which should solve the member's concerns. I call to the member's attention that the Government of Canada is making no financial commitment whatsoever, and that, of course, has put some added pressure on the government of Saskatchewan. We will have an announcement in the next day or so, as I say, of an amount which I believe the federation will find satisfactory.

Loss of Livestock in Southwest Saskatchewan

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Agriculture. In light of the recent storm which took place in southwest Saskatchewan, particularly in the Maple Creek-Eastend area, and in light of the large number of cattle which were lost during that storm (recent estimates class it at about 2,000 head). I would like to know what assistance he has made available to the ranchers and farmers. Who will qualify? How much money will be made available to them?

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the hon. member's question, in fact there were about 1,200 to 1,400 head of cattle and calves lost as a result of the storm. There were about 25 horses, and 100 sheep and lambs. There were only a very few ranchers who suffered what we would call "serious" losses. Those numbers are pulled together. The announcement will be coming, I would suggest, within the next day or two as to the level of support for those who suffered serious losses.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Supplementary to the Minister of Agriculture: what will be the rate of compensation? Will the announcement be made tomorrow or the next day? Can he inform the Assembly here today how much compensation will be paid and what the level of compensation will be in terms of the number of cattle a person will have to have lost before being eligible?

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — I will tell the legislature prior to making the announcement to the public, if that's the hon. Member's wish. With regard to the level of compensation. I will announce that at the same time with regard to the urgency of getting the announcement out. I don't share the same concern that the hon. Member does, since this is not a cash loss but a loss of future income. The amount of compensation will be announced within the next day or two.

Inquiry Costs for Kamsack

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Urban Affairs. Could the minister tell me if the Town Council of Kamsack has been in contact with him recently, and whether the minister intends to pay the inquiry costs at Kamsack?

HON. MR. SCHOENHALS: — Mr. Speaker, the council from Kamsack has in fact been in touch, and, yes, we do intend to pay.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The minister said that he does intend to pay. Does he intend to pay the total cost of that inquiry or just a portion of it?

HON. MR. SCHOENHALS: — Mr. Speaker, we will pay the costs of the inquiry. We have dealt with it with the town council. Once again, I would defer the question to the Department of the Attorney General; I believe that is where the matter is being handled.

HON. MR. LANE: — I believe the total payment will be in the range of \$52,000 – far more than the amount proposed by the previous government which was not prepared to give one red cent to the town of Kamsack.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Supplementary question to the Attorney General.

AN HON. MEMBER: — They're looking for a new candidate.

MR. LUSNEY: — I doubt that very much.

I would just like to remind the Attorney General that I don't think the former government at any time stated it would not be paying for the inquiry. I would also like to bring to his attention that the total cost to the town of Kamsack is in the vicinity of \$72,000. that's what is on their financial statement. The Attorney General says that he intends to pay about \$52,000. Is he saying that they do not intend to pay the inquiry costs in total at Kamsack? They said last spring and last fall that they would cover all the costs of the inquiry.

HON. MR. LANE: — I would like to remind the hon. Member that the former government and the former attorney general indicated that the town of Kamsack should pay all of the bills because it was their inquiry. As a matter of fact, he went so far as to suggest that perhaps the opposition should help pay. I'm sure he has changed his mind at this time. We have indicated that we will pay the actual costs of the inquiry – some \$52,000, exactly \$52,000 more than was proposed by the party opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Tourism Deficit in Saskatchewan

MR. THOMPSON: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources, the hon. Member for Meadow Lake. Are you aware that each year Saskatchewan people spend more money on travel outside the province than they spend on in-province travel? Is it, or will it be, the policy of your government to take action to reverse this trend? If so, will you tell this House what kind of immediate action you have planned?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — To answer the hon. member's first question, yes, I am aware that people in the past have been spending more on tourism outside the province than in. it is a problem which we were concerned about when in opposition and it is a problem we are still concerned about.

I can tell you what we have already done about it. There is a reduced price for gas in this province now ... (inaudible)... in great numbers this summer.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THOMPSON: — That's not the answer I was looking for and I'm sure it's not the answer the citizens of Saskatchewan are looking for either. Is the minister aware that public hearings gave full support to the development plans for Cypress Park and that plans were in place to proceed with work this summer on a 37-unit lodge, ski facilities,

snow making equipment and a chair lift? Is he aware that these plans were in place and can he tell this Assembly when he will be going ahead with the construction of facilities to help reduce out overall tourism deficit in this situation?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — The difference between the opinion expressed by the hon. member for Athabasca in this matter and what our government would say concerns the Cypress Hills installation that was proposed by the former minister. I might add – and I think many people in south-western Saskatchewan would agree with this – that the reason that the former minister proposed such a development in the Cypress Hills was more in line with building a monument to himself than with developing any kind of a tourism project in Saskatchewan. What we're doing is reviewing all of the tourism facilities in this province with a view to placing them where they'll have the most use by the most people. And certainly my preliminary view, at this time at least, is that the Cypress Hills is not a location for major expenditures.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THOMPSON: — That's quite interesting, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister tell us how many jobs it has cost this summer to shelve these projects and study them some more? And can he tell us if this stall in this major development in tourism is his message to the people in the Southwest about how much more they can be?

HON. MR. MCLEOD: — I can't tell you how many jobs this delay has cost. I don't believe it has had any effect at all on jobs. If it has had some small effect on jobs in the short term for this summer, what we have to look at is the long term. And we believe that our proposals, which you will see in due course, will benefit this province in a lot more jobs over a long term.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Dismissal of Dennis Foley

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Government Services. Has Mr. Dennis Foley, the former deputy minister of Government Services, been dismissed? And if so, what cause or reasons was given to Mr. Foley in respect to his severance?

HON. MRS. DUNCAN: — I would like to redirect that question to the head of the transition team, Mr. Bertson, the Deputy Premier.

HON. MR. BERTSON: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Dennis Foley, former deputy minister of Government Services was in fact dismissed. As to what cause was given to Mr. Foley, I would suggest that the Leader of the Opposition should ask Mr. Foley, as we are under no obligation to show cause. And, thirdly, as to what compensation package is available to Mr. Foley, again I would suggest that he ask Mr. Foley. That is worked out with outside, independent counsel, and for good reason: well, to keep the biases of this so-called bloodthirsty hatchet-man out of the formula.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — The description by the hon. member for Souris-Cannington of himself was his own. It may well be accurate, and he's perhaps a better judge of that than I.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order. Does the member have a supplementary?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — My question to the Minister of Agriculture, the Deputy Premier, is this: what was the cause of Mr. Foley's dismissal? Whether or not you have told Mr. Foley this, you perhaps may not wish to disclose. But I want you to say to this House what was the cause of the dismissal of a senior public servant with an unblemished record of service to the people of Saskatchewan.

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — Well, obviously the Leader of the Opposition didn't understand the answer the first time we went around this thing. Quite simply, if you don't know the cause, you may never know, because we're under no obligation to give cause and we're not going to.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary. Am I to understand from the Deputy Premier that senior employees of this government have been dismissed, and in the future are going to be dismissed, and that the government is not going to give to this House any reason why a senior employee with 10 years of service is dismissed from his service with this government? Is that what you are saying — that you will not tell this house why you are dismissing senior people who have an unblemished record of public service?

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what I'm saying. I would stack it up against the former premier's record in 1971. In addition, I would stack it up against the record of the government in Manitoba, which carries the same stripe as the members opposite. They said, "Damn it, we have to fire these senior civil servants, or why seek office again?" I'll just send this across to the former premier rather than read it into the record. And that's not to suggest for a minute that anything that I've said here would go to show cause in Mr. Foley's particular case. That fact is we made the decision; we acted on it; we're under no obligation to show cause in Mr. Foley's case or any other case, and we won't.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. Whether or not the Deputy Premier believes that he's under any legal obligation to show cause, I am asking him whether he believes he's under any moral obligation to this house or to the people of Saskatchewan.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Are you going to ask about morals?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I am asking the question again — whether the minister believes he's under any moral obligation to tell this house or the people of Saskatchewan the reasons why any senior public servant with 10 years of unblemished service is dismissed summarily from his position with the Government of Saskatchewan and offered no alternative employment?

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — If I were the Leader of the Opposition, I would be a little careful with that last one, but as it relates to whether or not I feel any moral obligation to show cause, I think any twinge of conscience that I may have had, if ever, would have been largely alleviated by the compensation package that has been offered for any of the former public servants who have been dismissed. I think if the Leader of the Opposition would look into it and just see what level of compensation package, in fact, exists, he'll find it far more generous than even the compensation package he offered to the people he has dismissed since the last election.

Statistics re Dennis Foley

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I have a new question for the Minister of Agriculture, the Deputy Premier. Does the Minister of Agriculture, the Deputy Premier, recall the age of Mr. Dennis Foley and how long he has served this government and what his employment was prior to coming with this government?

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — Not with any degree of precision, Mr. Speaker.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Does the Minister of Agriculture know whether Mr. Foley is a man in his youthful years, or in his middle age, or late middle age or older? He obviously does not know the age. Does he recall the approximate age of the employee concerned?

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition was asking is I knew the age. I said, “Not with any degree of precision.” I could take a guess and say in his mid – to late 50s. This is something different from your second question. Now, as it relates to his time in service with the public service of Saskatchewan. I can also take a guess and say in the neighbourhood of nine years. As it relates to his previous employer, I could take a guess. If it recall correctly, I think it was Poole Construction, but I don’t know.

So the first answer I gave to the Leader of the Opposition was. “Not with any degree of precision.” I answer him again, but not with any degree of precision.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Celebration of Moose Jaw’s 100th Birthday

MR. SMITH: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform this House today that the city of Moose Jaw is celebrating its 100th birthday this year. A wagon trek left Moose Jaw this morning for Saskatoon. There are some 19 wagons. I was at their celebration last night at the museum. It was a very spectacular show. They will land in Saskatoon in about nine days time to commemorate Saskatoon’s celebrations also. I should like this house to give a round of applause to the city of Moose Jaw for the fine air show which took place yesterday. I thank you.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATE

Address in Reply

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Hodgins.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, when I adjourned the debate on Friday last, I had mentioned a few things which I thought were relevant in commenting on the Speech

from the Throne. I asked at that time for a commitment from the government opposite that prior to bringing in a full legislative program it would bring in a Speech from the Throne giving us an opportunity to debate the legislative program at the first regular session and I repeat that request. I had had an opportunity to congratulate you, sir, to congratulate the Premier and his cabinet and to congratulate the mover and seconder of the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

I want now to express my thanks to the people of Elphinstone for returning me with a comfortable majority. Unfortunately not enough of my political persuasion had such a comfortable majority. None the less I do thank the people of Elliston. I have represented the territory which is now described as the Elphinstone constituency – the great bulk of it – continuously since 1960 and it is an honor for me to represent some of the most genuine people in all of Canada. I thank them and look forward to serving them again.

A good number of changes have taken place and are taking place in that part of Regina. Some of the most valuable changes are the infill housing by the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, the community schools, the work of the Regina boards of education and the Department of Education, and some pioneering work done by local groups in support of health services and in support of senior citizens' services. I very much hope that these efforts will be continued and expanded. I want to urge upon members of the government opposite the merit of these programs and to ask them to give them sympathetic consideration.

I have, Mr. Speaker, to direct a comment now particularly to the Minister of Finance. When we last met as a legislature in March, the then government outlined its spending proposals in a budget which was tabled and debated in this House. The new government is, of course, not committed to that budget and no one would suggest that it is. It is, however, now eight weeks since the election and I suggest to you and to members opposite that the new government is committed to telling the school boards and the university commission and the hospital boards and the city, town and municipal governments and all the non-government organizations what grants they might expect. It is also committed to telling the House what it tells all of these bodies, governmental and non-governmental.

Dozens of questions call for an answer and I will give one simple example. Will a grant be made to the Melfort Union Hospital Board (and I pick this out of many, many questions I might ask) and if so, what will be the formula for its calculation? Will it be the old formula, will it be the new formula as announced in the March budget, or will it be some other formula? Those are perfectly reasonable and legitimate questions and we would ask that the government opposite attempt to answer as many of them as possible. What grants will be made to school boards? What to nursing homes and the like?

Understanding that some matters will not yet be finalized, understanding that some answers will accordingly not be able to be given. I would call upon the Minister of Finance to make a statement as detailed as possible. I was pleased to note some reference in the press last week to a suggestion that there might be a statement. I would urge him to do it and I would urge all other ministers to outline as fully as they can what parts of the March budget will stand (if I may put it that way) and what parts will be set aside, and what, in fact, will be the response of the government opposite to the concerns of a good number of organizations – understandable concerns as to what money they're likely to expect from the government during this current fiscal year.

Again, I am not critical of the fact that the government has not been able to outline a full program at this time. Clearly time is required. I urge that it can be done as rapidly as possible. In business and in government decision makers can deal with almost anything but uncertainty. Any business person who talks to you will tell you that. Accordingly, I ask the Minister of Finance and his colleagues to remove as much uncertainty as they can as soon as they can.

Mr. Speaker, governments raise money by taxation and they spend money on behalf of citizens. Naturally, every government wishes to raise as little money as possible and spend as much money as possible. Not surprisingly, it's not possible to spend money for long unless you raise it.

It is possible to spend money for a little while without raising it. We've got some stellar examples of that in Canada. We have the federal government, which has for some time spent money without raising it. We have provincial governments in Quebec and in Ontario which for some time have spent money without raising it. The consequences are very, very difficult, not only for those governments, but also for people in other provinces, principally the three western provinces, which have adopted a different method of public finance.

I think we can anticipate that tax cuts are going to have to be paid for. The interesting question always is: who pays? If a government offers tax cuts, who is going to have to pay for those? If government spending must be cut, what spending will be cut? If there are economic problems, who is going to be asked to deal with the burdens created by those? There is no better test of where a government stands than to look to see whom it asks to bear the burden if there are economic troubles ahead.

There is no doubt that Canada is in troubled economic waters. Indeed, the government opposite recognizes this in its Speech from the Throne. We're deluged daily with appeals of one kind or another addressed to Canadians saying that we have to reduce out spending or we have to reduce out expectations and reduce out demands on the economy, that we have to suffer short-term pain for long-term gain. I believe that was the phrase offered by Mr. John Crosbie.

The phrases are the same whether they come from the mouth of Mr. Trudeau, Mr. Allan MacEachen, Mr. Clark or Mr. John Crosbie. Certainly they are the same when they come from the mouth of the provincial treasurer of Ontario, Mr. Miller, when he applies new taxes. It's the same story. We are asked to bear the burden of the difficult economic times through which Canada is suffering.

Let us take this Tory phrase of short-term pain for long-term gain and ask what the government opposite believes about short-term pain and long-term gain. We have noted that they have reduced taxes. We have noted that they've offered employment to a good number of senior people. I don't have a full list here but there's an impressive number.

I noted that there's a new cabinet secretary who is to get \$85,000 a year. According to the *Manitoba Public Accounts*, when he was employed by the Lyon government some 15 or 16 months ago, he was paid by Premier Lyon what was presumably a fair and reasonable salary, at that time, of \$53,000. He is now getting \$85,000, an increase of \$32,000. I doubt whether even the most true-blue Tory would think that that was a painfully small increase. I think not – 60 per cent in 16 months.

Now consider the matter of people on minimum wage. It has been the practice to increase the minimum wage every six months, and so, on, say, January 1, 1981, July 1, 1981, and January 1, 1982 the minimum wage was increased. We were doing it every six months because these people live close to the economic edge. Employers naturally feel that they would like to keep up wages but would not like to feel that they are committed over a period of a year. So there had been small increases. The minimum wage board proposed that there be an increase of 25 cents an hour – between 5 per cent and 6 per cent. That is the proposal – an increase of between 5 per cent and 6 per cent for the people at the bottom end of the income scale. I doubt whether even the most true-blue Tory would think that that was a painfully high increase, particularly if he were making \$4.25 an hour.

But here we see the government's priorities. They have decided against the recommendations of the minimum wage board (at least they haven't acted on them), against the position of every social service agency that I know of in this province and against the ordinary feelings of humanity, which suggest that people on minimum wage ought to at least get enough to keep up with the cost of living. They say no. They say no to people who are at the very bottom of the scale. And who are these people at the bottom of the scale? Well, overwhelmingly, they are women. Overwhelmingly, they are not teen-agers, but they are women who are working to help support their families.

About 39 per cent of the workforce is female and it is believed that approximately 60 per cent to 70 per cent of the people who are on minimum wage or minimum wage-related jobs are women. So, accordingly, overwhelmingly the people who suffer when the minimum wage is not increased are women. In Canada, for decades we have been talking about giving a better deal to women. We have made some progress when it comes to laws removing discrimination against women in the workplace and elsewhere. We have made some progress when it comes to laws, but we haven't made so much progress when it comes to the market place, because, in fact, women get a good deal less than men when they go out into the job market and seek employment. That is one of the reasons why the government of which I was proud to be a member felt that it had a strong obligation to keep minimum wages high. When we came to office in 1971, minimum wages in Saskatchewan were the seventh highest in Canada. When we left office, they were the highest in Canada. And we were proud of that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I think the results for women are there on the records. If you look at full-time employment and you look at what people get paid who are working full-time, you will find that female employees in Canada get 63 per cent of what male employees get. If you look at the figures for Saskatchewan you will find that the figure is not 63 per cent, but 68 per cent. Now, that is perhaps not impressive, but it is a significant difference. It came about because, while our general wages are not any higher and, accordingly, women get on the average more money in proportion to men than they get elsewhere in Canada. I am proud of that.

Accordingly, when people say there shall be no increase in the minimum wage, they are saying women should get less (a smaller proportion of what men get) than they now get in Saskatchewan, and that we in Saskatchewan should revert to the situation elsewhere in Canada, and we should stop our efforts to see that women get a better break in the market place. I think that is the wrong way to be moving. Now all these facts are known

to the government; they are known to the Minister of Social Services; they are known to other people. All these facts are in their records. They should study those facts and act on those facts, rather than freeze minimum wages.

Mr. Speaker, who else in society has had their wages frozen? Is it MLAs? Certainly not. The member for Moosomin was perfectly happy to take his increment, as was I and as were all members. They were perfectly happy to take their increase in the minimum wage with a little index we had built in. I see nothing wrong with that, nor am I critical of it. I am just saying that if we are doing that for ourselves, and if we are giving to senior public servants very, very handsome increases, then surely we ought to give a modest increase to women on minimum wage. I think every member of that cabinet, male or female, should stand up and say, "Yes, we should be doing that for the women in the market place."

Members opposite somehow suggest that there is going to be a benefit for people on minimum wage because their gasoline tax will be removed. Of course, that is true. How much benefit will this give to people on minimum wage? I ask each member opposite to take his pen or pencil and do a little calculation. What does 25 cents on the minimum wage mean to a woman who is working 40 hours a week, regularly throughout the year? How much will she have to drive in order to get that 25-cent benefit in cheaper gasoline? Well, if her car goes 20 miles per gallon, she'll have to put in 54,000 kilometres before she gets her 25 cents back. How many women on minimum wage do you know who drive 54,000 kilometres a year? Not many.

It is pretty clear, when you talk about people on minimum wage, that what they need is an increase in the minimum wage. They cannot possibly recover the same amount of benefit from any other tax cutting program of the government. I say to the government, and I appeal to the government to look at this again to see whether it does not think it only fair and just to accord a 25-cent (at least) increase in the minimum wage to people who desperately need it.

I say we are now finding out who is being asked to pay for these tax cuts by members opposite. We have indicated one group which is asked to pay. Obviously one of the reasons they don't want to increase the minimum wage is that it will put some pressure on some governmental expenses – nursing homes, and the like. That is one reason, but it is not an effective reason. It is contemptible for a government to attempt to save on the backs of people on minimum wage when they are offering very, very high incomes to other people they are taking on staff. There is one group of people that is being asked to pay – people on minimum wage.

Who else is being asked to pay for these promises? Well, I looked in the Speech from the Throne to see whether there was anything there to deal with the problems of injured workmen. Members will know that many months ago a bill was introduced into this House to provide an escalator for injured workmen who had been injured some years ago, because we believe, and in so far as we were aware members opposite believed, that this group in society, people who had been injured years ago and were living on workers' compensation, was deserving of support from the government of this province.

Let me try to outline for some members of this House what has happened with respect to workers' compensation. Members will know that The Workers' Compensation Act was substantially improved in the early '70s, but that as inflation went on it was clear that our method of dealing with workers' compensation was defective. We accordingly

introduced a whole new program in 1979 – the best in Canada by a wide margin and, I predict, one which will be followed by other governments over the years as so many other things in this province have been followed. So that dealt with the future.

With respect to people who were injured in the past we had made ad hoc increases to deal with their particular problems, believing that something ought to be done on a more permanent basis. We appointed a committee headed by Judge Muir which recommended that a system be put in to provide money for people who had been recommended that a system be put in to provide money for people who had been injured years ago and accordingly had small compensation. And here was a report by Judge Muir which was concurred in by employee representatives and by employer representatives. So far as I am aware, no one opposed it. It was brought into this House, it was not opposed by the Conservative members of this House. I fully expected when we were offered new legislation to deal with the problems of people who are suffering from the economic malaise identified in the Speech from the Throne that that legislation would be on the list. But it was not. It is not there.

Members opposite have identified yet another group which is asked to pay for their promises – injured workmen who should be getting an increase, even if only an ad hoc increase, and who are not getting any in the Speech from the Throne. We know well what a difficult time it is for people who are living on modest amounts of money. That legislation would have provided them with \$720 a month minimum – hardly a handsome amount, about the amount of a minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, there are other groups that are being asked to pay. Each year it has been the custom of this legislature to look at the superannuation allowances of people who have worked for this government in past times. And we have as a legislature decided whether or not those superannuation allowances should be increased. Almost uniformly in recent years we have decided that they should be increased, because superannuation allowances to people who retired many years ago are quite small. And they have been supplemented a great deal.

Again, many months ago legislation was introduced in this House to provide a supplementation for people who worked for this government many years ago, and retired on small pensions. It did something more. It provided that if the employee died, his or her spouse got not 50 per cent of the pension, but 60 per cent of the pension. Now that is something we had done for ourselves, as members of the legislature, a couple of years ago. And we had all agreed, I thought, that this should be done for people who had superannuated and had worked for this government 20 or 30 years ago when salaries were small and, accordingly pensions were small. Accordingly, I expected that Speech from the Throne to have something in it to deal with the problems of government employees on pensions, but it wasn't there. We are dealing with ward systems and we are dealing with taxes on mortgage interest, but we don't have any time to deal with government employees on pensions. It looks like 1982 is going to be a year in which they are not going to get any supplement. They are being called upon to bear the burden. They are being called upon to endure the short-term pain for the long-term gain promised by members opposite.

Superannuated employees were provided for in legislation introduced in this legislature in March which did not have any opposition from members opposite. Yet, when they have an opportunity to do something, they do nothing. They had an opportunity in this Speech from the Throne to act on what they said was okay last March, but they are not doing it. This is another group who are being asked to bear the

burden of the tax cuts offered by members opposite. And who else?

I think we all know that one of the most difficult expenses to deal with in this day and age is the cost of shelter. Members opposite made a very strong point of that, and rightly so, when they talked about utility costs and mortgage interest rates. For some strange reason they are of the view that some of these things do not apply to certain classes of society.

We have provided, year in and year out, property improvement grants to help people who own their own homes and who are trying to struggle with the costs of shelter. And I note that members opposite have provided nothing in their Speech from the Throne for increasing property improvement grants.

The Minister of Urban Affairs announced recently that there would be something for senior citizens' school taxes and there would be something for renters. But there is nothing for ordinary people who own a small house and need a property improvement grant to allow them to hang onto that house. There is nothing for small businessmen who are perhaps suffering as much as any in this society. There is nothing to increase the property improvement grants for farmers.

They have money for a great number of things, they have large gobs of money for upwardly mobile young executives with incomes of \$80,000 and only one swimming pool. But they don't have any money for people in my constituency who have modest incomes of \$10,000 or \$15,000 a year and are trying to hang onto their own homes. So here is another group of people who are being asked to pay, being asked to bear the costs of the tax cuts being offered by members opposite.

But when I am looking over the list of people who are being asked to pay, I think that perhaps the most difficult group for me to justify this to would be the senior citizens who are particularly hard-hit by increasing costs. I think all of us know that as a group senior citizens have lower incomes than most people. Some of them do pretty well and they are frank to say that. If a man and a woman are both alive and they are getting two pensions, if they happen to live in senior citizen subsidized housing, if they happen to own their own homes in a smaller centre, some of them do pretty well. But I think if you look at the records of who is being hurt you will find no group for whom the evidence is more overwhelming than single senior citizens living alone in rented accommodation. And I am sure that the Minister of Social Services, or anyone else who has looked at these figures, will confirm that fact.

Now what should we be doing about that? What we should be doing is providing a senior citizens' shelter allowance to see that no senior citizen living alone in rented accommodation has to pay more than, say, 25 per cent of his meagre income for his shelter costs, or 30 percent. That's what we should be doing. That's what should be in this Speech from the Throne, and that's what is not in this Speech from the Throne. And here is another group of people who are being asked to bear the pain in order to pay for the election promises of members opposite. There's no way these people are going to pick up any money by gas taxes or mortgage interest reduction programs or anything of the kind. Members opposite know that; they know they should be doing something for these people, and they're not doing it.

Who else? Well, I could go on, but if I want to mention one other group, it's the people who are on something called the family income plan. Here are people with low incomes and large families. Almost all of them are working because they don't want to go on

welfare, even though many of them could get more money if they applied for social assistance. The family income plan was a scheme whereby money could be paid on the basis of how many children they had, and these people could continue to work full-time. Their combined working income and family income plan would have put them over the threshold of what they would have received on social assistance. Here are people who are doing their bit, perhaps without skills, but doing their bit to make their contribution to society. The budget of last March provided an increase for these people who are living at the very edge. This would require legislation – legislation that should have been in the Speech from the Throne, but was not in the Speech from the Throne – and we have one other group which is being asked to bear the cost of the promises of the party opposite.

I said you can judge the priorities of our government by who it asks to bear the load. Well, this throne speech, although it's very short, says it all. If forced to choose, the disadvantaged and the voiceless are going to be asked to bear the load and some others, who are much better off, with much more voice in this society, are to step up and get the fruits of tax cuts by the government opposite. And I say that that's shameful. I say that it's a renunciation of the duties which this legislature owes to the citizens of Saskatchewan. And I can tell you that our party will oppose this Speech from the Throne on those grounds – it does not deal with the issues of the people who are hurting most in this society, and it ought to deal with the issues. It ought to deal with the concerns and the struggles of these people who are suffering most in this society.

Mr. Speaker, the poor and needy are not the only ones who should be concerned with this government's priorities. Saskatchewan's working people, small business people and farmers should be concerned as well. They should be concerned because this speech did not contain anything resembling an economic strategy. I think people in Saskatchewan are beginning to realize that this economic recession in Canada is rolling west. It's rolling west; indeed, it is in Alberta and in British Columbia and is now going to be in Saskatchewan. This is not a bolt out of the blue. We have seen this coming for some time. Signs were there as much as six or nine months ago that this province was not going to be able to avoid the difficulties that other parts of Canada were experiencing. Indeed, I think one could say that when the energy agreements were concluded between Alberta and the Government of Canada, and when they failed to stimulate their oil industry, we knew we were in trouble. We knew we were in trouble. And we, as a government, tried to act to see whether we could stimulate the economy. We introduced an expansionary budget, a budget designed to stimulate the economy to compensate for the impact of economic recession and to keep Saskatchewan people working.

Then came the general election of April 26, and members opposite campaigned against that economic program. Fair enough. They felt that the recession could be overcome by more dependence on the private sector – fair enough if it works. In their view, our plan depended too heavily on government action. They talked of a new approach to economic management in this province. They talked of an industrial strategy based upon reasonable free enterprise. And when the members opposite won the April election, we fully expected them to make good on that promise among others. It was their mandate. It was their duty and they had no time to lose. They had no time to lose.

Economics don't stand still. And let's be clear on this. This is not something that they should now be evolving. During the election campaign they said they had it. They had worked out an economic strategy. All we needed to do was give them a chance and they

would implement it. Well, the people of Saskatchewan gave them an overwhelming majority. That's right. The people of Saskatchewan were delighted to think that these people had a plan that they were going to implement the day after they got into office – not fully blown, but would start right away. Well, I say we have seen scant evidence of that plan. We have seen scant evidence of that plan. They have stopped acting on our programs. And they have every right to do that. What shocked us was that they haven't started any of their own. They put a freeze on all our economic plans and they didn't replace them with anything.

So what has happened, Mr. Speaker? Much of Saskatchewan's economic activity is grinding to a halt. Not all activity – it appears that studies and reviews and task forces and in-depth looks are the new growth industry in this province – the new growth industry.

I just picked up a couple of press releases the other day – picked them up almost at random. Press release number 318: the Norcanair situation will continue to be under review. Number 319: Mr. McLeod (that's the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan) says he wants to review the issues of concern in Uranium City. Number 323: the Premier announced a special commission to review the operations of Saskatchewan's crown corporations. Number 321, and here's something that isn't a review: the Minister of Industry and Commerce expressing grave concern about Ipsco layoffs. Well, isn't that bully! Grave concern! What does he propose to do, other than express grave concern? Does he propose to get a natural gas program going which would buy some pipe and provide some jobs, which I can tell you the Ipsco workers would appreciate a great deal more than his grave concern? Does he propose to get some of these building projects going? Does the Minister of Education propose to get the archives building going so that there will be some structural steel orders, and then provide some jobs for the people at Ipsco, instead of grave concern? I am sure that he minister has grave concern, but I suspect that a good number of people which he had a little something more – a plan to get people back to work.

Once again, I say that we do not ask them necessarily to go ahead with our programs. If they have programs of their own, by all means go ahead. The one thing they should not do is stop, gaze at their navels and wonder what they ought to do now. Furthermore it's pretty clear they ought to do something more than have studies, reviews and commissions.

There are literally dozens of examples of what is not happening in this province. Our rural energy program has been put on hold. I know that the Premier has announced that there's going to be a new rural energy program, but we have had nothing more than the announcement. We have no information on the design of the program, no information on who will qualify and, more particularly, no information on when the first tender will be called. I am sure that it is of great interest to people that something is going to happen, who knows, some day, maybe, but it does not provide any economic activity to this province today.

The housing corporation had a program for 4,000 houses – 4,000 houses during this construction season. My bet is that because of the procrastination of members opposite we will not see 4,000 houses generated by the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, but a very much smaller number. I further want to make a little prediction that the number of housing starts this year, even with the government's mortgage interest reduction program, will be lower than the number of housing starts last year.

Let's move on to the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and find out what it's doing to create jobs. That is the largest corporation in this province, public or private. That is a corporation which every year has a very, very large construction budget and which by managing its construction budget, as it has some small leeway to do, can provide jobs or dampen down an overheated economy. Now we do not have an overheated economy. We have a situation where people need jobs. For reasons which have not yet been explained to the public, the project at Nipawin has been put on hold and we see 900 people, who had jobs, who no longer have jobs. That's a lot of people – 900 people without jobs because the Saskatchewan Power Corporation has changed its building program. I haven't heard any public explanation of this. All I have heard and seen is the fact that 900 people who had jobs no longer have jobs.

These, for the benefit of some Conservative members, were not jobs with the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. I hear the interjection that the 3,000 employees of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation are political hacks. That was an interjection by someone behind me. I want to say that that's not my view of those employees and I am frankly surprised that it's the view of the Conservative Party that the 3,000 employees of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation are political hacks.

I think we have identify these projects. There is no rural gas program, a very, very small housing program, a power generation program cutbacks. There are plans by the Department of Northern Saskatchewan to build a new hospital in La Ronge. Where are those? Are they going ahead or not? Now here is a project which could provide employment in La Ronge and provide a hospital which everybody agrees we need. It is what they were last year, because we are not going ahead with that project and many other construction projects in northern Saskatchewan. Less construction in the North means fewer jobs and more social services. There is no question of that and everybody knows that.

I invite you to look at what has happened in the North in the last number of years at how many jobs have been created. There are not as many as we all would have liked. But how many people have been working and how few are working this summer at projects of the same kind? The government is putting away an opportunity to stimulate economic activity. I could say this with respect to many other projects. Where is the Lloydminster hospital? Is it going ahead or not? Where is the Maidstone hospital? Is it going ahead?

AN HON. MEMBER: — Where is the Gainsborough hospital? You guys didn't plan one for 25 years.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, the member for Souris-Cannington is suggesting that the Maidstone hospital ought not to go forward and a hospital at Gainsborough ought to go forward.

AN HON. MEMBER: — I didn't say that.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Perhaps I am misinterpreting what he is saying. He is at least saying that the hospital at Gainsborough ought to go forward. All I am saying is, even if it ought to be at Gainsborough, when are they going to call for tenders for a hospital that is going to give somebody a job?

No doubt it's under study. No doubt there's a committee reviewing it. Well, that's great.

Yet another review – the Gainsborough hospital review committee. By the time this government gets around to thinking about any overall strategy for Saskatchewan, it will be much tougher to get this economy up and running again . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I agree with the hon. Member for Moosomin. I don't often agree with him but, then, again, neither do his colleagues often agree with him: otherwise he would be on the treasury benches. But we'll leave that little note; we don't want to stir that pot.

The point I was making was this: it may well be that members opposite feel that our programs should be replaced. Fair enough, but they need to mount programs of construction now, not next month. This is Saskatchewan; we are not going to build much in November. We need to get many of these projects going, and going now. I say they are not going. Maybe they are going to go, but they are not going and there is no reason why many of them should not go.

All it takes in most cases is an act of will. In many cases these projects are planned, in many cases architectural and engineering drawings are out there. In many cases, they know and we know that those projects are going ahead. I say, mount them now so that people young and old in this province can look forward to some jobs this summer.

It has been an interesting transformation to watch, Mr. Speaker, the transformation of members opposite. When they were in opposition they were saying, "Elect us; we have the programs; we have our policies written; we know what we want to do." "There is so much more we can be," if I may quote. What has happened to all the plans which they had drawn up? Are they acting on them? No. It's studies and reviews and commissions and surveys and dither and dither and dither. It is paralysis by analysis, and there is no other description that can so aptly describe what is happening in this province. The other description that can so aptly describe what is happening in this province. The layoff notices pile up in steel, in lumber, in wood products and in potash. The people wait and there is no action. The government dithers. It says, "Wait for a budget."

I think the people of Saskatchewan are entitled to some action. I think they are entitled to call upon this new government to mount its programs so that there will be jobs, so there will be some opportunity. We see people opposite refusing, simply refusing, to take decisions which ought to be taken and which will be taken in a month or two, but which would make an enormous difference if they were taken now. The result is going to be more economic malaise.

And what's going to be heard from them then? That it somehow was the fault of the opposition. The opposition caused these difficulties. We are already hearing some of these things. It was somehow because the economy of Saskatchewan (which was the most buoyant in Canada) was not buoyant enough to stand the election of a do-nothing government. Well, it may not have been that buoyant but it was a buoyant economy, and no malaise which is going to happen six, or eight, or ten months from now can be laid at the door of anyone except the front benchers opposite who are refusing to act because they don't know what to do.

The member for Souris-Cannington once again says, "We are learning." Well, I certainly hope so, because we need some action. We need some people who can make some decisions – decisions which may be wrong; nobody is ever sure that their decisions are right – because very, very frequently the decision to make no decision is the worst decision of all. I think the people of Saskatchewan are tired of the slogans. They are tired of hearing all the promises about what is going to be done. They simply call for some action. They want policies which will produce jobs for Saskatchewan

people. Members on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, will be most interested in seeing what this government is going to do to create jobs. And we are very disappointed indeed that there is nothing in the Speech from the Throne that offers any comfort to people who are out of work, or whose jobs are threatened, and who rightfully look to their government to do something, and who are looking in vain.

Mr. Speaker, I want to touch on another and quite different subject. It might be called the general subject of freedom. Freedom is one of the most cherished values in any open and democratic society, and for good reason. Carefully nurtured freedoms are essential if each and every person is to have the opportunity to pursue responsibly a full and complete life within our society. That must be the fundamental goal of any democratic society. Carefully nurtured freedoms like freedom of thought, freedom to participate in political life, freedom to join and participate in organizations, and freedom of political and religious beliefs are essential to the health and vitality of democracy. We must all take responsibility for safeguarding that. Freedom to buy farmland is certainly one of the freedoms which I would include in the list – the freedom to buy property. Freedom is something that we politicians often speak of because it makes good political rhetoric.

But freedom is not absence of regulation, Mr. Speaker. A free and civilized society does not let each and every person do exactly what he wants. That leads to anarchy and anarchy is the enemy of freedom. To be free, people must be able, through their democratic institutions, to protect themselves from discrimination, exploitation and harm from those more powerful than they. They must be able to prevent others who are more powerful from taking away their freedoms. Freedom requires sane and responsible government – responsible to all the people. Until we all become angels, a society without government, without laws and without regulations can never be a free society.

Those who suggest that laws and regulations are the enemy of freedom have not analysed the problem. No society without laws and without regulations is a free society. To be free, people must be free to be protected by a law and by their government. They also must be free from excessive poverty. Compared with their neighbours, they must have some measure of the same economic power, so a society that aspires to the goal of freedom must strive to remove economic inequalities. Riches for some and poverty for others – that situation is an enemy of freedom.

I know many members opposite have talked about freedom. They, indeed, have set themselves up occasionally as the guardians of freedom, but I wonder whether they have any basis for so doing. They have attacked the role of government in society consistently. Like Ronald Reagan in the United States, they have become the advocates of less government and less regulation. They would believe that a Ronald Reagan society is a freer society than the Jimmy Carter society. That would be a view they would hold but I would not. They say, “Get the government off the backs of people. Get the government off the backs of the people who would be getting minimum wage; let them fend for themselves.” If we repealed the minimum wage laws, some of my Reaganomics friends would believe that would add to freedom – a remarkable judgment, Mr. Speaker.

What about farmers? Do members opposite believe that farmers would be freer if there were no Canadian Wheat Board? Do they believe that farmers would be freer if there

were no marketing boards? They'd be freer to go bankrupt. That's true. In some other respects, they would be freer. There's always a balance. But I say that it would not be a net addition to farm freedoms to repeal the Canadian Wheat Board Act.

What about Indian people or native people? Would they be freer if there were no programs to assist them with their special problems? I doubt it. I look at people who need protection, senior citizens and the like, for whom we have a great range of laws, programs and regulations. Does anyone believe we would have a freer society if we repealed all those? I think not.

When we talk about getting the government off the backs of people, we ought to ask whether or not that government does not in fact add to the freedoms of minimum wage earners, farmers, the poor and the needy. To abolish those would simply give to the powerful the right to lord it over those who have less power. It would simply give extra emphasis to the economic inequalities in this society and, as such, destroy the freedoms of many people.

Mr. Speaker, let me state this as clearly as I can: those who attack government in the name of freedom are, in my judgment, not credible. Their real intent has nothing to do with freedom, but rather it's to reinforce privilege and inequality. That concept of society, our party totally rejects.

Mr. Speaker, I have an even deeper misgiving about this new administration and about whether or not they will, in fact, protect the freedoms of the citizens of this province.

Saskatchewan has an enviable record when it comes to civil rights. Our province pioneered legislative measures to protect the basic rights and freedoms of its citizens. The Saskatchewan Bill of Rights was passed in 1947, and it was the first bill of rights in Canada. It protected freedom of conscience and opinion and belief and expression and association. We have added to that in subsequent years. We have the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, passed in the 1970s, which says that every person and every class of person shall enjoy the right to peaceable assembly with others, and to form with others associations of any character under the law.

We have had Mr. Diefenbaker, a distinguished citizen of this province, lead the way in Ottawa and introduce a bill of rights there for all the areas under federal jurisdiction, and recently we have had a charter of rights and freedoms adopted by the Parliament of Canada. So we have a distinguished record here in Saskatchewan.

One would have thought, Mr. Speaker, that the new Progressive Conservative administration would see the wisdom of accepting both the spirit and the letter of these legislative protections of freedom, whether they be the Saskatchewan variety, or the Diefenbaker variety, or the new charter variety.

The Premier said he would give protection of freedom a high priority. He was at a rally in North Battleford and said that even public servants would be given protection. Indeed, they would have their political freedoms honored and protected under a Progressive Conservative government. Well, Mr. Speaker, what they do speaks so loudly that I can't hear what they say.

We have a premier who addressed deputy ministers on May 12, and a summary of his remarks has been distributed by a senior official directly responsible to him, and those remarks say this:

We expect the public service to be thoroughly professional and entirely loyal at all times, and to that end we want to ensure that no civil servants hold membership cards in any political party.

Now that of course is a clear violation of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, and a clear violation of Mr. Diefenbaker's bill of rights. I'm not suggesting that the bill of rights would apply, but the spirit of the bill of rights. We have seen some attempts to deny publicly that that was the import of the Premier's remarks. I hesitate to think that a public servant with the experience of Mr. Derrick would have circulated that (he is directly responsible to the Premier) unless it was an accurate statement of his remarks. Frankly, I doubt whether Mr. Derrick prepared this paper. I suspect it was prepared by someone else who reports to the Premier and, accordingly, there is no way the Premier can deny responsibility for the import of those remarks by the attempt to deny it publicly. But the message was sent – a message contrary to law and contrary to every principle of freedom which has been enunciated in the province since 1947.

If it were an error, no doubt another message was equally circulated to the same people pointing out the error and pointing out the new policy. Well, the press has a copy of the message that went out denying political freedom to public servants. I haven't found anyone in the press who has a copy of the one assuring political freedom to public servants. Perhaps it was just something which was overlooked.

I think there is no question that this message makes clear that in the opinion of the government civil servants should not have the rights of citizens. To deny it later on doesn't in any way take the sting away. The message is out there. The later denial will be given the sceptical consideration by public servants which I am sure it deserves. The effect is to say to public servants in this province, "Yes, we have a human rights code. Yes, we have something which guarantees to everyone else the right of association, but not you, not while you are taking money from the Government of Saskatchewan." This is from the defenders of liberty and freedom. Well, I hear someone say, "Well, don't worry. They are only public servants. If they don't like it, they don't have to work for the government." Well, I don't know whether the members opposite say that. I hope not. Some remarks have been attributed to them.

I would have thought that it was incumbent upon the government to give a reason for dismissal of senior public servants. They obviously don't think that that is part of anybody's freedom and obviously they don't have a legal right to it. I would have thought it fell into the category of common decency in dealing with employees of long standing.

If it is suggested that it is all right to take away the liberties of public servants but it wouldn't happen to anyone else, then I just suggest that this sort of defence of the actions of the government is wholly wrong. It wrongs civil servants. It wrongs the basic notion of freedom. Civil rights and freedoms are not divisible. They can't be applied arbitrarily to one class in society and not to others. It simply makes no sense to take away the basic rights of a large group in society. Indeed, the real test of whether one is a defender of freedom is whether or not he is prepared to accord freedom to people he doesn't like and whose views he doesn't like.

Now, it may be that the government opposite doesn't like some public servants, but that is not the issue. The issue is whether or not this government is prepared to respect fundamental human rights and freedoms for every class of citizen protected by the human rights code. Already, I suggest, there is conclusive evidence that it is not. Civil servants have been dealt with in the way which the public record makes clear. The question which must now be asked is: who is next? Who else besides the civil service is to be subject to attack? Is it going to be safe any longer to belong to an organization or hold a view that this government doesn't like?

Members opposite suggest that I am paranoid. I have lived at another time in this province. I have lived at another time when it was, in a business sense, dangerous for a government or business to offer support to a political party that was in opposition . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . Members opposite are now speaking from their chairs, I am very confident that if they had a scintilla of evidence of what they are suggesting, they would have spoken when they spent those years in opposition.

I say that whatever the past may have been (and I am wholly willing to defend it), in future, whatever the future may be, it ought never to be the case in this province that anybody ought to feel that they cannot support any political party and do business with the government. It ought not to be true that anyone ought to be discriminated against because they make a contribution to any political party or belong to any group, be it anti-abortion, pro-abortion or whatever. These are issues which ought to be in the conscience of the citizen and not dictated by the government.

I am going to ask members in this House, since they all generally applaud this statement, to be guardians of that freedom for all of the citizens of this province and to speak out when they believe that anyone is being discriminated against because of views he holds.

I look at the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden and I remember him in this House saying, "You as a government (when we were the government) ought to cut off the grant from the ACFC (Association Culturelle Franco-Canadienne)." That's the Fransaskois organization, the French Canadian organization which our government was supporting with a grant. Why should we have cut off the grant? Because the ACFC was saying things which our government and that opposition didn't agree with. They were saying things about the Quebec referendum which the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden felt were inappropriate. And his response was not to go out and combat their ideas. No. Cut off their money. Well, I am sure that man has not changed his views. And I am sure that the ACFC is not the only intended victim. I suspect that members opposite will need to take on the armour of protectors of freedom to deal with some of their colleagues who may not have the same high principles that I am sure most members opposite have in this regard.

I say to you, sir, to members and particularly to the government that they should stop any attacks on any single citizen. They should judge public servants by their performance and not by their ideas, not by their commitment. They should call off their thought police and allow people to have views which are different from their views and still work for the Government of Saskatchewan.

No one, I think, suggests that some people who worked for our government did not share our views. Obviously they did. But the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden is revealing just how warped his thinking is in this regard. He will know, for example, that

the new acting deputy minister of consumer affairs worked with our government for years. He will know that he was a Conservative, a stated, dedicated Conservative, while he worked with the Attorney General's department. And he will know that that did not impair his employment with our government.

I suppose the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden is going to say that his appointment to the deputy ministership came by the sheerest coincidence, and that his previous political leanings, which were known very widely in the public service and known to me, since we are fellow members of the bar and he's perfectly willing to talk with me about it, were not known to the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden. You may well want to believe that, members opposite, but I don't, and I don't thin many people in Saskatchewan will.

Now, Mr. Speaker, my point is this: we should stop this purge of the public service; we should judge people by their performance . . . (inaudible interjections) . . .

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am obviously touching a nerve, because they are hardly allowing me to get a sentence out without four of them interrupting. And they were, prior to this, appearing to put on the mask of boredom. Perhaps it was not the mask, perhaps it was the fact of boredom. But they're certainly not bored now, because they're entering the debate in quite a remarkable way and they're entering it because their consciences are hurting them and they damn well ought to hurt them!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I am going to conclude my remarks now, but I'm going to say this in conclusion: we have found out that this government is not prepared to act to provide economic security for the people of Saskatchewan. It's still too busy studying. We have indicated just who is being asked to pay for the promises. We have indicated that the people on minimum wage, injured workmen, civil service pensioners, home-owners of modest income and people on the family income plan are all being asked to pay. And we have found that this government has something less than a full commitment to the freedom of all its citizens.

I'm asking this government to review our remarks, to answer them if they think they're wrong, to comment on them if they think they're right. But I'm also asking the government to shape its programs in response to what are really felt needs of Saskatchewan's people: a need for jobs, for protection of people who are at the bottom end of the income scale and for assurance that the liberties which have been protected in this province for many, many decades are still safe in the hands of the government opposite.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to move an amendment. One of my colleagues is going to move the amendment later in the debate. He will move an amendment in approximately the following terms. He will propose as an addition to the motion the following words: "But regrets that Your Honor's advisers, while recognizing that this is a time of severe economic strain for Saskatchewan, have failed to propose any adequate measures to help people who have jobs to keep them, to help students to get summer jobs and to help those with the lowest incomes to deal with severe hardship of rising prices."

That is going to be the amendment which one of my colleagues will move at an

appropriate time in this debate. From my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I think it will be clear that when the time comes to vote, I will be supporting the amendment which will be put forward and I will be opposing the main motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ANNOUNCEMENT

Royal Birth

MR. SPEAKER: — I would like permission from the House to make an announcement at this time. I have been advised by the press gallery that Princess Diana has given birth to a boy weighing 7 pounds, 1.5 ounces. No name has yet been given.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ADDRESS IN REPLY (continued)

HON. MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, it is more than just a pleasure to rise on this side of the House and take part in the first of many throne speech debates from the new Progressive Conservative government in Saskatchewan.

I think all of us in the province of Saskatchewan are very justly proud of many of the new faces that have been elected for the first time to form a new government. As time goes on and many of these new members make their contributions in this Assembly, the people of Saskatchewan will have even more of an opportunity to show confidence in the new members of this government.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member for Melfort on a fine maiden speech in this Assembly on Friday.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. THATCHER: — I believe that the member for Melfort is typical of the new faces in this Assembly today and I predict he is one that the people of Saskatchewan can look forward to many contributions from in the coming years.

I would also like to congratulate the seconder in the throne speech debate. I would like to make the very obvious comment that she's a heck of a lot better looking than her predecessor. It could probably be argued that she is just as good a speaker, too.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, these are just two of the members and you will hear from the vast majority of the others during this throne speech debate. I know that the people of Saskatchewan will be as proud of them as is the entire government.

I want to also extend my congratulations to the former premier and the Leader of the Opposition for this speech on Friday. It was a class speech and my compliments to him. It was a difficult situation – a situation that I suggest not just any politician could have handled. I congratulate the former premier for handling his opening remarks on Friday with class and dignity – the same class and the same dignity that he always showed as

the premier of this province, and which I am sure he will continue to show as the Leader of the Opposition.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. THATCHER: — Now, Mr. Speaker, a new week has come. Last week is over and we're into a new week. I wish to spend a few brief moments commenting on the lecture which the new government received from the former premier.

Mr. Speaker, we listened for about an hour-plus to a lecture on the shortcomings of this government from a former government that just suffered the worst repudiation of any government in the history of this province and perhaps in this entire country.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. THATCHER: — We listened to a lecture on agriculture from a government that 11 years ago brought in an agricultural policy, a radical, new agricultural policy. Two days after the 11th anniversary of their initial win, we can now take tally on what 11 years of socialism did for agriculture. Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is very simple. There are 15,000 fewer farmers today than there were when the NDP government came to power 11 years ago. You can cut it any way you want. You can go at it from any direction, but the bottom line is that 15,000 farmers went under. That was after 11 years of NDP policies of socialism in agriculture which built a Department of Agriculture which was polluted with hacks. NDP theorists, and a deputy minister who instructed the Department of Agriculture to actively support the philosophy of the New Democratic Party.

Today we listed to the architect of this philosophy of agriculture lecture us on treatment of public servants. The same architect who so politicized the Department of Agriculture into a blunt, flagrant instrument of the NDP lectures us when we move to correct the NDP philosophy in the Department of Agriculture. If we were to follow the advice of the former premier, I suppose Dr. Gartner would still be there. I suppose Marjorie Benson would still be there. Regrettably, the former premier has yet to learn that this government was not elected to perpetuate his policies. We were elected by both urban and rural voters in this province saying, "We want change; we want something different." Mr. Speaker, we don't apologize for making our changes. We weren't elected to do things the same way as the NDP. We were elected to do things differently.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. THATCHER: — With the mess that was left behind in agriculture, my compliments to the Minister of Agriculture on the moves which he has taken. I hope that that's only the start, because the Minister of Agriculture has one whopping mess to get into in agriculture. I have every confidence that he's going to deal with it.

Mr. Speaker, before the demise of the former government, there was a little document brought down in this Assembly in the middle of March that was affectionately known as a budget. It was a bit of a laughing matter at the time but today it's not a joke any longer. That budget was one of the most misrepresented pieces of paper and was as full of outright distortions (I suppose even very close to lies) as any document that I've ever seen in this Assembly. It was a document that grossly over inflated revenues, vastly underestimated expenditures, and wasn't worth the paper it was written on.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, do you know what they called it? They called it a balanced budget. I've been in this Assembly since 1975. on one occasion I have seen a balanced budget from the New Democratic Party. I've seen one balanced budget. Do you know when that one was? It was 1980-81. I say that, knowing full well that many of the pieces of paper they brought in here and would read on budget day projected a surplus. But when the numbers were all in at the end of the fiscal year, on only one occasion were we ever in the black. Always, somewhere, something had gone wrong. Somehow there had been an unforeseen expenditure. Well, Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that the budget they brought in in March is no exception. Instead of the modest surplus that was predicted by members opposite, this government, if it had done nothing, if it had left it exactly as it was, would have been facing a deficit of about \$300 million. Mr. Speaker, the mess that we have inherited on this side of the Assembly goes beyond belief – 11 years of NDP failure reflected in fiscal irresponsibility.

Mr. Speaker, we've tolerated along lecture from the former premier as to our treatment of the public service since we became the government. Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you that I am very proud of the way this government has deal with the public service, because we have had only one criterion as we have made changes. We have had only one criterion, as directed by the new Premier. The new Premier has directed every office of cabinet and the crown corporations to treat the public service as professional people. Treat them with respect and respect their professionalism. I believe that for every cabinet minister that has been the case to this point in time. I expect it will continue to be so.

Mr. Speaker, for the changes that we have made we make no apology to anyone. The new people have been hired on the basis of their professionalism and their competency. We make no apology for that whatsoever.

I am not very interested in listening to a lecture about how to deal with the public service from the former government – a government which blatantly forced some public servants to make donations to the New Democratic Party. They blatantly strong-armed them into making donations, over and over again. The obvious implication was, if you don't belong to the NDP, if you can't belong to us, or if you can't support us financially, your future is uncertain. Oh, they didn't say they were going to fire you. But it just meant that your promotions were going to be lateral or downward and not upward.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, I wish now to turn to the resource sector, one in which I suppose I have been charged with picking up the pieces. Let me tell you it is a horror story. I want to tell the former government across the way that I would give my eyeteeth for the conditions it had in 1971 as we make our changes. I would give my eyeteeth to have the expanding markets and the benefits of investment that it had through its 11 years. Mr. Speaker, let me tell you that if this government is half as fortunate as the former government was in having remarkable resource development during its next four years in office, the people of Saskatchewan will live very, very well.

Regrettably, this is not going to be the case.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, it is a horror story; 11 years of NDP resource policy have come crashing down. But unfortunately, to whom have the bills come due? To the architects over there? Heavens no! Most of them have come crashing down, most of them have gone into oblivion. I might ask the former premier, who snickers in his chair, where's the heritage fund? Where is his billion dollar heritage fund which he spent so many thousands of Saskatchewan's taxpayers' dollars to tell them about it? I ask him: where is your billion dollars, if in fact you ever had it? I note a little silence over there now.

Mr. Speaker, the resource policy of the NDP lies in ashes and ruin, and regrettably we have to pick it up. It all goes back to Bill 42, when this government said, "Hey, we are going to get you big guys. We are going to get the Shells, the Exxons and the Texacos. We are going to really put it to you." So in came Bill 42. Well, let's see what happened. Did you get the Exxons, the Shells and the Texacos?

AN HON. MEMBER: — They seem to have survived somehow.

HON. MR. THATCHER: — Yes, somehow they are still around. They quietly picked up and went elsewhere. But you sure got the little guys. You sure socked it to those little guys in Lloydminster, Swift Current and Estevan. You sure put it to them. You put them either right out of the province or on the verge of bankruptcy. You told the private sector, "Good-bye, we don't need you. We know what's best. We don't want you; we don't want your dollars. We can do better without you."

Well, then you couple that logic with the federal government's national energy policy and you have the present disaster which the western Canadian resource industry is perched on today. Eleven years of NDP harassment of the private sector, which succeeded in driving them out, was coupled with the onslaught of the federal government which was meant to bring western Canada into line. That ladies and gentleman, Mr. Speaker, is what we have inherited in the resource sector in Saskatchewan today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. THATCHER: — Summed up very briefly, Mr. Speaker, if we do not take dramatic measures now, there will be no oil industry in Saskatchewan in 10 years. That is the sad fact. It will be gone.

I heard a comment from one of those bright lights in opposition over there a few seconds ago about the status of the heavy oil upgrader. I would like to tell that bright light a little bit about the status of the upgrader, and the way that his former government in its usual stumbling, bumbling fashion has handled that thing in an atrocious fashion. The former government in its infinite wisdom decided, "Well, we don't want competing proposals; we only want one proposal. Why don't you people all get together and give us one. We don't want to fact the decision of looking at more than one proposal." So they put together a consortium, or the consortium was put together on their advice and whatever else.

The consortium is made up of some fairly shrewd people, some very astute people. These people came into Saskatchewan and they outmanoeuvred and outfoxed the previous government so badly that it was pathetic. It wasn't even a contest, because what they did was come in and before they reached any financial agreements, before

they made a deal with the provincial government, they decided on a site. They came out with a site after a great deal of jockeying among the government's backbenchers, the government of the day, as to whether it was going north or south or east or west.

No doubt that consortium decided that perhaps there should be some politics involved and perhaps that it should put that upgrader in the constituency of one of the hardest working MLAs in the Assembly at that time. Whether that was their logic or not, Mr. Speaker, is open to some debate. None the less, Mr. Speaker, they came out with two potential sites and it was pathetic what happened. Many of the people in Moose Jaw who have faced a terribly ravaged economy, much of it due to the inactivity of the former government, and who were so incapably represented by two NDP members for years, and have paid the price for that (and thank goodness they saw the light and elected two government members) saw this upgrader and the proposed site at Archydal as a significant solution to their long-term problems. Bear in mind there was not one shred of a financial deal on paper, but they announced a site.

And to the people up North, who have not exactly been having the most buoyant days either, they announced an alternative site and, again, not one shred of a financial detail put together.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, the consortium raised public expectations in almost all areas of Saskatchewan and put a tremendous amount of pressure on the government to deliver, pressure under which the former government was unable to perform, pressure which the former government was not prepared to meet. In short, Mr. Speaker, the consortium put the government in a box where everybody assumes that an upgrader was in a go position and an agreement had been signed. Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the Assembly today that that agreement was a fiction story. There never was an agreement. There was not even any serious negotiation on an agreement. All that had happened was that a group of oil companies decided on a site and an alternative site should it ever decide to build an upgrader.

That, Mr. Speaker, is the situation this government inherited on April 27, and it is pathetic because we need an upgrader in this province. EOR or enhanced oil recovery is the future of the oil industry. And now we find ourselves inheriting the boxed in situation which the former government created for us.

Well, Mr. Speaker, in contrast to the give-up techniques of the former NDP government, I want to tell this Assembly that despite the mess that we inherited from it, one way or another, this government is going to find a way to build a heavy oil upgrader. You see, Mr. Speaker, we intend to be considerably different from the former government. We don't intend to sit on this side and when a problem crops up immediately to blame the federal government. And that's the most famous, the most common, the most usual technique that was available to the NDP. If there was something they couldn't handle, it was all Ottawa's fault. Always it was Ottawa's fault. It was everybody else's fault but their own. This government isn't going to be like that.

Mr. Speaker, I don't have to tell you, I am sure, about the homeowners who have had tremendous difficulty in facing high mortgage rates, getting new mortgages, Mr. Speaker, did this government complain to Ottawa? Did we say, "Hey, it's all Ottawa's fault"? heavens no, we just bit the bullet and we are bringing in legislation that is going to bring down the mortgage rate on the first \$50,000 to 13.25 per cent.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. THATCHER: — Did we stand there complaining to Ottawa? Did we sit there and say, “Listen, it’s all Ottawa’s high interest rates; the fault has nothing to do with us, sorry”? Mr. Speaker, this government acted.

When inflation was ravaging every single resident of this province, and the province of Saskatchewan was paying the highest gas rate, with the possible exception of Quebec, this government did not hesitate to remove the gas tax.

Mr. Speaker, this government didn’t complain to Ottawa about its taxes on a gallon of gasoline, which I might add are substantial. We didn’t whine to the federal government, “Look, the taxation of gasoline is excessive.” We bit the bullet and we removed the gas tax in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we are now seeing a situation in rural Saskatchewan where farmers (after 11 years of socialism) are faced with a horrendous situation. They see the price of wheat declining. The price of cattle is terribly low, although it has picked up recently, I don’t know whether the lesson had something to do with the cattle market strengthening in Omaha or not, but I’m sure the news must have been affirmative down there. Mr. Speaker, we see a terrible situation in agriculture developing. It has not reached the proportions of the 1930s, but the potential for it to happen is there.

Mr. Speaker, we are not crying to Ottawa and saying, “Hey, we’ve got trouble out here; solve the problem.” We are not telling farms, “Hey, look, it is all Ottawa’s fault. We are the good guys. Ottawa is the bad guy.” No, Mr. Speaker, this government is preparing to act. This government is preparing to bring in farm loans, the 8 per cent farm loan, that we indicated we would bring in in the election campaign. Mr. Speaker, this government is going to perform. We are not going to whine to Ottawa.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to be on this side of the Assembly and in this government because, in contrast to the throne speeches I have heard in the past which were basically platitudes extolling the virtues of the government, the throne speech that was delivered in this Assembly last week was short, concise and to the point. And in effect it said exactly what we are going to do.

Mr. Speaker, for once it’s a pleasure to be in this Assembly with a government that is going to deal with the problems of the people out there. I hope that this government remembers where it came from – conditions where people were being ravaged by inflation and interest rates, and were very dissatisfied with their government. They turned to this party as a hope to bring them out of the economic doldrums in which they found themselves, through no fault of their own. They turned to the Progressive Conservative Party as a means out of the mess which this former provincial government and the present federal government had taken them into, and over which they had absolutely no control.

Mr. Speaker, it is not the fault of the average citizen that about 22 cents out of every dollar that he pays in taxes goes as interest on the national debt. That’s not his fault; that’s the fault of the federal government for incompetence. It wasn’t his fault that the former government went on an ego trip with its crown corporations. It wasn’t his fault that the former government became obsessed with power for the crown corporations

and said to blazes with the individual.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to say that many former supporters of the New Democratic Party turned to the Progressive Conservatives. They turned to us for help, and I have every confidence that the NDP is going to have one hell of a time getting them away from us.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, this government will remember where it came from. It came from the little people; it came from the ordinary people; it came from the people who were tired of arrogant remarks, such as the one delivered about four months ago by the former minister of health, who had the gall and the audacity to tell this Assembly that the sign of an efficient hospital is one with a waiting list. Do you remember that one? I've never forgotten that one, I'm sure everyone who was here at that time remembers Herman saying. "The sign of an efficient hospital is one with a waiting list."

I suggest to members in opposition that if you have to search very deep to find out why or where you are, that philosophy from the former minister of health typifies why you are where you are and why you're going to stay there for many, many years to come.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, I neglected in my opening remarks to congratulate you for your elevation to your high office. I wish to assure you (I'm speaking personally now) that I will treat you with respect and decorum, and I'm sure that I can expect the same fair treatment that I have become accustomed to from speakers in this Assembly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, I look forward, in the coming days of the throne speech debate, to hearing from the new members that were elected on April 26. And I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that you will enjoy, along with everyone in Saskatchewan, the bright, new, fresh faces that are going to be seen here in the coming years. Mr. Speaker, I want to say how proud I am to be in a government made up of people like this, I ask you to take a look around. Look at their age, and what they look like. You don't see a bunch of baldheads and old people — at least not very many. This is a government that is going to be here for a long time, and the base is here to build a solid government that the people of Saskatchewan can be proud of. Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Speaker, prior to making my comments in support of the throne speech, I think I'd like to make a number of comments on some of the points made by the Leader of the Opposition which truly amazed me. I presume that there are now two types of blinkers sold in Saskatchewan, the normal type with which you can see at least straight ahead, and the NDP kind that cuts off vision altogether.

What we heard today and on Friday simply amazed me. The theme of the speech was "short-term pain for long-term gain." I think that in Saskatchewan we haven't had that; we have had a long-term pain for very short-term gain, if we had had anything. I was

amazed, when the subject of women and the minimum wage came up, that the former government is still trying to regulate women into the minimum wage. When they were emphasizing the important of women in the work force, which is very important, it came to my mind that if you look at our caucus and the caucus of the opposition, that importance is more exemplified than ever.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. EMBURY: — I think that to lay a greater emphasis, for instance, on the property improvement grant, which was not increased this year, and forget totally the mortgage reduction plan which is coming into effect, is a classic case of the effect of blinkers. What we are taking about here is the difference between \$200 a year and \$200 a month to the homeowner in Saskatchewan. I think that the people of Saskatchewan much prefer our plan to their plan.

In any case, Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me to stand in this House on behalf of the people of Regina Lakeview to participate in this throne speech debate. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the hundreds of hard-working volunteers who participated on my behalf in the most fundamental practice of our society, the free election of a government. Mr. Speaker, these volunteers epitomize the future of this province and the future of the Progressive Conservative Party. They weren't threatened and blackmailed into working for me, nor were they induced by association or employment to do so. They cared about the future of this province. They worked because they knew that the Progressive Conservative Party cared about Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, thousands of people in Regina Lakeview responded and have placed their trust in me as their representative. As well, thousands more placed their trust in my colleagues so that we could form this government. The trust that the people in Regina Lakeview have placed in me will be honored, and the trust that the people of Saskatchewan have placed in our government will be honored.

Mr. Speaker, I quote from *Hansard* of February 13, 1947:

In the short history of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, cities and towns and villages have grown up more or less steadily and all the services – commercial and public services – have been built up. This very building we sit in today was built, magnificent as it is, in Saskatchewan. A million people have come to dwell here. A university has been founded which is now recognized as one of the finest seats of learning in the Dominion. It excels particularly in the school of agriculture as might have been expected in the heart of an agriculture community.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the point I wish to make is this: let those who seek to spread dissatisfaction, those who seek to spread dissention, remember that all of this has been done in less than 50 years under a capitalist regime.

Mr. Speaker, the member of the legislature who gave that speech was my father. It is then especially significant for me to stand in this Chamber some 35 years later, as a member of the same party, and speak in this throne speech debate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Speaker, from reading that speech made back in 1947, it is clear that times change but the message is still the same. And that message is that it is the initiative, the imagination, the pride and the enterprise of the individual that built Saskatchewan. From the early pioneers who homesteaded this land to the energetic men and women of today who strike out on their own, people working, either as individuals or together in co-operatives or other organizations, built this province. The government did not build Saskatchewan, and the government will not build Saskatchewan in the future.

Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Regina Lakeview is almost totally residential in nature. The people who live there represent a wide cross section of our society: labourers and professions, the old and the young, entrepreneurs and civil servants. Mr. Speaker, the significance of this last election is that the majority of people in all walks of life rejected government enterprise in favour of private enterprise.

The people of Regina Lakeview realized that government enterprise rewards neither rich nor poor, rather it rewards government. Government profit goes to the government. And so, Mr. Speaker, we saw in the last few years the growth of the heritage fund, made up largely of government equity and assets. At the same time, people saw their equity in their homes, businesses and farms decrease. They saw the cost of running their homes, businesses and farms go up.

Mr. Speaker, they saw the last government announce proudly that government enterprise had made a profit. And they asked; at whose expense were these profits made? The people then realized, Mr. Speaker, that the natural wealth of this province was not being shared with them. The wealth was being hoarded and returned to the government and the crown corporations. People didn't matter anymore.

People matter now, Mr. Speaker. In the short period that this government has been in office, we have reduced the burden of high gas prices for everyone in Saskatchewan, we will, in the next short period of time, into the legislation which will save the family home and remove the terrifying prospect from our people of being thrown out of their homes because high interest rates have made it impossible for them to live there any more. Furthermore, our mortgage interest reduction program will create jobs in the housing industry and given our young people a chance to own their own homes – homes of their own choice, Mr. Speaker, not homes built by the government.

As the throne speech indicates, Mr. Speaker, this government is here to serve, not to rule. Our policies will assist businessmen, not compete with the. Our policies will assist young farmers to own their own land, not rent it to them. Our policies will ensure that those in need will receive help, that our health care and senior citizen programs are not just adequate but are excellent, that our system of education is of the highest quality. In short, Mr. Speaker, this government will concentrate its efforts in providing first-rate services in those areas where our responsibility clearly lies as the government. We will not dilute our efforts and impede the progress of the people of Saskatchewan by becoming involved in areas where the government should have no role.

Mr. Speaker, what I have just outlined, in a general way, is very important to the constituents of Regina Lakeview. However, Lakeview is an urban seat and there are particular problems that they face which I would like to briefly turn to now. Regina Lakeview cannot be described as an inner city neighbourhood, as it does not lie directly

adjacent to the city core. However, the majority of the seat cannot either be described as suburban. It is best described as an older residential neighbourhood, for the most part. As such, my constituency shares some common problems with other urban seats and they also face some particular problems.

Let me address, for a moment, a common problem. In a word, it is taxes, the last decade, Mr. Speaker, has seen a phenomenal increase in the cost of goods and services to urban municipalities and a corresponding increase in city taxes. As this House is aware, a few years ago revenue sharing was introduced, which basically was a scheme where municipalities, by way of formula, would share in some specific provincial revenues in order to offset a part of the operating costs of running municipalities. When this was done, a number of other grants to municipalities were cancelled.

One of these grants of particular concern to the cities of Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, and Prince Albert was the old police grant. This grant provided urban municipalities with 50 per cent of the operating expenses of their police services. Mr. Speaker, this year in Regina, the revenue-sharing grant was some \$15 million on a city budget of over \$100 million – about 15 per cent. The police budget alone in the city of Regina was about \$19 million. The old police grant would have provided \$9.5 million to the city, leaving only \$5.5 million for the rest of the budget. The point is, Mr. Speaker, that in the city of Regina revenue sharing appears to be of less and less value to the taxpayer in combating the increase in the municipal mill rate. The future impact of this funding on municipal ratepayers is considerable.

I take Regina as an example again. This year the city budget increased 12.5 per cent on the expense side. The revenue-sharing grant increased some 11 per cent. However, because of the size of the provincial pool, in actual dollars the city of Regina received approximately \$1.5 million more for revenue sharing, while the city's expenditures increased by approximately \$11.5 million this year. As this example shows, Mr. Speaker, the future course of revenue sharing for urban municipalities will affect greatly the services provided by local governments and the costs of those services to the ratepayer. I am confident that the new minister will review this problem.

Another concern that faces the urban seats is the whole matter of assessment policy. As this House is aware, the province has now standardized the assessment rules for all urban municipalities. However, the whole issue of the bench mark system, which tends to impede growth in the city core while encouraging growth in the suburban areas, has yet to be addressed. As well, the planning act is in need of review. Both of these areas will have to be reviewed together in order that today's problems in urban centres can be resolved.

Mr. Speaker, there are two other problems which concern my constituency in particular, and which also concern the constituencies surrounding mine. It is unfortunate that this House could not sit here during the month of August. If it did, the members of this House would no doubt notice that the liquid in the glasses in front of them more closely resembled a week-old salad in a glass of water. It always surprised me that the last government gave no priority to this problem, which affects Regina and Moose Jaw. However, I am confident that this government will.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. EMBURY: — Finally, Mr. Speaker, as this House is aware, a number of years ago the

federal Department of Transport, together with the provincial government in the city of Regina, agreed to the recommendations of a study on the Regina airport. Among the recommendations was the provision for a new and enlarged airport building, together with the construction of a new runway southwest of the present main runway. Since the acceptance of these recommendations, of course, there are a number of additional airlines flying in and out of Regina, and the need for these new facilities has been magnified greatly. Mr. Speaker, I would encourage this House to urge the federal government to immediately implement the construction of the new airport in Regina.

Mr. Speaker, a change has come to Saskatchewan. Optimism has replaced desperation. New policies and directions, as outlined in the throne speech, have replaced the tired and worn out policies of the last government. New, strong leadership under Premier Grant Devine has replaced the tired, aimless and arrogant attitude of the last administration. Premier Devine has shown strength, compassion and a willingness to listen. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan will be a much finer place in which to live under his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not congratulate you on your election to the office of Speaker. I am confident that you will dispatch the duties of your office fairly and honestly. Saskatchewan is beginning the road to a new prosperity. This throne speech gives the province a new direction and a new purpose in the months ahead. Mr. Speaker, I support the motion before the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor for me to rise for the first time in this historic Chamber as the new member for Regina Rosemont and to participate in the debate arising out of the speech by His honor, the Lieutenant-Governor. My congratulations to you, Mr. Speaker, on your election to the Chair. Your sterling record of service to the people of this province, your highly-esteemed reputation in this Assembly, and your unswerving reliance upon the sovereign wisdom of God, have most thoroughly equipped you to impartially adjudicate the affairs of this Assembly, and I want to congratulate you. And to my colleagues, the hon. Member for Melfort, who so ably moved the motion in reply, and the hon. Member behind me for Saskatoon Riversdale, who so capably seconded the motion, may I express my commendation for your excellent remarks.

Mr. Speaker, April 26, 1982, was a watershed day in the history of Saskatchewan. On that day, a most unfortunate decade of experiment – euphemistically called democratic socialism, but more aptly termed a prescription for disaster – was mercifully terminated. For the fine folks of Saskatchewan to have suffered one more day of NDP mismanagement and insensitivity was a fate to be wished on no one – not even on Rene Levesque. The collective sign of relief breathed by the electorate on April 26 was more than justified. We are now told, for example, Mr. Speaker, that the former government's budget projections were in error to the tune of \$200 million to \$300 million. Such ineptitude is unforgivable. Why, even the Toronto Argonauts could play chess better than this former government could govern this country.

Mr. Speaker, the exchange on the Canadian dollar may leave something to be desired at present, but to replace the Solomons with the Sutors and the McArthurs with the Maxwells is an exchange that even grade 4 children could appreciate and were looking for. And I was not surprised when night turned to day on April 26, and the people of our province signed a new lease on life. I am proud and privileged to be a party to that

contract. I'm proud, Mr. Speaker, because the people I represent – the people from Regina Rosemont – are among the finest to be found anywhere in this fair province, and privileged because I have the honor of being chosen the first ever Progressive Conservative member for Rosemont.

Mr. Speaker, there are many here today who share in the new-found sense of pride and satisfaction to which I have just been alluding. They have, for the first time, been chosen to serve in this Assembly, and for most efforts have been doubly rewarded for they have also been given the honor of serving their first term as government members and, more importantly, as government members whose party will exercise the upper hand in the political affairs of this province for many years to come. My congratulations to each of you and to every member of this House for your recent political success at the polls.

Mr. Speaker, Regina Rosemont is certainly unique among the urban constituencies of our province for within its perimeter is located the century old and world-renowned Royal Canadian Mounted Police Training Academy. Each year over 1,500 recruits and law enforcement officers are superbly trained a this showcase of police academies which has come to play such an indispensable role in the maintenance of our democratic traditions.

One and one-half miles south of this academy is located another complex of buildings in which resides a group of people whose contribution to this province is overshadowed by none other. I refer to the almost 700 senior citizens who reside in Pioneer Village. When we consider their undaunted pioneer will in the face of many intractable adversaries, their exemplary faith in gold, their compassion for neighbour and stranger alike, and their devotion to country, we cannot adequately extol their character or laud their achievements. It is a high honor for me today to represent the needs and aspirations of these most special of constituents.

Mr. Speaker, Regina Rosemont is an almost exclusively residential constituency, but if you were to travel the streets, avenues, crescents, drives and roads of this west-end Regina area, you would quickly note that the population of Rosemont defies all traditional labels. It is neither predominantly professional middle-income suburban, nor traditional lower-class blue collar. It has no particular socio-economic flavour. What then is Rosemont? It is a rich kaleidoscope of native Canadians and newly arrived immigrants, industrious small businessmen and union works, single parents, working women, war veterans, farmers, unemployed fathers, students and senior citizens, rich men and poor men, old and young, dilapidated one-room shacks and palatial homes. it's all there. It's Regina Rosemont. It's Saskatchewan in miniature.

It is precisely because Rosemont is composed of such a diversity of people and such a multiplicity of lifestyles that I am proud to stand in this Chamber today. There was no single ethnic, economic, religious or occupational group which swung the ballot in my favour. On the contrary, people from all stations and walks of life together exercised their franchise in favour of a political philosophy, a party, a leader and a candidate whose policies were sufficiently broad, compassionate and sensible so that he people of Rosemont would point to the Progressive Conservatives and say, "There is a party and there is a candidate that are truly concerned about me."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DIRKS: — Who were some of those people who said that? It was a white-haired senior citizen who confided to me that she had voted CCF-NDP every election since

1944, but not this time. She was no longer going to put up with gouging utility rate increase. It was time for a change. It was a CUPE (Canadian Union of Public Employees) hospital worker, disaffected not simply because of messy, no-strike legislation, but also because he was astute enough to recognize that the philosophical drift of the former administration was seriously debilitating Saskatchewan's strengths. He told me so. It was a housewife, anxiously concerned about the insidious build-up of toxins in her children because of an intolerable drinking water situation in his capital city. It was a despairing home-owner facing impossible mortgage payments. It was a mother who could not longer countenance a government which refused to take concrete steps to protect the right to life of the unborn child.

Mr. Speaker, I find it repugnant that the Leader of the Opposition today would castigate and ridicule the Progressive Conservatives for their ostensible lack of concern about the rights of individuals when that party, when in government for 11 years, did not take one concrete step to protect the right to life of unborn children. I say shame.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DIRKS: — It was a small businessman, shell-shocked by high interest rates, while the NDP not only competed with him in the market place but also loaned his tax dollar at attractively low rates to some eastern fat cat. It was all these, and more, Mr. Speaker.

It was a decisive majority of people who reached out with hope to grasp a new deal for Saskatchewan. And that, Mr. Speaker, is the reason why Rosemont is Progressive Conservative today and why it will remain so. And if the Rosemont mosaic chose to unanimously reject the old for the new, then we need not speculate as to why people from all walks of life in this province have unanimously rejected the old for the new.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, already the new deal has become a reality and is beginning to take shape. With the speedy removal of the 20 per cent road tax on gasoline. Premier Devine has demonstrated his leadership capability to develop and implement those strategies which will help secure the economic health of the people and businesses of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this province and the people of Rosemont are looking for leadership, make no doubt about it. The tried and tested election slogan of the previous administration now seems little more than a pathetic pretence, a sadly distorted perception of reality. There was a government which insensibly boasted of its programs before an electorate that day by day sank further and further into the despair of high mortgage rates, high utility rates and high gasoline costs. It was a government which turned its attention away from people and inward upon itself. Is it any wonder the electorate swiftly dispatched the MacMurchys and the Romanows to the sidelines at first glance? The former government is a graphic example of that truest of dictums: pride comes before a fall. And how the mighty have fallen — vanquished by a so-called invisible man! Well, he certainly has been visible lately.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DIRKS: — Living on the legends of Douglas and Lloyd, blinded by their short-sighted ideology and deafened by their own rhetoric, they stumbled headlong into the

trap that they had unwittingly set for themselves. It was the nearest thing to a death wish come true that I have seen in a long time. They forgot that governments exist for the people and not vice versa. It's a lesson we would all do well to heed, Mr. Speaker.

I make no presumptuous boasts today that the administration of Premier Devine will magically eradicate the plague of economic ills and cure the social malignancies which fester in this province, no thanks to the former government. I certainly don't want to suggest that large majorities automatically produce virtuous government and good administration, but I do believe that a government led by a man whose tenacious will overcame a series of personal bitter defeats which would have arrested in the ambition of most men, who refused to have his campaign mainstreaming encounters prearranged by his advisers, whose programs are the direct result of thousands of contacts with average Saskatchewan people, and whose fiscal and social policies address the real immediate and long-range concerns of the people, is exactly what the doctor ordered for the improved health of this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DIRKS: — And how, Mr. Speaker, will this be accomplished? Without question, of paramount concern to all people has been the need for immediate relief from usurious interest rates which threaten to crumble the very foundation of our economy. The Progressive Conservative mortgage assistance plan, a proposed low interest farm purchase assistance loan program and the removal of the gas tax have addressed this concern head on, not with cosmetic superficiality, but in tangible and substantial fashion.

The members opposite will no doubt consider this to be paralysis by analysis. But just ask the folks at the gas pumps. Just ask the thousands of home-owners who are about to receive relief from high interest rates. They will tell you that if this is paralysis by analysis, then Henry Baker will be the next premier of this province. It's not paralysis, it's action — something that they haven't seen around this town for a long time. Mr. Speaker, it is not simply action but eminently sensible action, for these low interest programs are designed to provide both immediate and long-term benefits.

The mortgage assistance will help stimulate and rebuild the housing industry, almost emasculated under the previous government, and the low-interest farm purchase loans will provide for the continuity and development of family farms. These are key means by which the social fabric of rural Saskatchewan will be ensured.

Mr. Speaker, despite the difficult economic times which are facing the western world, and from which Saskatchewan is not immune, a great swell of optimism has surged across the farms and into the towns and cities of this province. Why? I'll tell you why.

The NDP said, "We'll spend \$40 million to increase our holdings of state-owned land." The Progressive Conservatives said, "We'll help you buy the family farm when Dad retires."

The NDP said, "We'll use your tax dollars to sell products and services and compete with you in the market place." The Progressive conservatives said, "We'll use your tax dollars to create an economic environment which supports you instead of competing with you."

The NDP magnanimously said, "We'll give you free eyeglasses." The Progressive

Conservatives said, "We'll make sure you won't lost your home."

The NDP said, "The government is the most important player in the province." The Progressive Conservatives have said that people are the number one priority.

Mr. Speaker, we should not be surprised that the people of this province have unequivocally rejected the former for the latter, because the fundamental problem of socialism of any stripe is that if it is going to maintain its political momentum it must continue to take things unto itself. It must control, dominate, own and usurp in ever-increasing measure. It has no other option. It must convince people that this is in their best interests and so it must mount ever-costlier programs of government advertising and influence. In my mind it is an insidious and cancerous ideology.

But thank goodness, Mr. Speaker, today it is a disease in remission. It is a spent ideology, for the people don't like it, they don't want it and now they are free of it. They want a compassionate government which puts people ahead of programs. For the first time in years the people now have such a government, and this is why the fresh breeze of optimism is blowing across this province.

Mr. Speaker, the initiatives described for us in the Speech from the Throne are but the beginning of a new, forward-looking heritage for Saskatchewan. To support the address in reply is to support what all of us know to be in the best short- and long-term interests of this province. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to support the motion and speak against the forthcoming amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GLAUSER: — Mr. Speaker, I would also like to join my colleagues in congratulating you on the position to which you have been placed, and I am certain they will join with me in saying that the position will be served with distinction.

I would like to congratulate all those members who have been re-elected and all those who have been newly elected. And I would like to congratulate the cabinet members on the positions in which they have been placed, and the Premier for taking his seat in this House – a new Premier of a new Progressive Conservative government.

I deem it an honor and a privilege to stand in this House and thank the people in my constituency who worked with me and ran an election campaign which was superb because of all their efforts. They unstintingly gave of their time. I am please to be here today to represent them for the next four years and more.

Furthermore, I would like to thank all those people in my constituency who voted for me. As I intend to be here for the next four years, and more, to represent them in this House. I want to look after them in every way possible and I invite them to phone me regardless of their political affiliation.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment briefly on the constituency that I represent. It is located in the north end of Saskatoon; it spans an area from the river on the east to 10 miles west of the city limits, and six miles north of 33rd Street. It contains people from all walks of life – farmers, labourers, professional people and educators. The city portion at the core contains a large industrial area. There are numerous businesses located in this area – small, medium and large. During the last legislature, not one of those business people knew his NDP member. In my contact with these businessmen,

this is what they have informed me.

Because of the newly-elected Premier's initiative in creating a new balance of government, industry, labour and education, and because of my contact with constituents, people from all walks of life will not feel alienated and will know who is representing them in this legislature.

The new Progressive Conservative government, Mr. Speaker, has a heavy responsibility. Under the leadership of Premier Grant Devine and the cabinet ministers whom he has selected, and with all of us working together, it is my firm belief that we have the ability to establish a dialogue with the people of Saskatchewan.

You know, there are two forms of communication between individuals and groups – force and persuasion. A lot of would-be persuaders are like Mark Anthony. They cry out, “Lend me your ears.” But in these days the people are shouting back, “Now, you listen to me. I have an identity and I have intelligence, and I want to have my say.” On April 26, the voters had their say. Very emphatically, they have said what they want, and this new Progressive Conservative government in consultation with them is charged with the responsibility of providing them with the opportunity to achieve their dreams and aspirations.

Mr. Speaker, this party under the leadership of our Premier, who will be guiding the destiny of this province for years to come, very early in the election set aside negatives and promised position action. It therefore should not have come as a surprise to anyone when at the close of the swearing-in ceremony of the Executive Council on May 8 the Premier announced that the road tax on gasoline would be taken off at midnight, and he is to be commended for his quick implementation of that promise.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GLAUSER: — Mr. Speaker, there is more to come. The 13.25 per cent mortgage reduction plan soon to be implemented is being looked upon as another positive measure to assist the home-owner in his or her struggle to cope with living in these inflationary times. The people of this province do want to own their own homes; they are not tenants. That would seem to be the direction in which we were headed under the former NDP government. Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, the young farmer does not wish to be a tenant farmer, a sharecropper. He too wants to be a landowner. The \$350,000 in low cost loans will help to get the young farmer started, another Progressive Conservative election promise that will be in place in due course.

I congratulate the mover and seconder of the throne speech, the members for Melfort and Saskatoon Riversdale respectively. I will vote for the motion.

While on the subject of farmers, Mr. Speaker, those with whom I talked during the election campaign and who are located in the Saskatoon Mayfair constituency enunciated very clearly to me their distrust for the Meewasin Valley Authority (MVA). Perhaps as a first step to allay their fears, this legislature at some future date could consider a name such as Meewasin Valley Parkway to eliminate that connotation of authority.

Secondly, in order to arrive at a consensus with the elected officials or individuals of Corman Park, when discussions on irrigation problems or whatever are taking place, they should do so in an atmosphere of consultation as opposed to confrontation, the

latter of which seems to have been the norm under the NDP administration.

Consultation is one of the oldest democratic functions, the natural instrument for government to use in order to harmonize its policy with public opinion. The people of this province cannot be driven in blinkers. Any attempt to promote great changes without making clear the purpose and method will dissolve into frustration.

Turning to education, Mr. Speaker, operating grants to school boards for 1982 as allotted for in the budget that was not passed when the election was called were \$295 million, an increase of 13.6 per cent over 1981. Since the mid-1970s the portion of the provincial budget assigned to education has decreased by 2 per cent. Translated into dollars, that means \$55 million less to education. In 1982 it has been estimated that the provincial operating grants will account for less than 54 per cent of the school board revenues across the province, down from 58 per cent a few years ago. Virtually all government departments were to receive a higher percentage increase in 1982 than education, for example, social services, 29 per cent, 22 per cent; highways, 18 per cent; and agriculture, 16 per cent. Mill rate increases across the province for boards of education are in excess of 15 mills, and in Saskatoon it is 20 mills.

The former premier of this province, during the election campaign, stated in Saskatoon that we, as a city, had too high a standard of education. There was no mention made of population growth in Saskatoon, which has been approximately 2 per cent per year over the last 16 years, during which time that has not been a public high school constructed. The increase in enrolment has not been taken into consideration and should be examined more closely before criticizing the high standard of education in Saskatoon.

I would like now, Mr. Speaker, to draw attention to some of the concerns expressed to me regarding nursing homes. Firstly, there are not enough beds in Saskatoon, or Saskatchewan for that matter, to accommodate level 4 care. The result is that levels 1, 2, and 3 care nursing homes are not equipped to provide the specialized care for severe cases of health deterioration of long-term residents.

Mr. Speaker, that brings me to my final topic of volunteers. After many years of governments taking on more and more of the social responsibilities once borne by private citizens, the pendulum is now swinging back the other way. Governments everywhere are deeply in debt, and the NDP government that was, found out how heavily you can tax people without damaging the economy and their own political appeal. Therefore, there is a body of people in society whose enthusiasm is being destroyed by socialistic bureaucracy. Public services lack the human touch that people in distress need so badly. Volunteers can either supplement the services provided or take care of special problems, which government programs tend to overlook.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, over the years in my professional and social life, I have believed in the principles of integrity, responsibility and accountability. That is the manner in which I intend to serve my constituents in this House. Thank you.

The Assembly recessed until 7:00 p.m.