

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
March 18, 1983

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

QUESTIONS

Minimum Wage

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Labour. By way of background, I want to remind the Minister of Labour that yesterday's throne speech was the longest in many, many years. Notwithstanding its length, it was more noteworthy for what it omitted than what it contained.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — In the midst of an economic recession we got no blueprint for recovery. We did get an announcement of a horse-racing commission.

Finally, by way of background, Mr. Speaker, I want to remind you of the group of forgotten people, because it's rather revealing — the unemployed, those on welfare, the native groups, the senior citizens. All of these groups merited nothing more than a pious statement.

My question is with respect to just one of these groups of forgotten people, Mr. Minister — the working corps, the people who work at, or near, minimum wage. Why was there no announcement in yesterday's throne speech of an increase in the minimum wage?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, in answer to the member opposite, we've been doing some considering of the minimum wage for a number of months now. There will be an announcement coming, probably the beginning of next week. And you will hear the results of that report at that time.

MR. SHILLINGTON:— New question, Mr. Speaker. I can only assume from the fact that it wasn't in the throne speech, Mr. Minister, that you are ashamed of whatever you are announcing.

My question, Mr. Minister, is: will you give us your assurance that those on minimum wage will get an increase at least equal to the increase in the cost of living since the last increase?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, I am not making any assurance whatsoever as far as an increase, or no increase, as far as the minimum wage is concerned. I will let you know as soon as I have arrived at my report. We've spent a lot of time looking at it. We've talked to a lot of people that are on minimum wage and there's a number of factors to consider and we are doing that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will you give us your assurance that this travesty of going for over a year without an increase in minimum wage will not be repeated? Will you give us your assurance that the increases in the minimum wages will be done regularly from here on and henceforth?

HON. MR. McLAREN: — Mr. Speaker, I have just finished saying I will give no assurance whatsoever as far as increasing or decreasing the minimum wage. A lot of it is dependent on the economic conditions. And to me, jobs are more important than just rising minimum wages. People are anxious to have a job let alone worrying about the increase of wages. The job is becoming more important in our society than high wages.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Fuel Rebate

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Premier in the absence of the Minister of Agriculture. The Premier will be ware (as all farmers in the province are today) of the drastic reduction in the initial grain prices which are predicted by the minister in Ottawa, of 70 to 80 cents a bushel. I wonder if now he will have a look at his government's program in assisting farmers. It is very much lacked in the throne speech. What they got was the promise of a horse-racing commission. Will you now admit that you have a responsibility in meeting the needs of the farmers who are facing a cost-price squeeze that hasn't the likes of being seen since the last 1960s under another right wing government, and that you do have a responsibility in terms of bringing in fuel rebate program to assist farmers in Saskatchewan who are facing very desperate times?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — In response to the member's question, Mr. Speaker, I believe that it's indicative of the attitude of the federal government to be proposing a plan that says it's going to quadruple of increase the transportation rates to farmers at about 500 per cents, and at the same time announce, Mr. Speaker, that the price of wheat is going to be falling 60 cents a bushel. Our ministers have been working extremely hard around the clock to make sure that all of Canada — not just the province of Saskatchewan but, indeed, all over Canada — knows the consequences of those kinds of actions, not only on the farmers of Saskatchewan but, indeed, on the manufacturers of Massey tractors and combines, and Chrysler pick-up trucks, and half-tons that have to be sold across the country. If the income falls here in the province of Saskatchewan it not only hurts the province of Saskatchewan, but, indeed, it hurts the whole country.

Mr. Speaker, I could remind the members of the kinds of things that we have done with respect to agriculture in the few short months that we've taken power. Number one, Mr. Speaker, the request to have the average Saskatchewan farmer own his land and not the government own it was the kind of thing that we said we'd do, and we brought in a farm purchase program for 8 per cent money to farmers. That's the first thing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Number two, it was rural Saskatchewan, that uses school buses to get their children back and forth to school, that travel a great deal to get to church, to got meetings, to go to 4-H meetings, etc., that wanted some protection in terms of gasoline tax that we provided, and we now have the lowest priced gasoline in the country, and rural Saskatchewan respects that.

Number three, Mr. Speaker, a rural gas distribution system to provide the farmers and the towns and the villages with natural gas. It's one of the largest natural gas systems in the distribution systems in the history of Canada, and perhaps in the free world. It's a 10 year program of \$340 million at the request of rural Saskatchewan.

Number four, Mr. Speaker, water. Water is a very important issue to rural Saskatchewan. We've identified over \$2.3 billion in projects for rural Saskatchewan particularly, farm and non-farm alike, above irrigation. There was demand and request for our government to move within months. In terms of water, it has been extremely important to rural people. So in terms of the cost of living, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the structural problems, in terms of the opportunities, in terms of the jobs, in terms of reducing the cost of living, and in terms of protecting people in terms of high interest rates, this government has done more, Mr. Speaker, in 10 months that the people opposite did in 10 years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Premier. I am sure that the farmers who have faced an increase of 23 per cent in farm fuel since the Premier took office will be very impressed with the fact that he is promising a natural gas distribution system sometime in the future. What I want to know is whether the Premier will now give an indication to the farmers of Saskatchewan that he has the confidence in them to give them the same kind of benefits that he gives to his friends in the oil industry, by introducing a farm fuel rebate program. That was the question and after 10 minutes of listening to an answer I didn't quite pick up on whether he was giving that assurance or not.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: —Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite have some colleagues in the neighbouring province to the east of us . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Let me finish. There was purple gas in the province of Manitoba and recently the NDP administration in the province of Manitoba removed the purple gas for farmers and brought it up to the price of everybody in the province. We went the other way. We cut the tax in the province of Saskatchewan, so school bus divisions now in rural Saskatchewan can save \$40,000 a year, as opposed to raising it in the province of Manitoba.

Number two, I have been the only premier, as far as I know, who is requesting the federal government to take the tax off diesel fuel for all farmers across Canada, and or fishermen as well (there's not that many of us left), to give us a competitive edge. We know that if we continue to tax the kinds of production parts of our economy like the federal government is doing, we will lose.

Final point, Mr. Speaker. Is the hon. member suggesting that people in the riding of Shaunavon want us to subsidize the federal government by allowing Mr. Trudeau to raise the tax and we raise taxes to rebate the framer here, so we can sent it to Ottawa? Is that what he is asking for? Because if it is, I'd be very interesting in talking to his constituents.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the Premier. You have missed

the point twice about a farm fuel rebate program — whether or not you intend to give any assistance to the farmers of Saskatchewan who have faced a 23 per cent increase in their fuel costs since you became Premier. In terms of a farm that uses 4,000 gallons of fuel, that's an increase of over \$1,000 per year since you became Premier, the likes of which farmers have not seen in Saskatchewan for many, many years. My question once more is whether or not you intend to bring in a program to assist farmers in terms of purchasing fuel and in terms of bringing in a fuel rebate program. You could use the Alberta example, if you want to talk about another jurisdiction. If you're into blaming other governments, why don't you talk about the 32 cent a gallon rebate program that Alberta has, and use that as the basis for a program here?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, every farmer in Saskatchewan knows that it's the NDP's friends in Ottawa that are raising the tax on gasoline and diesel fuel. They know that. They know that the province of Saskatchewan hasn't raised the tax at all; in fact, it has removed all the tax. So, the point is that the federal government could continue to raise the tax, month after month, and the hon. members opposite are saying that we should subsidize it so it could go on into Ottawa, because we wouldn't pick up any of it at all. If that's what he's asking, I would think it would be interesting for the people in his riding to ask him whether that's a good idea or not.

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Premier. In your first answer, you suggested that the farmers of Saskatchewan won't pay once cent more, or aren't expected to pay more, and that you're going to defend the Crow. Your first minister, the Minister of Agriculture, was speaking to a chamber of commerce meeting in Melville, and he said that Saskatchewan is prepared to pay more to move its grain. He said, and I'm quoting, "We've met with Pepin and told him we will pay more but we want a safety net."

How much more are you asking farmers to pay in light of the announcement that we're going to get 80 cents? What's the bottom line? How much more are you saying that the farmers are prepared to pay? Maybe you should come out and meet some of the constituents in Assiniboia-Gravelbourg and in Shaunavon, and see how much more the farmers want to pay.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite well know that our position has been from the outset, prior to the campaign, since the campaign, and today, that one, we should have an increased transportation system, and number two, that the federal government should pay for it. Now, subsequent to that, the federal government comes out with a plan and says, 'No, you unilaterally will pay for it,' and farmers all across Saskatchewan and western Canada say we can't afford that.

There is no benefit to us and we don't think that we can afford it in the long run, so we, your members and my members, jointly pass a nine-point resolution in this Assembly that says if these protections aren't in that plan we don't want any part of it. You agreed to that and I agreed to that. Those protections are benefits in the long run for the farmers of Saskatchewan. Now, unless you're going tack on your word we're sticking to those nine points, and unless they live up to them we're not going to buy it. That's the position of this government.

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, this isn't a supplementary. This is a repeat of the first question; he didn't answer my question. The resolution we passed stated that we will not pay any more. The bottom line was . . . The announcement yesterday was that there

will be a 70 to 80 per cent reduction in the price of our grain, and here the minister is saying we've talked to Pepin and told him we will pay more. I'm asking the question: is the minister stating government policy when he speaks to the Palliser in January, in Alberta, saying the farmers can pay more? Since his conversion in saying that he is going to support the Pepin plank or support defeating or derailing Pepin, he fell off the wagon again and he is saying the same old story. He is saying the farmers are prepared to pay more. Is he prepared to pay more, and if so, how much? That was the question.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member signed that accord that had the nine points in it in this Assembly, that said we have to protect the statutory rate, the number two the farmer has to have protection in terms of the cost increases. That's exactly what we're saying today, that we have to protect the farmers if we're going to provide a transportation system that's going to get the job done in terms of increased marketing and so forth. That's what we've been negotiating and talking with now, that if you don't listen to those nine points we don't want any part of the Pepin plan — no part of it. In fact, if he doesn't listen to those nine points we don't want to see him change it at all. We've made that very, very clear. The nine points that you and I agreed to are what he's looking at today, and I suspect those are the very nine points that are gathering respect and endorsement right across Canada. The minister has been in the Atlantic provinces; we're getting support in Manitoba; we're getting support in Quebec, Ontario, Alberta, and British Columbia; and, as a result of that, more and more people are beginning to recognize that the stand taken in this legislature and the joint resolution here are the kinds of things that are going to make a difference federally. If the federal government doesn't buy that, we said yesterday in the Speech from the Throne that we're prepared to go to war to protect Saskatchewan agriculture and the resources here, and we will.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ENGEL: — In the throne speech you state that if required measurements will be placed before the Assembly to keep Saskatchewan's grain and livestock farmers competitive with those in other parts of Canada. Does this also refer to Saskatchewan canola growers, those people involved in canola? What about the closure of the rapeseed plan in Saskatoon today that is laying off 30 people as a result of the . . . (inaudible) . . .

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, if you go back and look at the resolution that we proposed here, the nine-point program, plus you combine that with our Speech from the Throne yesterday, we said that we were prepared to defend the Saskatchewan individual's rights to control its resource wealth and have those resource benefits come back to the people here. That includes all commodities, Mr. Speaker — all commodities. We know that, in this process of where the federal government is going to be announcing this program, we're not going to begin now by saying that we will put millions of dollars into this industry and millions into this commodity when he's sitting there designing his program. When he comes out and addresses our nine-point policy, then we will tell him whether we like or whether we don't.

Assistance for Oilseed Crushing Industry

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, a new question. The question I asked the minister: will the minister guarantee that the budget will contain some form of assistance for the oilseed crushing industry in our province if Alberta subsidies have not been removed in the meantime? The crushing industry has failed in Saskatchewan. CSP Foods have closed

their plant. You're saying in your throne speech 'that if required.' Surely that's a requirement to keep a plant operational and keep the industry in Saskatchewan. That's one of your main thrusts. Are you prepared to spend some money on that?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — We're prepared to look at it. It's an important question in terms of timing.

Number two, we're not prepared now to get into a battle or to compete with the Alberta heritage fund. What we're prepared to deal with now is to say to the federal government, 'If you make changes here that unilaterally impose hardship on the province of Saskatchewan, or indeed western Canada, then we're going to go to bat for agriculture.' That's what we've said. We've had some short-run problems that are running into situations that were, to a large extent, generated and caused by the ill feelings and the non-co-operation between Saskatchewan and Alberta prior to April 26, 1982.

Water Pipeline from Lake Diefenbaker

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Urban Affairs. It relates to another of the omissions, which make this throne speech such a memorable event. The omission, Mr. Speaker, to which I want to refer the minister is the lack of any mention of the water pipeline from Lake Diefenbaker. By way of background let me remind the minister that you found time to mention The Teachers' Life Insurance Act — a bill that has been a standard, routine and non-controversial bill for at least 30 years in this legislature — but no time to mention the pipeline. Do I take it from that that your government is going to do nothing further to see that that pipeline is built, and you're going to allow Ipsco to leave those locks on the gate and close Regina's largest industry?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SCHOENHALS: — Mr. Speaker, our position on the pipeline is very clear. We had some informal conversation with the mayors of the two cities. There has been conversation at the officials' level. We have an offer that they are considering. As we indicated a number of times, we are waiting for the cities to reply to our proposal. We expect that shortly. We have indicated a commitment to solve the water problems in Regina and that commitment stands.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — The supplementary question to the minister is: does our new offer contain additional funding for the pipeline so that the project may not be considered to be feasible?

MR. SCHOENHALS: — Mr. Speaker, in answer to that, I'm not aware of a new offer. The offer has been made and has not been reacted to.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Mr. Speaker, a new question. I misunderstood the answer. I thought you had finally got around to doing something. I vastly overestimated your concern, I gather; you were talking about your offer. Further, by way of background, I must say that the minister must be the only person in Saskatchewan who isn't aware of the reaction of the two mayors to your offer. Their reaction was that it isn't sufficient. My question to you, Mr. Minister, is: will you take those comments at face value and put an

offer on the table with which the cities can work, enrich your offer?

MR. SCHOENHALS: — Mr. Speaker, we have indicated a position. The reaction that I hear coming from across the floor is slightly different than what I'm hearing in conversations with the two mayors, certainly different than what we are getting from the officials in their discussions. We have a position. WE again feel that it's a fair one, a reasonable position, and we are waiting for a reaction.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Final supplementary. Do I take it then, from the minister's response, that your feet are firmly set in cement, and you are not going to increase the offer which you've made and make that pipeline feasible? My question, Mr. Minister, is: do I take it that that offer is chipped in stone and will not be changed by your government?

MR. SCHOENHALS: — Mr. Speaker, I can guarantee the member opposite that my feet are not planted in his head. A couple of comments that I made in this House on previous occasions comparing our offer to the program that was put in place in Lloydminster on per capita comparisons were not a very effective method of appraising. However, when you look at the offer, what is important in per capita considerations is the amount of money per capita that is left to the citizens of the city involve. In their offer, the city of Lloydminster was left to fund \$9 million. Per capita, that meant that each member of the population had to pay \$600 to put that pipeline in place.

What we are offering to the cities of Moose Jaw and Regina, and this excludes any consideration of interest subsidy, will result in a \$457 per capita cost burden on the people of the two cities. If you take Regina alone and assume that the split will be the 72-78 percentage split that is now in place, the people of Regina, in our offer, once again excluding interest subsidies, will be asked to pay only \$399 per capita to put the program in place. I believe with those figures it's obvious that this offer is a very realistic one.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — A very brief question to the Minister of Environment. I ask the minister whether he has received from the environmental advisory council a report entitled "Environmental Decision-making in Saskatchewan." If so, will it be made public and when?

HON. MR. HARDY: — Mr. Speaker, I have not received the report to date and when we get it we'll look at it and it certainly will be made public.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Notice from the Chief Electoral Officer

MR. SPEAKER: — Under orders of the day, I would beg to inform the Assembly that the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly has received from the chief electoral officers a certificate of the following election and return, that is, of Sidney Peter Dutchak, Esq., as member for the constituency of Prince Albert-Duck Lake.

Electronic Hansard

MR. SPEAKER: — I would like to also advise all hon. members that commencing with this session the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan will have an electronic *Hansard* in the form of an in-house system of television coverage of all proceedings in this Chamber. The legislative television service is operated by remote control by the staff of the Assembly to form a complete record of our deliberations and is being made available to Saskatchewan broadcasters and cablecasters, either by means of a live signal or in the form of taped copies.

This is a culmination of over seven years of planning and preparation and is the direct result of a recommendation of the second report of the special committee on the review of rules and procedures of the Legislative Assembly concurred in by this House on December 10, 1980. The videotape copies of the daily proceedings will form the Assembly's primary historical record and after prorogation of each session will be deposited for preservation in the Saskatchewan archives.

Birth Announcement

MR. YOUNG: — Mr. Speaker, I rise to inform the House that my seatmate, the member for Saskatoon Westmount, this morning at 5:45 gave birth to a baby girl, 8 pounds, 5.5 ounces, named Esther Patricia Caswell at the St. Paul's Hospital. Mother and baby are doing fine.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADDRESS IN REPLY

MR. DUTCHAK: — It's sincerely an honour to appear here today to give my maiden speech, especially when I can move the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. I'm sure that all members of the Assembly can appreciate the sense of pride that I feel, being a new member to this Assembly. I wish to express a sincere thanks to the people of Prince Albert-Duck Lake for the confidence which they have shown in me as a result of the vote on February 21, 1983. Some even called it a landslide.

This vote of confidence in the policies and the programs of this government was a message to all of Saskatchewan, that the people do have solid trust in the province and the Government of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Prince Albert-Duck Lake, I should like to thank Premier Devine for the privilege and the opportunity to move the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. Mr. Speaker, the very fact that I'm a member of this Legislative Assembly is a positive credit to the economic policies of this government.

A headline in the *Leader-Post* of January 24, 1983, read as follows: "By-election turning into a clash over economic policy." With your permission, sir, I would like to quote from the article. It read: "A by-election called last Friday is shaping up to be a straight-on clash over economic policy." The same article went on to say, "NDP Leader, Blakeney, set the ton for a tough campaign by blasting the Conservative economic policies."

Mr. Speaker, we saw the blasting that took place later. This was a feeling that is widespread across the province of Saskatchewan in relation to this government.

Mr. Speaker, during the course of the by-election campaign, I had the good fortune to go and visit hundreds of people in the constituency, and my people in Prince Albert-Duck Lake expressed their feelings clearly. The people in Prince Albert-Duck Lake expressed their feelings clearly. The people in Prince Albert-Duck Lake gave an overwhelming vote of confidence in the policies I represented. The positive economic policies of the government of Premier Devine were approved by the people of Prince Albert-Duck Lake. The people in my constituency are excited about the future of this province. They are excited about their own futures.

On February 21, the people of Prince Albert-Duck Lake made it clear that they did not want the tired and rusted slogans of the past. They wanted constructive, realistic action on the part of the Progressive Conservative government. For the record, Mr. Speaker, one must point out that even after the massive rejection of the policies of the NDP, the quickly disappearing party continued to blame the voters for their defeat. Indeed, the Leader of the Opposition, in the usual flippant and smug manner, was quoted as saying that he did not consider this as a reflection on him or his candidate. Mr. Minister, this was the same type of attitude that led to the defeat on April 26. This is the same sort of attitude that the opposition carries in to the new session.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to bring our minds back to April 26 and recall what the Leader of the Opposition said was his reason for the loss. As you recall, the statement was made that we are in tough economic times and the voters repel against the government in power at that time. Shortly after that, Mr. Speaker, the Alberta election took place which returned an overwhelming majority for the Conservative government there. Then the opposition changed their minds as to why they had lost on April 26, and indicated that the people had the wrong perception of what they were all about.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's very clear, in light of April 26 and in light of February 21, that people know what's going on. People want good government, honest government. They want government to do the things on behalf other people, not on behalf of the government. That's the distinction between the opposition and our government.

Mr. Speaker, on March 9 in this House, the NDP member for Regina Centre suggested that the people of northern Saskatchewan lacked sophistication, and were bad credit risks. This is a clear example of why the people of Prince Albert-Duck Lake so strongly supported myself as a candidate. The member for Regina Centre also admitted how poorly the previous government had administered the affairs in northern Saskatchewan, and again, Mr. Speaker, this is why the people in Prince Albert-Duck Lake voted for me. They voted for a member of the government that ran the province of Saskatchewan like one would run his own business. Just because the money the government is handling is not the money of the members making the decisions, doesn't mean the money can't be treated like that member's own money. Taxpayers' money must be held in trust by us.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to tell the Assembly that the trust that the people of Prince Albert-Duck Lake placed in this government is a sacred trust and one that will be honoured by our government.

We pledge a solid commitment to the development of the Prince Albert technical institute, and yesterday in the throne speech this was verified. I recall very distinctly in my by-election campaign that the members to the right, physically speaking only, were trying to tell the voters of Prince Albert-Duck Lake that this wasn't happening. The throne speech yesterday verified what the people of Prince Albert-Duck Lake knew was

happening: that we are getting a technical school.

Mr. Speaker, that is what I call carrying the commitment to the people. This is part of the government's commitment to bring maximum stability to our economy.

We are living in perilous economic times in Canada. In our nation's capital we have a Prime Minister who sometimes holds western Canada in contempt, I submit, and has put this nation on the brink of economic disaster. Here in Saskatchewan we don't agree with that type of economic madness. I submit that Saskatchewan experience a change in government just in time. We went over a number of years where the revenues flowed into the provincial purse — millions and millions of dollars. We've come through some good times, and yet, on April 26, as new government, we were starting out fresh as if we had simply broken even as a province. Nothing was saved; no long-range planning took place.

In the short time that I have been here I have noticed, from the records, that massive expenditures were made for the people just before elections; no system of long-range planning for the benefit of the people. Yet, the former government called themselves the party of the people. This has changed, because we are looking into a new horizon. We are optimistic, and that's the direction we are going in.

The government of Premier Devine is proud that Saskatchewan's economy will help lead recovery in North America. In the last 10 or 11 years the former government did nothing to fight recession and inflation. People had to leave the province, and the family farm declined. Taxes increased, and state intervention was the order of the day. This is not the case today. This government can proudly say that Saskatchewan has the lowest unemployment rate in Canada, but we will not be satisfied with that fact. Our government will be introducing further measures to create jobs. I am pleased to be able to tell this House that as a result of our housing mortgage plan and the \$3,000 home construction grant, housing starts in Saskatchewan rose a full 14 per cent in 1982, increasing over 1981, while in the rest of Canada they fell 29 per cent. That, Mr. Speaker, was because of leadership and the vision of this government.

Inflation in Saskatchewan is consistently the lowest in Canada. The removal of the sliding 20 per cent tax, which the NDP had in place on gasoline, is an example of how this government is taking action in the battle against inflation. This is the type of encourage we have to provide to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I am encouraged by the measures that this government will take to meet the challenges of the future. To build a strong economy we need a private sector that is strong, and today I want to say to this House that free enterprise is alive and doing well in the province of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. DUTCHAK: — The government has proudly proclaimed that Saskatchewan is open for business. I've noticed that that statement seems to cause a bit of pain in the opposition benches, but really, this is the answer. We have to take down the wall that was built by the former government and begin to deal with our neighbours, our economic trading partners.

I was glad to hear in the throne speech that our relations with the western American states will be improved. That is a step in the right direction. We have to increase trading

with our American partners; we have to maximize trading in these economic times. We all know that we are normally involved in a lag. When the American economy pulls out of a recession or depression, it takes us two or three years to join the good times, and yet we're so strongly affected by what happens south of the border. It is the plan of our government to work closely with our American neighbours to see if we can close the gap for economic recovery.

Mr. Speaker, this government is going to be announcing the details of a high-technology development strategy. This will mean a whole exciting new era for Prince Albert-Duck Lake and the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, agriculture is still our number one industry in this province. This government is a friend of the farmer. The Progressive Conservative government has taken solid measures to strengthen that sector. The farm purchase program is the best and most progressive piece of farm legislation in the world today.

This government has clearly gone on record for the Crow rate, and in this session new measure will further make Saskatchewan number one in agriculture. We must continue to work, as we have been doing in the last several weeks. We have to convince the opposition members and we have to convince farming groups to join us, and forget about partisan political issues on the Crow rate issue. We are all Saskatchewan residents. We all believe that the agricultural sector is a key and vital part of our province. Our interests are similar. We have to forget about the political difference, and join together in fighting the Pepin proposal and defend what built this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. DUTCHAK: — Mr. Speaker, our government has also identified education as cornerstone of economic and social development in our province. I'm proud about this government's commitment to education. This province was lagging badly in that sector. We have a lot of work to be done, and we have a great start. We are not going to sit back on the educational issues. We're committed to expansion and diversification of our system. The government is taking steps to ensure the future of education in Saskatchewan. We are building schools and studying curricula in order to identify the needs and demands of the future.

We live in some difficult times because of our progress in economic and industrial matter. We can't simply educate people with degrees that they can hang on their wall where they aren't employable after they get those degrees. Our Minister of Education is doing an admirable job in bringing Saskatchewan back into line at the forefront where we belong in the educational process.

We have changed our priorities. We aren't that excited about building huge government buildings as monuments to us as a government. We feel that educated people, trained people, out there working in the labour field, are monuments to our success. That's what we intend to build.

On March 1, Mr. Speaker, our government distributed \$2.8 million in student aid. This is the largest single disbursement of student aid in provincial history.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. DUTCHAK: — That is the right direction. While many areas of this country are making cutbacks in education, our government has increased funding for educational purposes. This year's provincial bursary total was more than \$6 million, an increase of more than a million over last year.

I am, of course, delighted by our government's expressed commitment to the completion of the expanded version of the Prince Albert technical institute. Our education minister, again, had done an admirable job for the Prince Albert area, which includes my constituency. Last spring, when he became the minister, he looked at the former government's plans which were laid for the area. They were going to build a technical school in Prince Albert, but it was a small technical school, clearly not sufficient for the needs of Prince Albert and area. Our government saw it as a mere political ploy. Everything was on paper, plans were made, but plans like that were made for the previous 10 years. We had heard talk of a new technical school, a technical institute, in Prince Albert. We have doubled the capacity of that school because the people of Northern Saskatchewan deserve that kind of an educational facility. It's long overdue, and it will be highly utilized and appreciated by the people in northern Saskatchewan.

That indicates, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Education has all of Saskatchewan in mind in his programs, as the government does. Far too often a region is forgotten because of regional disparities and so on, but with this government I'm pleased to say that in northern Saskatchewan we have had the attention of government that the northern residents deserve, and the technical school is a product of some of that attention.

With our government that's fully in touch with the people, we welcome public response and input, and we intend to continue in that vein. Mr. Speaker, health has long been something Saskatchewan has been proud of. Our health care system has been a good system, but that's not going to stop this government from improving upon what we have. We are committed to providing Saskatchewan people with the best health care in the world, and we will do it

We're building and renovating hospitals, such as the ones in Lloydminster and Yorkton. We've extended the dental plan to include all age groups including 16 year-olds. We're co-operating with the university in the establishment of a centre of toxicology in Saskatoon. We have shown the people of Saskatchewan that we are dedicated to sound health care and research for this great province.

Mr. Speaker, in August we responded to the needs of cancer patients in this province by legislating an end to the cancer workers' strike. As a government who cares, we were not able to sit by and watch Saskatchewan people suffer needlessly, so we acted. Mr. Speaker, allow me to quote from the *Leader-Post*, August 19, 1982. Dale Eisler indicated as follows:

Last March, when we were treated to a similar situation, the NDP did not hesitate to end a less menacing strike so that it could get on with politics and calling an election. In this case, the Tories have no such crass motives.

And really, that article hits the nail on the head in our political system in this province. We are going to do what the people require, not for political purposes.

Mr. Speaker, we are on record as a government that cares. During the 1982-83 fiscal

year, this government allocated \$6.1 million to the building and expansion of nursing homes in order to provide long-term care for the elderly and disabled. A further \$1.1 million will be spent in this year. Now, Mr. Speaker, we are also committed to independent living facilities for our elderly and disabled, and the disadvantaged. The people that built this province cannot be ignored.

Last summer, Statistics Canada reported an increase over the past five years in the number of elderly living in our province. In the same time span the population of 14-year-olds and under decreased. This trend will continue into the next century. For this reason, our government is committed to proper home care for our seniors. The people of Saskatchewan should be allowed to continue to live independently and safely in their later years. Related to this are, our government is doing is doing continued work in the area. This is what we have to carry on with. We can't find the solution in the coming fiscal year. It's a commitment that's required, and we have given that commitment to the Saskatchewan people.

Improved ambulance services will soon be available for the people of Saskatchewan, which will certainly strengthen services presently available. Mr. Speaker, it is evident that we have made a commitment to people with special needs — the sick, the elderly and the disadvantaged. But we have also made a pact with families and young people.

Our housing programs are the best in the country. We have assured the people of Saskatchewan that adequate and affordable housing is available through programs like the mortgage interest reduction plan, Saskatchewan's family home purchase program, and Build-A-Home Saskatchewan, for instance, if you consider the amount of taxation that's generated from the construction of one residential unit, it's easily visible that this should have been done long ago by the previous government. It encourages contractors and it encourages carpenters and it finds employment for people. So these are positive programs and we have to continue on the positive road.

We are not content to rest on our past achievements. Changes to Saskatchewan housing are being made to allow for co-operation with the private sector rather than competition. We must work together. This government believes in working with the public rather than against it.

Mr. Speaker, these are only a few achievements of our government. As outlined in the Speech from the Throne, we will also be proposing changes to The Urban Municipality Act, The Vehicles Act, The Department of Finance Act — all our aimed at increasing protection and autonomy for the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on at great length about the great things accomplished by this administration under the capable leadership of Grant Devine. The people of Saskatchewan have reason to celebrate the future. The Premier has a positive outlook and is carrying on in a positive manner, and is achieving success with that manner. The days of the doom and gloom attitude of government are over. I would, however, like to quote the watch-dogs of government in regard to the administration and leadership that Premier Devine has given to the government. The *Leader-Post*, September 17, 1982, I quote:

Devine can put the province in order even where he cannot control external economic matters.

And on November 13, 1982, the same newspaper indicated, and I quote:

The government here is more willing to act to maintain its economic activity than other governments are.

November 3, 1982, the same newspaper indicated:

So eager is this government to ease the pains of recession that it is moving to create work through the public sector at a pace not consistent with the ponderous ways of government.

Mr. Speaker, the only reason that people, such as newspaper people and other people in Saskatchewan, view governments as being ponderous is because we had 10 or 11 years of ponderous government. We've now entered into a new era, and in a number of years people won't have that view any longer. They'll realize that government is there to accomplish things for the province of Saskatchewan in the most speedy and most efficient manner. On July 21, 1982, the same newspaper indicated, and I quote:

If there was a mess left by the previous government it was in various industrial policies, especially in oil where the loggerhead stance between the industry and the government has led to a sharp drop in activity. That, however, has since been more or less repaired.

And they stated as follows:

In summoning MLAs to Regina today to legislate striking cancer workers back to the job, the provincial government has taken proper action under the circumstances.

That was August 20, 1982. It is not only the *Leader-Post* that is singing the praises of Premier Devine's government, Mr. Speaker. The influential *Financial Post* had this to say on October 30, 1982.

Indeed, the upbeat attitude, and the determination of the new Conservative government to do what it can now to get out of the economic doldrums is in marked contrast to the quiet, little television lecture on the obvious we had from Mr. Trudeau last week. The difference is that in Saskatchewan the government has moved and is moving to provide incentives aimed very directly at business that should pay off in more investment and more jobs.

And this further quote from the same paper.

More importantly, action is being taken now. Prime Minister Trudeau talked in his final television address of seizing the next century for Canada. In Saskatchewan they don't wait that long.

That was a quote.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. DUTCHAK: — Mr. Speaker, it's obvious that we in Saskatchewan have a Premier that is known and respected throughout Canada. His leadership, vision and ability are

qualities that make him well qualified to be the Premier at this time. This is a tough time in Saskatchewan's history, and we need the Premier that we have. Saskatchewan residents will benefit from this. Premier Devine is at the helm of a government that truly represents all that is good about Saskatchewan.

I made the decision to enter public life because I believe in the greatness of this province. We want to build Saskatchewan where our children can stand tall and say, "We are from Saskatchewan. Our economy is in good shape; our people are working." We want to be able to say this, and we're on the right trail. We'll get it done. We can hear all the doom and gloom we want from the opposition, but we're going to get it done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. DUTCHAK: — This morning, Mr. Speaker, I'm convinced that Saskatchewan is on the road to recovery after 10 years of mismanagement. I would remind this House that we must never lose touch with those good people who put their faith in us, because they firmly believed that we would give Saskatchewan a government as good as the people, as good as they deserve. I submit that Premier Devine has provided that type of a government, that type of leadership, which the people deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I am a lawyer by profession but I realize that the Assembly is not strictly a law-making body. We represent the hopes, dreams, and goals of our fellow citizens. We must never forget that, because one other government did forget that, and that's why we are here in government.

It means a great deal to me to be in the House. I have every confidence in the ability of this administration to build Saskatchewan to be the strongest province in Canada. Mr. Speaker, less than one month ago, I was elected as MLA for Prince Albert-Duck Lake. I gave the people of the constituency, during my campaign, my word to serve them to the best of my ability. I will do that. The trust of the voters is important.

In concluding my remarks, I want to say that this government is one of integrity and ready to carry out its mandate. That was evidenced by the results of the by-election. In normal circumstances a by-election is not a popular election for a government to go through. There was a clear indication that the people of Saskatchewan are behind us and with us on our road to economic recovery, and on our road to building a future in this province.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure and honour to move, seconded by the hon. member for Morse:

That an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor as follows:

To His Honour the Honourable C. Irwin McIntosh, Lieutenant-Governor of the province of Saskatchewan.

May it please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan in session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

MR. MARTENS: — Mr. Speaker, as we commence the second session of the 20th legislature, I would like at the outset of my remarks today to express my appreciation to Premier Devine for the honour he has extended to me and the people of the constituency of Morse.

This is an exciting time for all of Saskatchewan. There is anew sense of pride and optimism. Indeed, there is a good feeling about our province, because after 10 long years of the socialist experiment the people now have a dynamic and progressive government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne read in this Chamber yesterday by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor symbolizes the constructive and dynamic policy of the Progressive Conservative government. They are realistic measures designed to make Saskatchewan the envy of every other province in Canada. In speaking of other province, may I remind this Assembly that it was the favourite practice of the Leader of the Opposition to compare Saskatchewan to other provinces. And I hope the members opposite take this to their former premier and Leader of the Opposition, as I see he isn't present right now. So in keeping with the practice of the member for Regina Elphinstone, let's take a look at NDP Manitoba. Over in Manitoba they practise voodoo economics. Their NDP government can take price in the fact that 55,000 (and I hope they listen) people in Manitoba are out of work — 55,000. Here in Saskatchewan we have the lowest unemployment rate in all of Canada.

In Manitoba the order of the day is to tax at every opportunity. The recent NDP budget for Manitoba did the following. Number one, a 1.5 per cent tax on wages was introduced — on wages. This tax applies whether or not a company has revenues, let alone profits. Number two, the Pawley government brought in a tax on gross personal incomes. Number three, the NDP in Manitoba raised their sales tax. Can you believe it, Mr. Speaker? They have 55,000 people unemployed and they had the cruelty to raise the sales tax by 1 per cent.

The *Winnipeg Free Press*, on Wednesday, March 2, 1983, wrote the following and I quote:

Saskatchewan has benefited from the economic policies of Premier Pawley.

They went on to say that Saskatchewan has a far superior economic climate for new industry to locate in. To top all of this, Manitoba had the largest government spending increases of any government in North America, under their NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, here in Saskatchewan we removed the terrible 20 per cent sliding gas tax, as the Speech from the Throne indicated. This government remains committed to the objective of lower taxes and will continue to reduce taxes wherever they are excessive and whenever reductions are possible.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — Mr. Speaker, back in my home constituency of Morse they call that economic common sense.

I just want to indicate a little part of a speech that was read by the president of the Royal Bank to the chamber of commerce in Ottawa. It goes like this. There is a child's rhyme that goes: "Nobody likes me, everybody hates me and I'm goin' down to the garden and eat worms." It illustrates a kind of self-destructive and uncaring despair, an all-encompassing pessimism, and it doesn't take a very extensive search to find it in Canada today.

Confidence and optimism about our economy and its prospects have become scarce commodities. Canadians seem to take almost perverse delight in hearing or recounting one economic horror story after another, or in topping someone else's tale of woe with one of their own. Listening to such a stream of bad news gives one the impression of Canada with an infinite number of problems so complicated and interrelated and difficult that we don't know what to do about them and can't decide where to start on them.

The spokesmen for doom and gloom sit on the opposition side of this Chamber. They are natural born cynics who cheer and celebrate every time a working man or woman is out of job. Their whole attitude is to hope for bad economic times so they can, in a loud shrill way, tell everyone, "We told you so." Mr. Speaker, the crisis of the motley crew of naysayers who sit in opposition will soon come to the realization that April 26, 1982 was the end of the 10 dark years for Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, tradition dictates that hon. members make reference to their constituency, and in my case I am exceptionally proud to talk about Morse. Morse constituency has benefited well from this new government. I am pleased to be able to say that a grant for \$9,000 has been granted to the town of Cabri for pump improvement under the water assistance act. In Herbert, the Herbert Senior Citizens Home will receive a \$38,900 construction grant from the Department of Social Services to assist them in upgrading their home. And under the rural natural gas program, the towns of Rhineland and Springfield will be included. These, Mr. Speaker, are some positive examples of how Morse constituency is progressing with the Progressive Conservative government.

Mr. Speaker, Morse constituency has a strong agricultural base, and, for a few moments, I would like to talk about the positive achievements in agriculture. First of all, I want to deal with some of the things that the constituency produces. We have over 30,000 acres of irrigation in the constituency. We have a broad, diverse agriculture that extends itself beyond to the export to the rest of Saskatchewan of milk and milk products out of that constituency. And this has been done by the initiative of the people of the constituency and I'm proud of that.

Mr. Speaker, we are now living through an extremely exciting time in the field of agriculture. But it's also a time for grave concern. Grain prices have fallen from a high of around \$6 a bushel to a low of around \$4. And the minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board has said it may go lower. Can we live under those burdens? We're going to go on and talk about the Crow later on in relation to that. And with the grain stockpiles around the world the chances of quick recovery for grain prices don't look very promising. And farm input costs continue to climb. Almost everything needed to operate farms costs more – fuel, fertilizer, equipment, and federal taxes on this, that, and the next thing, too. Our farmers have been caught in a cost-price squeeze for months and then the final blow: the federal government's plan to dismantle the historic Crown rate for grain shipments and replace it with a new mechanism that would see

freight costs jump by at least 500 per cent in less than 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, I had in my office, just this week, a gentleman who came in and wanted to know what the total cost of that program on an individuals basis and the total cost to the province would be. The average farm size in Saskatchewan is a little over 900 acres. If you calculate that out, it could be a loss of about \$6,000 per farm on freight costs — costs that are going to go elsewhere in Canada besides to the people of this province — and the total cost would be over \$400 million expanding that out. So it's a real cost, and it's going to be a cost that affects each individual in this province.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, it's a troubled time for the Canadian farmer, but our government is determined to see that our farming community does survive and flourish. We're not a group of people who can only recognize the importance of agriculture to the economy of this province. We're not looking at it from the outside; we're looking at it from the inside. We know agriculture because we've been a part of it all. We are made up in this government of men who come from the land. We are a government made up of men who still work the land. We are a government made up of men who, when we decide to leave politics, will return to work the land full-time once again.

Premier Grant Devine is an active member of the farming community. Agriculture minister and Deputy Premier, Eric Berntson, is an active farmer. Our deputy minister of agriculture, Jack Drew, is an active farmer. Mr. Berntson's two Legislative Secretaries, Weyburn MLA and Rosthern MLA, are also active farmers. Yes, Mr. Speaker, when I look down the list of our MLAs, I see the word farmer after farmer noted there as their occupations.

Because of this make-up and background of our MLAs, we think we have more agriculture expertise in our government than in any other government in the history of the province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — Mr. Speaker, we regard agriculture as the backbone of our province's economy. When our economy is threatened, we have that agricultural expertise at the top to fight for our rights. We are using that expertise to fight the federal government's plan for the Crow rate because if they go through, as they now are, agriculture in this province will suffer a devastating blow.

And not only agriculture, Mr. Speaker. About 200,000 people in Saskatchewan class themselves as being members of farm families. They make their living directly from the land. Another 200,000 or more residents live in rural communities. They, too, depend directly on the health of the farming community for their livelihood. If the farm families suffer economic jolts and set-backs, so do the rural communities. So about half our population is directly tied to the health of the economy of the average farmer.

Our urban centres, too, are largely dependent on agriculture for their survival. We do have potash, other types of mining, some oil and natural gas, and small manufacturing industries, but to a large extent the urban centres need the farmers' dollars. So, if the farmers and the rural communities are hit with a sledge-hammer, there's no way the urban centres can possibly escape the impact.

Gross farm income in Saskatchewan last year was almost \$4 billion. If it's not economically feasible for farmers to ship their grain to market and compete in the world

scene, that \$4 billion would soon be cut down. It would be cut down for the farmers, Mr. Speaker. It would be cut down for everyone else in this province. Also, it would be cut down for everyone in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is that we are dealing with the very economic survival of Saskatchewan. We intend to meet the challenge of the federal government's proposal, just as we have met every other challenge that we've been presented with. We have a commitment to the people of Saskatchewan, and we've been honouring that commitment as a provincial government.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to outline some example of what this government has done to make agriculture more viable in this province. Allow me to speak of the new direction Saskatchewan has taken in the field of agriculture since we have formed the government. I am extremely proud, Mr. Speaker, to be able to say that our farm purchase program is a tremendous success and is surpassing all our projections. As you know, the program rebates down to 8 per cent for the first five years mortgage rates on amounts up to \$350,000 on new land purchases for young farmers. After that, the farmers are guaranteed another five years that their mortgages will be no more than 12 per cent.

The program is primarily aimed at enabling the transfer of the family farm from parents to children. It also allows other starting-out farmers to buy land from anyone anywhere in the province and be protected from uncertain and high interest rates until they have established a viable operation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — We had critics in this House that said that we would never put the program into place. They said that our predictions were grossly inflated. So far, the farm credit corporation, our financing vehicle for the program, has already interviewed 4,600 applicants.

AN HON. MEMBER: — How many have been approved?

MR. MARTENS: — We're coming to that. Of those applications, more than 2,000 have been identified as appearing to be eligible for rebates.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — I'd just like to indicate that in the total 10-year program of the land bank, there were a little over 2,600. We've done this in less than three months. If they complete all necessary processing, these 2,000 and are approved for rebate benefits, the total mortgage money involved will be \$249 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — The member for Shaunavon wanted to know exactly how many. I'll give them to him: 758 of those applications have paid appraisal fees to the farm credit corporation and are undergoing final processing before approval is granted. The mortgage amount involved with these 750 applications totalled \$98 million. To date, about 350 of the 2,000 with mortgages totalling 41 million have been obtained final approval, and are not rebate clients. So you see, we've exceeded our expectations. Our projections were for 1,500 rebate clients with mortgages totalling \$150 million in the

first three months; that compares with the actual 2,000 potential clients, with \$259 million in total mortgages. Only the pressure of demand has slowed down final processing somewhat.

Mr. Speaker, I might add that the former government's Saskatchewan Land Bank Commission turned only 151 tenants into owners in 10 full years. We have already put our 152nd client into ownership of his land under 10 weeks, and it took them 10 years. We certainly do have a right to be proud of the farm purchase program. We're proud of it, and we hope that the people of Saskatchewan are proud of it too. The farm purchase program is helping to preserve the family farm in our province, and it's allowing young, starting-out farm people to own the land they work, rather than being tenants of that land, and tenants to the government.

Across Canada last year, about 410 farmers went bankrupt, compared to 261 in 1981. So, although every farm bankruptcy is a sad occasion, we have not suffered as much as farmers in other provinces. In January alone of this year, 33 farmers went bankrupt coast to coast; just one Saskatchewan farm suffered the same fate. Our government likes to think that our policies have helped prevent the scourge of farm bankruptcies that has afflicted the rest of the nation.

Still, Mr. Speaker, life isn't easy for farmers, any of them, and that's why it's important in the province at this time that we have a government made up of rural farm people. We are not theorists. We're not a group of academics sitting in some kind of an ivory tower. We are practical men with practical problems and we deal with them in a practical way. And we are going to do it with the help of the people of Saskatchewan. That's why last month we held the most significant agriculture conference ever in his province's history. More than 500 delegates from all over Saskatchewan representing every phase of agriculture gathered in Saskatoon to attend our agriculture opportunities conference. They wanted to get their grass-roots input into our policies and programs to meet the challenges of the future.

Our government didn't want to formulate its policies and programs behind closed doors, with some market research company telling us what to do. We wanted to get ideas from people who have a practical understanding of the problems and challenges facing rural people. We wanted to hear from the farmer about the farm; we wanted to hear from the rancher about his cows. That conference was a major attempt to get some ideas. It was so successful that we are already being urged to make it an annual event.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — The future for agriculture, Mr. Speaker, may not look too bright in the midst of current depressed prices and high input costs, but by meeting the challenges of today, we think we can ensure a secure agricultural market for tomorrow. It is estimated that by the year 2000, and that's just 17 years away, Canada can increase its agricultural output by two-thirds. Because of growing population and economic advances, we are told there will be markets for this tremendous increase, and the prices will ensure that the farmer, for once, receives a fair return for his output.

Our government is determined to be in the forefront of that increased production. We are looking to find new markets for the produce we not produce, to find new ways to diversify the number of products we grow, and to find new markets for these too.

It is our government's job to see that much of the two-thirds increase in agricultural output by the year 2000 comes from Saskatchewan. We are now working on ways to achieve this. In agriculture we are planning new programs and policies for launching major irrigation projects throughout Saskatchewan. We are working on new programs. Of research and development. We are studying ways to ensure that our agricultural facilities keep pace with the demand for skilled specialists.

Mr. Speaker, in keeping with the ever-changing technology of modern-day society, I am pleased that this government has decided to keep Saskatchewan in the forefront of high technology development.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — There is no doubt in my mind that the implementation of high technology will benefit the people of Saskatchewan. Research and development will enable industry and agriculture to be more effective in every respect. Progressive steps like these, Mr. Speaker, are indicators of a modern government in step with the forward march of society.

Mr. Speaker, our government thinks we have to look at both the big picture and the small picture when we look at the problems and challenges facing us in agriculture. The big picture is, of course, things such as the world grain situation; the small picture might be represented something like trying to solve the problems of chemical can disposals. All of the problems and challenges must be dealt with on the basis of the same kind of urgency. What we are dealing with is a giant jigsaw puzzle in which all the pieces must fall into place at just the right time and in harmony with all the other pieces. It is not a small task for government to tackle all these issues at the same time, but, Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what we are doing. We are looking at our agricultural future, both from the short terms, like how to see our farmers are not devastated by the dismantling of the Crow rate, and by the long term, like how to ensure they benefit in the years to come from world demand for food at decent prices.

I think, Mr. Speaker, you can recognize the complexity of the situation on the one hand and the tremendous challenges it poses on the other. We met with challenge; will continue to meet with it. Our government does not take its task lightly. We have arrived on the scene at a time of great change and of great opportunity for Saskatchewan and its rural communities. Our role, then, is to continue to work together to achieve so much more for the people of Saskatchewan, their children, and the generations that follow.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, the farmers of Saskatchewan never had better friends in government. Mr. Speaker, as well all know, the government of Premier Devine has shown courageous leadership in the battle to save the Crow. I remember last year's NDP election ploy about the Crow rate. The farmers of Saskatchewan know that the NDP were playing politics with the Crow. I also remember some farm folks saying, 'Save the Crow, Blakeney must go.' And indeed he did. The Progressive Conservative government's position is clear – we reject the Pepin plan. We have sent a message to Ottawa that will fight their scheme to scrap the historic Crow rate. The Minister of Agriculture has been meeting with people, such as the ministers of agriculture of Quebec and the maritime provinces. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture is on record as saying that the politicians and businessmen coast to coast are not starting to realize that the federal plan to dismantle the historic Crow rate for grain shipments will be economically disastrous for the whole country – not only Saskatchewan.

It is clear, Mr. Speaker, that the Liberal government in Ottawa does not care about this province. When the Pepin proposals wreck Saskatchewan's economy no employee or businessman in any part of Canada will escape the effects. Saskatchewan farmers will not have the money to buy cars or television sets made in Ontario, fish caught in the Maritimes or in British Columbia. Mr. Speaker, the Crow rate motion of February 22, 1983, is the policy of this government: the farmer shouldn't pay one penny more.

The development of oil is important to southwestern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. As we all know, over the past few months there has been a dramatic increase in oil industry activity in Saskatchewan and that is because of the policies and the philosophy of this government.

Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative Party made a pledge to extend natural gas to farms and rural communities. This will bring service to approximately 25,000 farms and 10,000 residential customers. It is worth nothing that this major project will create 300 man-years of work per year during the next 10 years of this plan. A total of \$340 million will be invested . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . It sounds to me like the opposition doesn't even like it when we do make employment available. They should have been here listening to the doom and the gloom of the last 10 years and then they would know that, Mr. Speaker, for increased jobs and increased investment in the province, is real progress – Progressive Conservative progress, by the way.

Mr. Speaker, co-operatives are a unique part of Saskatchewan. They provide unique service to the people of this province. And to help make the co-operative movement even better a new co-operatives act will be introduced in this session.

Mr. Speaker, this government believes in free enterprise and wants to help the small businessman. This government is going to introduce a new policy to simplify government bidding practices for small Saskatchewan contractors . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, and you'll hear it again, opposition. You'll hear it more than once and we'll do it.

Water is important to the future of Saskatchewan. An adequate water supply is essential for the future well-being of our province. The Progressive Conservative government had the vision to establish a cabinet committee on water. And the committee held hearings through the province. As a result of all of this, Mr. Speaker, it is the intention of our government to introduce measures to bring all water-related legislation and services under one body. I would venture to say that this is a bold, intelligent, initiative, innovative action that is, in all probability, the first endeavour of its kind in Canada. Water is a precious resource and Saskatchewan will lead the way in protecting it for future generations. Royal class, Mr. Speaker, royal class.

Mr. Speaker, it's the philosophy of the Conservative government that both public and private initiatives have a place in the economy. With that in mind, we will improve the operation of the crown corporations which were mismanaged by the previous government. Our measure will make them more effective and thus serve the people of Saskatchewan better. The government must be the servant and not the master of the people. The government must be brought closer to people and that is why, during this session, the House will be asked to approve measures to improve the Government of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, all taxpayers expect an efficient public service because they are paying for it. To stimulate productivity in the public service, there will be a study on how to make this happen.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne contains literally dozens of exciting programs and measures to make Saskatchewan the best place in all of North America to live. All of us who sit as members of this Legislative Assembly should be proud to be here and to be associated with such a great Premier as the Hon. Premier Grant Devine. These are good times for Saskatchewan even though they don't always comment on the same from the opposition. This reminds me of a story, and I wish there were more members of the opposition . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Just the leader. The situation reminds me of a 'Peanuts' cartoon I was told about recently. Lucky was using the metaphor to explain life to Charlie Brown:

Charlie on the great oceans are large ships that carry many passengers. On each ship there is a sun-deck, and on that sun-deck the passengers arrange their chairs. Some place them facing forward so they can see where they are going; some place them backward so they can see where they have been. Now, Charlie, on the great ship of life, which way will you face your deck-chair, forward or backward.

To which Charlie replied, 'I can't even get mine unfolded.'

Mr. Speaker, I'm referring in that case to the 10 long years that they're looking backward, the hard years of the government led by the member for Regina Elphinstone, the NDP years. Mr. Speaker, no one should forget the arrogance, the mismanagement, and big government mentality of that government. For the record shows . . . Let me cite some examples of these NDP years.

During the NDP regime, there was a 20 per cent sliding tax on gasoline, It moved every time the federal government increased their tax and the provincial tax went up with it. Mr. Speaker, our Conservative government removed it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — During the NDP reign, they refused to establish a public utilities review commission to protect the consumers. What did the new, innovative Conservative government do? They established one. During the NDP administration, they would not consider expanding natural gas to rural Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — We did it; our Conservative government is bringing about an extensive rural natural gas plan, and it will likely go the NDP constituencies, too.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — During the NDP term of office, the Department of Northern Saskatchewan was described as a 'bureaucracy run amok.' A Conservative government has brought effective government to northern Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — The NDP spent money like drunken sailors on such lavish things as posh government offices throughout the province. A Conservative government practises economic common sense, Mr. Speaker, that total accumulation of the NDP waste and mismanagement took its toll on Saskatchewan. That all, we can safely say, Mr. Speaker, is what the NDP have done. History will remind us of it in the future. April 26, 1982 was the day that the Conservative government took power. The people of Saskatchewan gave us that right and that responsibility. The 56 Progressive Conservative MLAs in this House are proof positive that the people of Saskatchewan wanted a good government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — They will continue to have it for many years to come. There is an ancient Jewish proverb that says, 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.' Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative government of Premier Grant Devine is one of vision and action, for in the final analysis, deeds are stronger than words.

There was a time in our province's history when our grandparents and parents overcame hardships and obstacles, and we in the Progressive Conservative side still carry that pioneer spirit. I want to mention a town in my constituency that has continued that pioneer spirit, and I feel that that is an example of what we will see in the province of Saskatchewan. The town of Cabri — 20 per cent of the towns businesses burned down. What did they do? They went to the former administration and said, 'What will you do for us?' And they said, 'We will get a Sedco loan for you at 17.25 per cent interest.' And then, Mr. Speaker, when the election was completed, we found out in fact that they hadn't intended to do it at all.

So what did the people of Cabri do? They went out on their own, and they said, 'We'll go and get the private industry in the lending business to give us the money.' Mr. Speaker, they got it from the Royal Bank of Canada, and they're building a mall in Cabri. Not only that — they're building a mall, but they're also building a brand new skating rink, because the skating rink also burned down. Mr. Speaker, that community has put in over \$80,000 worth of donations to that facility, plus all of the time and the effort that they have placed in it on their own.

That, Mr. Speaker, is a part of the pioneer spirit we are seeing all over the province. People are banding together to work together and become a part of the province of Saskatchewan. We are doing that in government; we are pioneering to build an even better Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — Mr. Speaker, in the years to come people will say that the Progressive Conservative government of Premier Devine heralded a new beginning for Saskatchewan — a new beginning in a number of things. We initiated a program for weed control of noxious weeds in relationship with the United States that I think is unique, and I think it's good.

There is another thing that is important in relation to that establishment of a good relationship with the neighbours to the south. In the cattle business, many people in the southwest will recognize that that is one of the most vital issues we have, because we market a lot of our livestock into the United States — 20 to 25 per cent of it goes there. We have to have a good economic relationship with our neighbour to the south,

because they are one of our major consumer markets that we have to continue.

It was brought to my attention, Mr. Speaker, about some things that private initiative is doing in relating to some of these issues because of imagination and initiative and being innovative.

In our agriculture conference in Saskatoon it was brought to our attention that the industry was marketing products made in Saskatchewan to all of the United States. We're marketing canned hams throughout the United States, and it's the only one that's doing that. We're proud to be a part of that innovation. We're also, Mr. Speaker, initiating many of the things related to the development of industry in the province, and related to secondary industries.

Mr. Speaker, the days ahead are absolutely challenging and exciting. The opposition should be proud to be a part of that. I don't say that lightly. I do not say that to score partisan political points. The fact of the matter is we have a Progressive Conservative government that is a model of excellence in government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — It's a model of excellence of government throughout Canada. People are looking to us for leadership, and we're providing it.

Mr. Speaker, the dimension of the government in its leadership is relating itself to housing; it's relating itself to agriculture; it's leading itself in specific items in relation to the Crow debate. And for me, Mr. Speaker, that has been one of the most important items in what we have been dealing with in the last month in relation to the discussion that we had on the Crow. It's important. We are dealing with it, and I think it's important that our government does.

We have been a leader in other areas. We have been a leader in dealing with job increases. We have been a leader in dealing with housing increases. We are a leader in dealing with many of the issues that confront the people of the province of Saskatchewan. We are a net job creator in the province of Canada. We had an increase that none of the other provinces did have. We're proud of that, and Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue to do that.

It's a special honour for me, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Morse constituency and the people I represent, to say how delighted I am to be able to second the motion to move the Speech from the Throne. This will be a landmark session for the Saskatchewan legislature, and Saskatchewan will be a better place because of our Progressive Conservative government. This pioneer spirit, Mr. Speaker, is evident in the people of Saskatchewan. They elected a new kind of government. That pioneer spirit was evident there. They elected people who care and, Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to be a part of that.

It's an honour for me at this time to second the Speech from the Throne, and I want to thank you for hearing me out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I want now to join in this debate in response to the Speech from the Throne which we heard yesterday. Let me begin, Mr. Speaker, by

offering my congratulations to the mover and seconder of the motion, the hon. members for Prince Albert-Duck Lake and Morse. May I particularly compliment the new member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake on his maiden speech in this legislature. And, Mr. Speaker, I particularly compliment them because considering the material they had to work with, their speeches were an outstanding tribute to their imaginations, if not their ability to distil anything from that speech.

This is the second Conservative throne speech, and I want to spend some time discussing what's in it, but I also want to spend some time discussing what isn't in it because that is much more noteworthy than what it contains. Let me take a moment to put some comments in context I wondered what one might call that speech, that bit of drama, because it certainly lacked any other substance or any relation to reality . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Members opposite ask me what I'm going to call it. I thought about Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* but that has been overworked in relation to Conservative documents through Canada. I thought of the 'The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly,' but there really wasn't very much good in the speech, there really wasn't very much bad in the speech, and it really was of the character of stale toast and warm milk – the sort of thing you wouldn't really describe as ugly, a little distasteful but not ugly. So I thought, no, that won't do. 'The good, The Bad, and the Ugly; wont' do. I thought then, how about 'Jaws'? Any speech that long ought perhaps to attract the designation of 'Jaws' because it certainly went on for a good while. Then I thought 'Jaws II.' That's perhaps even better — 'Jaws II' because of all the things that are in the speech, Mr. Speaker, which have been in other speeches or other documents. It has the same sort of qualities as a rerun. I noted the dedication to high technology which is certainly a simple reiteration of what has happened with respect to SED systems and Develcon and Northern Telecom, none of which is new but all of which should be accented.

I heard about water resources, and their accent on water resources by the Saskatchewan Research Council. I thought, yes, no reason why we shouldn't mention that. It's at least 10 years since the research council has had the strongest water resources component in Canada, has done the best ground-water mapping of any province in Canada. There's no reason why we shouldn't mention that again.

Then a special water agency is being mentioned. I thought, why not? We had one before. We called it the Saskatchewan Water Resources Commission. If this is going to be 'Jaws II,' there's no reason why we shouldn't mention that again. Then there's the farm natural gas program, which has been mentioned a fair number of times in this House before, If one is trying to flesh out an otherwise sparse document, why not mention the natural gas program again? Simplified resource taxes, by all means. Why not mention that? It's directly flowed from the constitutional amendments passed last April. The legislation was in draft form when members took office, and there's no reason in the world why we shouldn't mention that again.

Then we had a reference to the Nipawin dam, which project was under way a year ago. It would have been rather startling had it been cancelled. There's no reason why we shouldn't mention that again.

Then we had the references to potash. They were particularly interesting. There was, Mr. Speaker, a reference to a warehouse network and unit trains. I said, 'Why not?' They're all stated at some length, complete with maps, in the 1981 annual report of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — . . . having been completed during that time. There is perhaps no reason why we shouldn't mention those again.

A mention was made of the fact that there was:

. . . no money in hand, and there had been no investments of the money which had flowed into the treasury of Saskatchewan in the past number of years.

I point out to the hon. members what they already know: that a good bit of that money was invested in potash expansion — we think wisely invested. I'm glad that the throne speech agrees with that because they're continuing with the project at Lanigan. I can only agree with them that it was good project when it was started and is a good project to be continued. There's no reason why it shouldn't be mentioned in a 'Jaws II' speech. I think of regulatory review. I would think we're probably in year three of regulatory review, and there's perhaps no reason why again, if you're fleshing out a 'Jaws II' speech, you shouldn't mention that.

The Public Libraries Act is the result of work done over a period of several years with the library advisory council and others. The legislation again is in draft form and perhaps even farther than that — no reason why that shouldn't be mentioned, if you are again trying to flesh out a speech that doesn't have any other new content.

The same goes for the local government legislation which has been discussed publicly and widely for several years now, as it should be — no reason why it shouldn't be discussed publicly and widely, no reason at all. The only reason you're searching for is: why mention it in this Speech from the Throne, since it has something which has been going on for several years and I gather will not result in legislation at this session?

We have The Northern Municipalities Act — splendid. It has been in; I think this will be draft three, and there's no reason why it shouldn't be mentioned. The transportation of dangerous goods act — that bill was introduced at the last session but one, not the last session but the one before that, of this legislature. And, there is perhaps no reason why, if you're trying to flesh out a speech, you shouldn't mention that.

I thought, well, 'Jaws II,' that certainly is fitting. But that might suggest, Mr. Speaker, that there was some bite to the speech, and the speech certainly didn't have any bite, so I thought, no, we'll not have 'Jaws II' as a proper title. Then I wondered: what can we call it? And I thought perhaps the title is best described in that movie title that is going the rounds now, called 'Missing', but that certainly is the key element of this speech — not what it contains but what it does not contain, what is missing from it.

It contains a little optimism, and I note the member for Morse was commending optimism to us out of the words of the chairman of the Royal Bank of Canada. I must say that if my financial fortunes had increased and improved to the extent of those of the Royal Bank of Canada, whose profits during the last year have increased 40 per cent, I too would be confident. But I doubt whether many of the farmers of Saskatchewan have enjoyed a 40 per cent increase in their profits in the last year. I doubt whether many of the businessmen in this province have enjoyed a 40 per cent increase in their profits in the last year, and accordingly, I doubt whether they will be quite as confident as the chairman of the Royal Bank of Canada.

I want now to turn to the context of this particular throne speech. Less than a year ago the Conservatives based their entire election campaign around the claim that Saskatchewan was not living up to its potential. They said again and again, 'There is so much more we can be.' Mr. Speaker, they say it again today. They said again today, and they have claimed that the only way that this province can attain its full potential was to turn to private enterprise. Private investment, their argument went, would fuel the economic recovery. Rapid economic growth would mean a new era of prosperity and jobs for all.

When you think of it that was really their essential promise during the last election — prosperity for Saskatchewan and for Saskatchewan people, and with prosperity, jobs for all, jobs for everyone here, and, Mr. Speaker, not only jobs for everyone here, but jobs for people who might come in, who had left our province and who now would be able to come back and enjoy good-paying jobs here. You will remember the slogan: bring home the children. The clear promise was that this new era of private enterprise prosperity would create thousands of new jobs, so many new jobs that our young people who had left at other times would be able to return and pick up these remarkably new opportunities.

Well, also last April the claim was that the new era of private enterprise prosperity would not only generate many jobs but would generate lots of money for new government programs. New money for education; there would be lots of money for education. New money for health; in fact, we were promised that health spending in Saskatchewan would move to number one. We would become number one in health spending in Saskatchewan. That's what they said. There would be more money for nursing homes. And there would be money, Mr. Speaker, for four-lane highways. How many times did we hear that? All this and more. And because everyone would be prosperous, there would be jobs, good-paying jobs, and all these people be paying high taxes, all of these achievements could be realized within a balance budget. That was the undertaking. No Conservative government would mortgage the future of Saskatchewan young people with massive and successive budget deficits. Not this government. Now that is what they promised.

That was last April, Mr. Speaker, less than one year ago. How things have changed! How things have changed. Today the Conservatives don't talk about rapid economic growth. Their new buzz word is restraint. Today the Conservatives don't talk about increasing government spending on programs and services. They talk about cuts under the guise of economy and efficiency, but what they are talking about is spending less money, not more.

Today the Conservatives don't say very much about balanced budgets. They are trying far too hard to defend their massive deficits.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people have a right to ask this Conservative government to make good on their promises last April.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — The people have the right to ask: where is this prosperity; where are these jobs? However the sad fact is, Mr. Speaker, that the promise of last April was for a new era of prosperity, and the reality this March is the reality of recession.

From time to time, Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House have reminded the government that recession was not what was promised last April and we asked the government what it planned to do and what action plans it had to get our economy moving again. When we ask these questions, the Premier and his ministers have two stock answers, and we've heard them many times in different ways. The first is that economic recession was here long before the Conservatives took office. It hasn't all happened. That's their first answer. And the second is that in any case, the opposition is being negative — nay saying, doom saying. Members opposite ring the changes on these particular words, but the meaning is always the same.

Let's take a moment, Mr. Speaker, to examine these two stories. First, that the recession is nothing new. Well in a way, Mr. Speaker, that's right. A year ago there was recession — in Ontario, in Quebec, in Atlantic Canada — and during last April's election campaign in Saskatchewan, the rest of Canada, or much of the rest of Canada, was reeling from the effects of nearly 18 months of economic recession. But here in Saskatchewan we had managed to keep that recession at bay. We had done that by taking positive action as a government to maintain economic activity and to keep people working.

For example, last year's budget, the last one introduced by our government, contained nearly \$2 billion of capital projects which would have provided work for 18,000 people working in the summer of 1982 and through the winter of '82-83. Because our government, over the years, had displayed confidence in our economy, the private sector had followed and they had displayed confidence and they had invested here.

It was for those reasons that year after year the investment by private mining companies in Saskatchewan was higher than in other provinces. Indeed, at times exploration in Saskatchewan was as much as in all provinces put together in hardrock mining exploration. Those are pretty impressive figures, Mr. Speaker, and the figures are there for everyone to see. In 1981 Saskatchewan economic growth was at a greater rate than any other province in Canada.

That's what was turned over to the Conservatives when they took office early in 1982. Not an economy on the slide, but an economy which, at least in 1981, had grown faster than any other provincial economy in the country.

Today the Conservatives are saying something very, very different. Oh, they say, we've had a lot of nasty surprises in the last 10 months. There are farm economy troubles here and elsewhere. Oil prices are falling. That, of course, is true. They have had some difficult times, but they've also had some remarkably favourable chances in circumstances.

Interest rates have fallen rapidly and this has given them an opportunity to enjoy the economic fruits of that fallen interest rate. When the government took office in May the Bank of Canada bank rate stood at 15.4 per cent. Today it's 9.5 per cent, a drop of just about 6 per cent, or put in percentage terms, 40 per cent of the previous interest rate. Now that is an impressive drop, in anybody's language. A year ago people were confidently predicting that if interest rates dropped then prosperity would necessarily follow. That's a huge, positive factor that the new government has had working for them. It should have helped our economy to very largely avoid the downturn that has hit the rest of Canada.

That's what should have been possible, Mr. Speaker. We should have been able to

avoid that, but we didn't. Instead, the government has allowed our economy to stumble and slide into the most serious economic recession that we have seen in this province since the Great Depression of the 1930s. So let's make no mistake about that, Mr. Speaker. Let's make no mistake about that, Mr. Speaker. The recession is in very large part a Tory recession. Much of it could have been avoided and was not. A large part of this recession is of the government's making, the government that sits to your right, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, what about the second point that this government often uses in its defence, that the opposition is just too negative, that we don't see the potential, that we don't share their enthusiasm? The Premier is fond of saying that Canada is in a recession but Saskatchewan decided not to participate. When we confront the government with some of the hard realities, they say that we're hoping for recession.

True, true, the Premier admits Ipsco has closed its mill for the first time since its founding 25 years ago — 1,200 people out of work. He says that's not because the government has failed to get on with the water pipeline, failed to create jobs at Ipsco by getting on with that project, not at all. It's because that management at Ipsco just hasn't got the message of optimism. They're negative. Otherwise they wouldn't close their plant.

True, CSP Foods in Saskatoon has closed down, but that's not because the Conservative government has failed to protect our oilseed crushing industry against unfair competition from Alberta, not because of that at all. It's because the CSP management is negative.

True, CP Air did suspend its flights in Saskatchewan, but that's not because the government has allowed the economy to sag so there are no people or not enough people taking the flights. It's because the CP management hasn't got the message of optimism. They're negative.

True, Saskatchewan's non-agricultural labour force has dropped 9,000 in the last year. Employers are firing more and hiring less, but that's not because the government has failed to take action. It's because all those employers out there haven't got the message of optimism, and they're being negative.

Mr. Speaker, my point is this. There's nothing wrong with optimism; optimism is a wonderful thing. But we should never let it cloud our sense of reality, and the hard reality today is that we are in the midst of a serious recession. Therefore we should admit it, and we should have a blueprint for action which would allow us to see our way clear to climbing out of this recession. We should act in a positive way, not with slogans, not with enthusiasm only, but with enthusiasm coupled with an action plan which is designed to get our economy rolling again. But this government refuses to agree that government have a positive role to play in our economy. They refuse to admit that their number one obligation is to provide jobs and to keep people working.

Conservatives in Saskatchewan, it seems, like their counterparts, the Reaganites in the United States, see governments as part of the problem, and not part of the solution. They even seem to deny that governments have a positive role to play in making our society more fulfilling for all the people and not just the privileged few. Mr. Speaker, it is their attitude — their attitude that government has no positive role to play, their attitude that everything must be left to the private sector and the government is not called upon to act — that is negative, and their attitude is the one which is holding back the people

of Saskatchewan from enjoying their full potential.

Well, Mr. Speaker, shortly after the document was introduced in the House yesterday, when I was asked by the press what my immediate reaction to it was, I said that it was barren, a barren document. And as I reread it, I can find nothing which causes me to change that view. I repeat. Saskatchewan is in a recession. The throne speech should have laid out an action plan for economic recovery, and instead what we got was a promise of regulations for horse-racing.

Mr. Speaker, the document reveals the government's priorities. I repeat again: there is no clear statement in the throne speech that economic recovery is the number one obligation of the government. There is no legislative plan to deal with the worst unemployment that we have seen for many, many decades in this province. And the real tragedy, Mr. Speaker, is this: it doesn't have to be this way. It doesn't have to be this way. There are many positive things that the government can and should do to get the economy moving again. But in its negative, neo-conservative, leave it to the private enterprise approach, they refuse to take the necessary steps to get us moving again. They say no to using all of the tools of government which are at their disposal.

Now let me be clear, Mr. Speaker. I am not asserting that there is not a major role for private enterprise: there is. But similarly, there's a major role for government, and a major role for co-operative enterprise, and when we are in a difficult time like we are now, we need all the tools available to us. We need action by the private sector, action by the co-operative sector, and most assuredly we need action by the government sector.

The throne speech tells us clearly, Mr. Speaker, that the government has no plan of action and do not propose to devise one. They outline in their speech for whom they have concern and for whom they have less concern. I'll have something to say about that on Monday, but I touch again. I touch again on what is not in this speech, what is missing.

We now know, after seeing this second throne speech from this new government, who are the forgotten people. There has been much talk, Mr. Speaker, about compassion much talk by the Conservative MLAs and spokesmen for the Conservative Party about compassion. We see now to whom this compassion is directed and for whom there is no obvious compassion.

Well, who are some of these forgotten people? Well, there are 50,000 people looking for jobs, and they are not mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. There are Saskatchewan's working poor — 60,000 of them — depending for wage increases on an increase in the minimum wage; they are not mentioned in this speech. There are Saskatchewan's native people, probably the most needy group in all our society, and I ask you to read this very, very voluminous document and see what it says about native people. What is the vision of this government in grappling with the problems surrounding relations between native and non-native people in this province?

You will look there in vain, Mr. Speaker. It is not there. There is nothing there with respect to the economic problems of native people. There was, when this government took office, a native economic development foundation which was being organized. It is not put on hold — I suspect it is doomed — and nothing is put in its place. No proposal for getting some economic development among our native people.

Saskatchewan's senior citizens — nothing for them. No mention of improved benefits for, let us say, superannuated public servants. It will be some years since we have a throne speech which did not say that the government is going to act to increase the pensions of superannuated public servants. But we have one now the longest speech for many years, but no mention of the problems of those people.

What about farmers — anything there? Anything there to deal with the cost-price squeeze which is evidently, and I think obviously to all, becoming more serious for farmers? Any suggestion of a cost reduction program of any kind? Any suggestion of a real solid defence of the Crow rate? Not there, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to other senior citizens' problems — anything there about as senior citizens' allowance. I don't see it. Not even a mention of the free telephones which were promised so often by members opposite for senior citizens.

I looked in the speech, Mr. Speaker, for anything about the problems of the handicapped. When the Conservatives were in opposition, they frequently talked about the need for accessibility legislation. And indeed, a year ago in this House there were before this House accessibility legislation bills presented both by New Democrats and Conservatives. Yet this throne speech makes no mention of those problems and the problems of the handicapped. More people who are among the forgotten when the Conservatives are dispensing the compassion, which they have so often talked about.

Mr. Speaker, for these people and for many other people, Tory times are tough times.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, 12 pages. 12 foolscap pages of content and so little for so many in this province. Mr. Speaker, I want to say a great deal more about this document and particularly about what is not in this document.

Accordingly, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

MOTIONS

Crown Corporations

HON. MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Speaker. I see we're approaching adjournment time. I have, I believe, five routine motions to present that are necessary at the beginning of the session.

I would ask, by leave of the Assembly:

That the annual reports and financial statements of the various crown corporations and related agencies be referred as tabled to the standing committee on crown corporations.

I so move, seconded by my seatmate, Mr. Hardy, the member for Kelsey-Tisdale.

Motion agreed to.

Radio Time

HON. MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Speaker. I move, by leave of the Assembly:

That the matter of the division of radio time arranged for the current session be referred to the standing committee on communication, the said committee report its recommendations thereon will all convenient speed.

I so move, seconded by my seatmate, Mr. Hardy, the member for Kelsey-Tisdale.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, I want to first start out by saying that members in the opposition have no qualms about referring this to the standing committee on communications. In fact, I think that's an appropriate body for it to be referred to and to be dealt with. I suppose the problem that we have with this motion is the fact that it will be dealt with under this proposal on Monday at 12 noon, which is very late in the period surrounding the session when we'll already be into the session two sitting days. We would propose that we would meet on adjournment today. All the members are here. It would mean that we could get on with the procedure of having that meeting now. We would move that that committee would meet here on the floor. I think as has been traditional, or at least to sort out the radio time has been traditional on adjournment of debate on Friday.

HON. MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Speaker, I don't believe we have any problem with that. My understanding is that you, Mr. Speaker, are chairman of that, and certainly we on the government side would be in agreement with that suggestion.

MR. SPEAKER: — If that's a convenient time for the members, there's no problem with that. Let's call that the time and meet here in the Chamber on adjournment today.

Motion agreed to.

Public Accounts

HON. MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Speaker, by leave of the Assembly I move:

That the public accounts of the province of Saskatchewan for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1982, tabled as sessional paper 79, '82-83, be referred to the standing committee on public accounts.

Mr. Speaker. I so move, seconded by my colleague, Hon. Mr. McLaren, the member for Yorkton.

Motion agreed to.

By-laws of Professional Associations

HON. MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Speaker, by leave of the Assembly I move:

That the by-laws of the professional associations and amendments thereto, tabled as sessional paper 35 of the 1981-82 session and sessional paper 10

of the 1982-83 session, be referred to the special committee on regulations and that the professional association by-laws of the current session be referred as tabled to the special committee on regulations.

I so move, seconded by my colleague, Hon. Mr. Currie, the member for Regina Wascana.

Motion agreed to.

Report of Provincial Auditor

HON. MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Speaker, by leave of the Assembly, I move, seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs, Mr. Schoenhals, the member for Saskatoon Sutherland:

That the report of the provincial auditor for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1982 be referred as tabled to the standing committee on public accounts.

Motion agreed to.

The Assembly adjourned at 12:23 p.m.