

December 9, 1986

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Koskie: – Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of my colleague who is unable to be here, the member from Regina Centre, I want to, on behalf of him and through you to the legislature, introduce a group from Regina Plains Community College here in Regina, an adult upgrading group, 5 to 10. They're accompanied by their teacher, Bob Brown. I want to welcome the group here on behalf of the hon. Member from Regina Centre, and we'll meet with you later this afternoon.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Deficiency Payment for Farmers

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: – Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier, and it deals with the very disappointing announcement from Ottawa to be made in a few minutes, and of which the Premier will be aware – and if he isn't I'm sure he'll tell us he's not aware – that the billion dollar deficiency payment promised during the recent Saskatchewan election campaign in fact turns out to be something less than \$420 million for Saskatchewan farmers. My question will be, in a moment, whether the Premier can tell us what went wrong.

He went to the premiers' conference in Edmonton - he went to the premiers' conference in Edmonton – asking for \$5 billion. In September, he is quoted as saying that there would be \$1 billion for Saskatchewan farmers. Today the announcement is that they're going to get less than half of that. What went wrong, Mr. Premier? Why are we getting less than one half of what you said we were going to get in September?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: – Well, Mr. Speaker, I do have a ministerial statement to make if, in fact, the Prime Minister makes the announcement today, and I will not make it unless I am sure that he has made that statement, but we will have to see what's in it. But if the Prime Minister makes the announcement that it is a billion dollars cash, and over 84 per cent of it is coming to the prairie provinces, that's exactly what we asked for, and that's exactly what we said we would do in the election campaign.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — So, Mr. Speaker, I won't comment any more until I find out what the Prime Minister has announced, and when he makes that announcement I'll be quite prepared to make a ministerial statement outlining the details. But 84 per cent of a billion dollar cash payment coming to western Canadian farmers here on the prairies, I believe you will find, is the largest, single support for western Canadian agriculture in the history of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: – Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: – Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Premier, who is inordinately well-informed on what the announcement is going to be from Ottawa, and I ask you then, sir, in view of the fact that a deficiency payment in the \$4 million range was said to be needed by United Grain Growers, and in view of the fact that the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool said that at least \$2 million was needed for Saskatchewan farmers, how can you say that a payment of less than \$240 million for Saskatchewan farmers is going to do the job that needs to be done in respect of the crop year we're now in?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, as the hon. Member knows, the four western premiers met in Swan River, Manitoba, and we agreed – and that includes obviously, the Hon. Howard Pawley from Manitoba, myself, and the two western premiers, British Columbia and Alberta – that a \$1 billion deficiency payment would be necessary – at least 41 billion. And the four premiers agreed. They talked to the wheat pools and they talked to people right across western Canada, and they agreed that that would be something that we could demand and ask, request, from the federal government that would be reasonable for them to address as the package that we could provide western Canadian farmers, to take on the increase in the export subsidies in the United States.

Obviously, Mr. Speaker, it was an issue during the last campaign in the election in Saskatchewan throughout rural Saskatchewan. People were saying, I would like to know that the Premier of the province, in discussions with the Prime Minister of Canada, can deliver a billion dollars cash to farmers. And I expect what you're going to hear today, if you're right and my expectations are accurate, that the Prime Minister will announce a billion dollars cash, new money, allocated to farmers, and 84 per cent of that coming to the prairie provinces, and approximately 42 per cent of that coming right to the province of Saskatchewan, which is the lion's share exactly what we have been asking for, Mr. Speaker.

And I will only say to my hon. Colleague across the way, if you got 100 million, you can always ask for 200 million; if you got a billion, you can always ask for two billion. I will just point to you and to the public in Saskatchewan and to the farmers who listened carefully in this last election – and they spoke from one end of the province to the other – that anybody that would bargain sincerely on their behalf to get a billion dollars delivered and have it delivered is going to be looked at with some degree of respect, whether they're in Ottawa or whether they're in Regina or whether they're in kingdom-come, for that matter. Because you've never, ever, in the history of Canada, seen money like that go into the hands of farmers when they needed it in this country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — I ask a question, Mr. Premier, for clarification. Are you telling me that the four western premiers said that they were asking for or would be satisfied with \$1 billion dollars for all Canadian farmers, including the farmers of Newfoundland and the corn farmers of Ontario? Were they not asking for \$1 billion for western farmers, and did they get it?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Chairman, my hon. Colleague keeps talking about \$1 million. It's a billion dollars – a billion dollars, not a million, okay, and it's not 3 million or 4 million or a 100 million, it is a billion dollars – a billion dollars for farmers. And 84 per cent of that billion dollars goes to prairie farmers. And the Prime Minister, obviously, if he makes this announcement, and I suspect that he may in the near future as you look at the clock, and so do I, also knows that he has corn producers who have been subject to some of the hurt as a result of the export subsidies in other places like southern Ontario where they grow it, or for that matter in southern Quebec.

But 84 per cent of that billion dollars . . . And as I said during the campaign, the lion's share of the billion dollars – 42 to 42 per cent of that will come into the province of Saskatchewan. I didn't hear anybody complaining. They said, well that's appropriate, that's accurate. There'll be over \$400 million right here, and if the announcement is as I believe it will be, Mr. Speaker, then you're going to hear exactly that.

Well the opposition, fair enough, can say, well you could have done better. You should get more. You should add it up. I mean, I've heard them complain about \$200, let alone a billion.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would just say that 84 per cent of a billion dollars, cash, coming to farmers in western Canada, on top of \$879 million, almost another billion dollars in grain stabilization payments in one year, Mr. Speaker, is an inordinate amount of cash and assistance to western Canadian farmers, and it's never ever happened before in the history of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Premier, supplementary. In view of the fact that Saskatchewan farmers are not perhaps overly concerned about what's being paid to farmers in the Fraser Valley, one of the four western provinces; and in view of the fact that you promised them \$1 billion for Saskatchewan, or at least is quoted as saying you are promising \$1 billion for Saskatchewan, and are now delivering \$420 million; and in view of the fact that they lost 80 cents a bushel and are going to get back less than 40 cents a bushel, are you saying you are satisfied with that payment from the Mulroney government?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I can only say this, that during the campaign – and I'll say it very clearly – it was an issue that I was asking for \$1 billion to go to farmers in Canada, and I said very clearly in Saskatoon that I expected over 400 million of that to come into the province of Saskatchewan, because based on any reasonable production or based on acreage we should have the lion's share of it.

Well if the announcement comes down today, as I suspect it will, and the member of the opposition knows it's going to be exactly as I said it would be, it's going to be \$1 billion cash. We are going to get over \$400 million of it, close to 42 per cent – 84 per cent of the entire figure goes to the western provinces. And, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what I said it would be, and it's right on the number.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — Yes, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, I remind you of your own words in Edmonton last August when you told reporters, and I'll quote you:

It is vital the federal government provide the cash to show our competitors we are serious in defending our agricultural industry and markets. Only in this way can we exert some pressure for a long-term solution and provide some leverage in trade negotiations.

Mr. Premier, I ask you: how does a billion dollars, a out one-fifth of what Canadian farmers are losing today, how does this exert pressure on our competitors? Doesn't it send them exactly the opposite message?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, I would just, Mr. Speaker, in all respect, ask . . . I will have to make some assumptions about the question. If you're saying that we shouldn't be helping farmers because it would give the wrong message to Americans or Europeans, I can't agree with that.

I mean if . . . I believe that we have to show the U.S. people that if they're going to put their treasury up, we're going to be prepared to do the same. And I believe that we're going to have to, because I will not stand by and see Saskatchewan farmers or, if I can help it, Canadian farmers go out of business because of unfair subsidies in European markets or the United States markets.

Now maybe that's the NDP policy. And if it is, I would like to know that you just let them go. But I'm not. And I've said that earlier, I mean I can understand perhaps . . . And the reason I question your statement, because in the past when interest rates were 22 per cent, the NDP didn't do a thing for anybody . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

And they can holler "order" all they like, Mr. Speaker, but they didn't do one thing . . . not one thin dime for farmers — not one penny. And when we deliver a billion dollars to Canadian farmers for help, they sit across the way and say, I don't think we should help farmers because of the wrong impressions to Americans or Europeans.

Well I'll say to anybody, on that side of the House or anybody any place in this legislature, that doesn't remember when interest rates were 22 per cent and nobody would help them in this province — somebody did. We did, Mr. Speaker, and we will do it as long as we're here.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — Mr. Speaker, if that is not letting farmers go, it's the next best thing, especially in light of the fact that Canadian farmers receive approximately \$34 per ton subsidy; their counterparts in the United States and Europe receive about \$130 per ton. What kind of pressure . . . is this the pressure you exert on our competitors.

I ask again: why is Canada continuing to force Canadian farmers to fight these international grain price wars — fight these wars on their own, while the member opposite says we're helping you.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I can only briefly reiterate, Mr. Speaker, what I've said. We have defended farmers against drought and against flood, against 20 per cent interest rates, and against unfair subsidies to the tune of hundreds of millions and, indeed, billions of dollars they've never had before. Now if you don't think that's good, fair enough. If you don't think that we should be involved in that, I mean that's perhaps reflected in the results in the last election across rural Saskatchewan.

When interest rates were 20 per cent, you didn't help. When people were hurting in drought years ago, you didn't give the many money. You didn't stand up for them and defend them. When we had an opportunity to help farmers, we were there. And today, I believe you are going to hear that one more billion dollars — cash, no strings attached, new money — going to Canadian farmers, and 84 per cent of all of it coming out here in the West.

Mr. Speaker, I will just say that, well the record of that defence for agriculture as our basic industry is extremely important and it will speak for itself. And if the NDP doesn't believe in it or doesn't argue for

it or doesn't want us to do that, fair enough. But let the public, and particularly the farmers, and the towns and the villages, and indeed through the cities of this province, that receive \$400-and-some million . . . where do you think the money will be spent? Where do you think it's going to go? It's going to go to every pocket and every small business and every jurisdiction in this province. It will almost match total farm income.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I will just say that I will defend that. I believe it's extremely important. And I believe that \$400 million plus will be significant to Saskatchewan people from border to border, north and south and east and west. And yes, I will defend it as long as I am here, because it's the number one industry in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Drop in Net Income of Saskatchewan Farmers

Mr. Koskie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I want to address a question to the Premier, the Minister of Agriculture. Recently it is announced, Mr. Premier, that Agriculture Canada economists reported that farmers will see their take-home pay, net farm income, fall by almost 18 per cent. But they go on to say that, for example, Saskatchewan realized net farm income is expected to fall 27 per cent in 1987. And that is a drop of 27 per cent in '87, expected drop, on top of a previous 9 per cent drop. Over a third in two years of net income of farm income has dropped.

And I ask you, Mr. Premier, do you really believe, and are you saying to the farmers of Saskatchewan that this \$420 million that you got out of Mulroney is going to address the magnitude of the problem confronting the farmers, over two years, with over a 33 and one-third per cent drop in income. Are you purporting to say that that deficiency payment fulfils the crisis that the farmers are in?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I have the numbers before me. But I will say to the member for Quill Lakes, and I've said it before in this legislature, the problem that we have in agriculture in Saskatchewan today, in large part, is a result of the fact that when interest rates were over 22 per cent, you wouldn't help them, and in 1979 and 1980 and 1981 and 1982 they went deeper and deeper and deeper and deeper into the hole and you wouldn't help them with one dime

As a result of that . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please! The Premier is attempting to answer the question.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, we can go back and review his question — you say, is this enough? All right, I'm telling you what's enough. I'm telling you . . . I'm telling you exactly, but you don't like to listen. I want to whole public to listen to you holler and talk again and the children can listen because you never will listen in this legislature.

When we talk about agriculture . . . Mr. Speaker, there he goes again. It's the same stuff over and over. Why don't you just stand up and apologize to your leader like you did the last time you were in the House. I mean it's time you learned about the rules of the legislature and have some respect for your colleagues.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, the NDP has very, very little credibility when it comes to defending farmers in this province. Our income is down, Mr. Speaker — forecast to be down 27 per cent in 1987. Alberta's is going to be down 64 per cent. Manitoba's going to be down 52 per cent.

All right, Mr. Speaker, I'll point out one fact; it goes back to the deficiency payment. With the income that we will receive — over 40 some per cent of this deficiency payment coming into the province of Saskatchewan, over \$400 million added to the \$465 we're going to make in 1987 — our income in the province of Saskatchewan will go up 35 per cent in 1987 — 35 per cent.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — No other province will touch it, no other province in the country. Now you talk about bargaining for Saskatchewan farmers. First you'd better do your homework; second you better go back and look at your record; and third, you had better be prepared, you'd better be prepared to defend yourself on the farms and the towns and villages across in this province, because you haven't been able to do it in the past. Unless you get your act together, you won't be able to do it in the future.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — I rather thought, Mr. Speaker that you were the one that decided the conduct in the House, not the Premier. I don't need your lectures, and I'll tell you, you're out of order doing it.

An Hon. Member: — We need answers, not lectures.

Mr. Koskie: — That's right. What we need in this House, Mr. Premier, in some answers — straightforward answers — not lectures from you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: — I want to ask you, Mr. Premier, that in view of the fact that if you look at the bankruptcies in western Canada, that the largest proportion, or half of them almost, are in Saskatchewan. If you look at the Wheat Pool, the Wheat Pool survey that they did, they indicated that 9 per cent of the farmers were in a non-viable position because their debt was so heavy. They said another 10 per cent were in serious economic or financial straits. That's about 20 per cent.

I ask you, Mr. Premier: do you think that the miserable \$420 million that you extracted to win an election — to win an election — in dealing with the major agricultural crisis, I ask you, do you feel that in fact the \$420 million will help those farmers that the Wheat Pool have identified, the 20 per cent that are in every serious financial straits?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I'll only say this about that comment. The members opposite can call a billion dollar payment miserable. And you're on record — you're on record that it's miserable . . .

An Hon. Member: — And you misrepresented the facts.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, again he will not even have the courtesy to listen to the response. He just speaks from his seat. Mr. Speaker, it's on the record now in this legislature that the members

opposite, that did so well in rural Saskatchewan, call a billion dollar payment miserable.

Well I will say, Mr. Speaker, with the money that the provincial government and the money that the federal government have put up to defend agriculture in this province, and justifiable so . . . I don't believe that farmers in this province are going to call it miserable. I believe they are going to say finally somebody is defending us that should have been defending us for years.

And, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite can call it miserable all over if he likes, he can call it miserable all over Regina, he can call it miserable all over this riding for that matter Mr. Speaker, \$1 billion cash that has never been paid before, no strings attached, is one of the most important financial statements ever made in this country in agriculture, and it's the result of a great deal of co-operation and hard work, not just calling the federal government, or anybody else for that matter, miserable.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: — On this subject matter tot he Premier, Minister of Agriculture as well, I refer the Premier to the press statement which is dated August 11, 1986, as a result of the premiers' conference in Edmonton. And on page 1 of this statement, the Premier identifies these are his words, quote:

Right now, based on Canadian Wheat Board estimates, it would cost Canada \$4.7 billion a year to meet current international grain subsidies.

And then later on, on page 2 the Premier says the following quote:

It is vital the federal government provide the cash to show our competitors that we are serious in defending our agriculture industry in markets. Only in this way can we exert some pressure for a long-term solution and provide some leverage in trade negotiations.

Now I agree with both of those statements, and my question to the Premier is a simple one which I think can be answered simply: does the Premier believe that given today's announcement of which only \$400 million approximately will end up in Saskatchewan farmers' pockets, does he believe that those objectives which he started out with in Edmonton have been met?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, 4.7 . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, you need one in agriculture.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. Member's question, the \$4.7 billion that I went through is the total subsidy that the United States was giving to their farmers, and I compared it to on a comparable basis with equivalent dollars to the Canadian farmer. And I said that when we add up the stabilization money that comes through, the Crow money and other things that we have, we're still a long way short of that \$4.7 billion.

And after that we agreed that if we could design a deficiency payment mechanism and put a billion dollars to handle just the export subsidy part of it — just the exports part of it — that that would be a very positive move to show the United States, as well as show our own farmers that we will not let them go, that we will defend them. I would like to have a full \$4.7 billion every year and I could allocate the money. And the hon. Member knows there are deficits in every jurisdiction in Canada, including the federal government, and you just don't go walking into any government and ask for 4 billion or let alone

a billion dollars.

Mr. Speaker, we have a billion dollars. If the Prime Minister makes the announcement today, that will be a commitment to Canadian farmers. Never done before. And the opposition says, well, they'd rather have 4.7.

Look, I would like to have more money as well. I believe at some point in time the public would even appreciate if you would say: that's a very good payment, thank you. But not one word of recognition. The Premier of Manitoba always gets into that problem; he will never say thank you for anything.

Well, I think the prairie farmers are going to say it may not be perfect, but it certainly isn't miserable.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Tabling of White Paper on Proposed Code of Ethics

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I will be tabling a report on the White Paper on a proposed code of ethical conducts for Saskatchewan public employees, and I am going to be tabling it now and I just want to make a couple of comments on it.

Mr. Speaker, on tabling the report on the White Paper on a proposed code of ethical conduct for Saskatchewan public office holders, I point out the obvious fact that the report is a result of much research and industry

It would be fitting at this time, particularly since there are many new members in this Assembly, to set out some background to this matter.

The white paper was tab led in the legislature for two purposes. Firstly, it outlined suggested guide-lines which might assist public office holders to avoid becoming involved, or appearing to become involved, in any conflict-of-interest situation. Secondly, it was hoped that making public a white paper on an important subject would stimulate public interest.

By proceeding in this way the government hoped to make clear its intent to obtain public input and discussion before finalizing any policies. In order to obtain views and representation of interested individuals and organizations, I requested the On. E.M.Culliton, former chief justice of Saskatchewan, to arrange public hearings. At the conclusion of such hearings, Mr. Culliton was asked to suggest appropriate changes tot he white paper in light of the vies expressed and his own research.

It will be evident from studying this report that a thorough and complete review was made of all relevant legislation in Canada and in Great Britain. It is equally apparent from the interviews conducted, the briefs filed by interested parties and individuals, and the representations made at public hearings, that the inquiry resulted in the desired public input. Indeed, the public input was greater than might have been anticipated and, I believe, reflected the views of many segments of the province's population.

I remind members that the white paper was not introduced to meet any crisis situation. Our history reveals how exemplary has been the record of people in public life in the province of Saskatchewan. But society has become more complex. The NDP government brought in conflict-of-interest legislation in

1979; that was not a crisis situation. But the increasing complexity of life may lead to a certain scepticism in the public's mind as to the conduct of cabinet ministers and legislative secretaries, and I thought it fitting and proper to have a review made to ask for a report on the white paper.

I do not intend to make comments now on any of the particulars of the report. When the white paper was tabled in April of this year, it was our intention to carefully consider the report's recommendations with respect to the white paper before finalizing our approach to dealing with conflict of interest. This is especially important now, as Mr. Culliton has suggested new approaches to many of these basic issues.

I am therefore tabling Mr. Culliton's report at this time, to permit full study of and response to its recommendations before I make proposal for change.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I apologize to the House for not being able to make a reply in the terms that perhaps I would like to, because I have not had an opportunity to see the statement.

And when we are making comments about courtesies extended one to the other, I make that point. It has been customary to have a copy of ministerial statements provided to the opposition.

I now refer to the statement and note that the Premier indicates that there was no crisis. That indicates his view of what a crisis is. I don't think he denies that one of his members, no longer here in this House, was receiving contracts without tender with respect to travel business of the government, directed to a company of which that member was the owner.

Another member of his, indeed a Legislative Secretary, was, I think by common knowledge, involved in a development on a lake where the department in respect of which he was the Legislative Secretary was carrying on environmental enhancement projects which would obviously increase the value of the resort project in which the member was involved.

Those may not represent crises in the mind of the Premier; I think they represent situations which required action, and I believe that's why the Premier set up his study and the public hearings with respect to conflict of interest guide-lines for public officials.

We welcome them. I have not seen the report. We will study the report. But we believe that, in the light of events which have happened in the last four years, there should be some changes. And we very much look forward to the proposals which the government will put forward with respect to changes which will stop, or at least reduce, the circumstances under which members of this House are seen to be profiting from their position as members of this House — a situation which erodes public confidence in this House and in our system of government.

I hope the government will act. We will be looking forward to receiving their proposals, I hope, shortly.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Martineau and the amendment thereto moved by the Hon. Mr. Blakeney.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, I'm honoured today to have the opportunity to participate in this debate on the throne speech debate in this House. And I want to begin by first congratulating you, Mr. Speaker, for your election to the office of Speaker, a very important office in our government.

And I must say, from my observations of the first few days of this session, I believe you're off to a very good start and want to commend you for your role in keeping the good attitude that is being displayed within this House. I wish you every success in the future.

I'd like to congratulate my colleagues who moved and seconded the Speech from the Throne, the new member from the constituency of Saskatoon Eastview and also from Pelly.

On that note I would also like to congratulate all members who have been elected to this House, and especially welcome new members, as I believe that the honour to represent people in the province of Saskatchewan is given to only a few. And certainly it is an opportunity for you as members, no matter which side of the House you would sit on, to develop and put forth some of the ideas that you believe will make this province of Saskatchewan a better place.

After all, Mr. Speaker, I think that **is** why the people of Saskatchewan have elected us, and I think that's what they expect of us. And I urge all members to remember that and over the next four years, four and a half years, to try their utmost to bring forth those types of objectives.

I'd like to thank the people of the constituency of Indian Head-Wolseley for the confidence they have placed in me by returning me to the legislature for my third term. The fact, Mr. Speaker, that I was re-elected with an even greater plurality than my previous terms underlines not only the trust my constituents have placed in me but also their confidence in the leadership of Premier Grant Devine and the Progressive Conservative government.

On October 20th the constituents of Indian Head-Wolseley joined with the people of Saskatchewan and said yes to four more years of a government that wants to build and diversify and provide opportunities for people. They said yes to a government that has the courage to protect people when they need protection. They said, Mr. Speaker, we can't afford to lose a premier and a government that understands the importance of agriculture and stands behind Saskatchewan's farmers.

And I believe, Mr. Speaker, in the exchange today in question period, again that was shown very plainly to everyone in this Chamber and to the people of Saskatchewan that may have been watching the proceedings, the stance of our Premier directly, squarely behind the farmers of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to be apart of the government of Premier Grant Devine, and I'm proud of he confidence the Premier has shown in me by returning me to his cabinet with increased responsibilities. As the former minister of Health, Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the health care accomplishments of the Progressive Conservative government over the last term. And I know that my colleague, the hon. Member from meadow Lake, will continue this government's commitment to keeping Saskatchewan number one in health care.

My new cabinet duties, Mr. Speaker, charged me with great responsibilities, but at the same time provide exciting new opportunities to serve the people of Saskatchewan. As set out in the throne speech, this government's goals of economic development and diversification, of economy and efficiency and protection, will be my guide-lines, Mr. Speaker, in the management of the portfolios I've been charged with.

In the areas of tourism and small business, for which I'm not responsible, this government will introduce measure to increase the economic contribution of tourism and small business to the Saskatchewan economy. This is an area which holds unlimited potential for job creation and for economic diversification. I say unlimited, Mr. Speaker, because its only limits are the imagination and the initiative of the people of Saskatchewan.

Through the Department of Tourism and Small Business and the Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation this government will encourage and assist you and existing businesses to provide jobs and opportunities for Saskatchewan people. As Minister of Supply and Services, Mr. Speaker, one of my priorities will be to expand the Buy Saskatchewan policy which the government adopted in 1983. In addition, Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of overseeing the establishment of the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation. I will further elaborate on these initiatives a little later in my remarks.

Mr. Speaker, in my capacity as minister responsible for Northern Affairs, I see many commitments in the Speech from the Throne as being applicable to the northern people of this province. Some of these include the stimulation of the tourism and hospitality industry to expand tourist opportunities offered by our magnificent and world-famous northland. Also, an enhancement of the Indian Economic Development program – particularly significant when over two-thirds of the northern population are of Indian ancestry. And, Mr. Speaker, a tax and fiscal regime for the uranium industry with the view of protecting jobs, as well as research initiatives to strengthen Saskatchewan's position in this significant world industry. In these initiatives, Mr. Speaker, we see the keynote of development, diversification and protection.

I would add to these, Mr. Speaker, this government's commitment to fully integrating northern Saskatchewan into the economic life of our province. This will be achieved by encouraging and assisting Northerners to take up the challenge of the economic opportunities in mining, in forestry and in tourism, and to explore new frontiers in renewable resources, transportation, service industries and manufacturing. The services, programs and commitments of this government, Mr. Speaker, are for all the people in Saskatchewan.

I'd like to return for a moment now, Mr. Speaker, to the subject of tourism and small business – a growth area which was long neglected by the previous government. I wish to comment the Devine government, Mr. Speaker, on its initiatives in support of Saskatchewan's small business community and its tourism industry during its first term in office.

This government's first step was to listen to business people and they told us what they needed. They said they needed an advocate in government, and we responded with the establishment of the Department of Tourism and Small Business.

They said they needed access to loans at stable interest rates, and the Devine government responded, Mr. Speaker, with the business interest reduction program.

They said they wanted regulatory reforms and less red tape, and we responded, Mr. Speaker, with the

elimination of over 1,400 regulations, many of which inhibited business. And to ensure this process continued, the business regulatory reform council has been formed.

Business people said they needed better information related to government programs and services. They said they needed professional advice in skill development. This government responded, Mr. Speaker, with a management assistance program and the establishment of business resource centres across this province.

Entrepreneurs said they needed a source of equality; we responded with the introduction of the venture capital tax credit. Manufacturers said they wanted support for products manufactured in the province, and we responded, Mr. Speaker, with the establishment of a Saskatchewan made program. And small towns, Mr. Speaker, said they needed support for community economic development and this government came through once again, Mr. Speaker, with a program that is currently helping 53 towns co-ordinate their economic development activities and attract new businesses.

Mr. Speaker, these initiatives are not like many of the idle programs that were in place when we came to office. These programs are much needed and they are heavily used. Let me give you some examples, Mr. Speaker. Prior to the establishment of this government's business resource centres, tourism regional services received an average of about 5,000 business inquiries annually. This year, staff of my department will have handled more than five times that many.

Another example, Mr. Speaker. The owners and managers of 1300 businesses in communities across the province have benefited from this government's management assistance program. Private sector business consultants have helped these business people with everything from financial and personal management to marketing and advertising.

Perhaps the best example of the government's commitment to small business are the more than 8,000 businesses receiving interest rate protection under the business interest reduction program. The owners of these businesses are resting easier these days, Mr. Speaker. They are resting easier because they no longer have to lie with the nightmare of increasing interest rates.

(1445)

Mr. Speaker, the Progressive conservative government recognizes that small business and tourism are the primary engines for the job creation in our economy – it only makes sense to keep those engines primed. To do this, Mr. Speaker, the Premier has announced that 50 million will be committed over the next five years to encourage growth in these areas.

Mr. Speaker, as I have said, tourism is very important to our province. Tourism contributes almost \$1 billion per year to this province's economy and holds an even greater potential.

In the area of job creation, we see over 7,000 new jobs in the hospitality industry over the next five years. To ensure that there will be skilled and motivated work-force to fill this demand, Mr. Speaker, this government has pledged to create a tourism and hospitality institute. This centre of excellence will provide training for people to fill new jobs in an expanding tourist industry. With leadership from government, Mr. Speaker, a new interest in tourism is building in all areas of the province.

Reinforced by our great success at Expo, the industry has developed a pride and a confidence that it can compete in the world market-place. Increased tourism potential, promotional activities, expanded travel

services, and ongoing development initiatives are helping to put Saskatchewan on the continent's tourist map.

Particularly encouraging, Mr. Speaker, is this year's dramatic increase in tourism inquiries. During the first nine months of the year, 115,000 inquiries were handled by our central office. That represents, Mr. Speaker, an increase of 96 per cent over 1985. There have also been significant increases in registrations at visitor reception centres. This summer, registrations were up by over 70 per cent over the previous season.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the \$30 million Canada-Saskatchewan tourist agreement is providing an important vehicle for future development. Under the agreement to date, 10.5 million has been committed toward 53 projects. Major projects currently on the drawing board include a \$35 million conference centre here in the city of Regina and resort projects near Prince Albert and La Ronge worth over \$15 million.

In the future, Mr. Speaker, this government will be placing an even greater priority on supporting tourism at the community level. And we will continue to encourage the private sector to assume more responsibility for the promotion and development of tourism. We look forward to working closely with TISASK, the new tourism industry association of Saskatchewan. I am pleased with the direction this government is heading in, Mr. Speaker, because ongoing support for our tourism industry and our small business will help strengthen and diversify our economy overall.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation, for which I am now responsible, is also providing valuable support to the business community. Sedco's activities in 1986 have created more than 500 jobs for Saskatchewan people. Eighty-five per cent of Sedco's financing in 1986 was to small business. Farm equipment manufacturing in Saskatchewan is being encouraged by Sedco's new Agrilease program. Mr. Speaker, Sedco's involvement in Innovation Place in Saskatoon is just an example of how this government's growing commitment to the high technology industry is demonstrated. Five construction projects at research park have created more than 400 construction jobs, while activities within the new facilities will employ more than 600 people in related research and technical fields.

Since its inception in 1985, this government's youth entrepreneur program has helped 65 young men and women create new business and new employment opportunities for others. This successful program will be improved and expanded during our second term.

Mr. Speaker, in my own constituency of Indian Head-Wolseley there lies an excellent example of the diversified manufacturing that this province can support, given the right political and economic climate. The Canapharm pharmaceutical plant in Wolseley, which obtained financing through Sedco, is now employing near 50 people.

As a result of a contract with Canapharm, the Melfort-Tisdale Union Hospital expects to save a quarter of a million dollars over the next five years – manufacturing in Saskatchewan and savings for Saskatchewan people because of local manufacturing. This is just one example, Mr. Speaker, of how local manufacturing can result in jobs and cost savings for our province.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne noted the efforts of this government over the past three years to encourage government departments, Crown corporations and agencies to purchase goods and services from Saskatchewan sources. During that time we succeeded in increasing awareness in the public sector

of the many Saskatchewan companies able to supply products and services to government.

Conversely, Mr. Speaker, increased awareness of government needs by the manufacturing sector has resulted in new products being made in our province. The benefits of stimulating Saskatchewan business and spending money in the province are obvious, Mr. Speaker. Consequently, this government intends to expand its Buy Saskatchewan policy even further, government departments and crown corporations will be working harder to increase their level of purchases made within the province.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, we will be asking the consulting industry, the construction industry, and other Saskatchewan businesses, to help in the effort to use Saskatchewan products and Saskatchewan labour.

Mr. Speaker, consistent with this government's announced intent to increase government efficiency and effectiveness, as Minister of Supply and Services I'll be undertaking the full establishment of the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation. The role of the SPMC, Mr. Speaker, will be to satisfy government accommodation requirements and to provide financing to third parties for capital construction projects.

The benefits of the corporation, Mr. Speaker, will be an increased government accountability in the provision and use of government-funded accommodation; also increased management efficiency and a reduction in the cost of providing public facilities. A board of directors has been appointed, Mr. Speaker, with myself as the chairman, and we will begin immediately staffing the corporation in order to get it up and running.

Mr. Speaker, when the people of Saskatchewan returned the Progressive Conservative government to office on October 20, they said two things to us: one was that they recognized the accomplishments of this government during four years of difficult times, and my own constituents of Indian Head-Wolseley looked around and they took stock.

And I want to give you some examples from my own constituency – which I'm sure member after member could get up and indicate similar ones – that show, even though we were in difficult times, we still built. And we still continue to build for this fine province.

In the constituency of Indian Head-Wolseley we have an extra 50 new jobs created by Agtech Processors in Indian Head. It's being built right now, a world-class seed processing plant that has contracts reaching around the world for specialized seeds. I've mentioned the Canapharm plant, a pharmaceutical production, earlier in my remarks.

Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Indian Head-Wolseley over the last four years was blessed with some double-laning of the Trans-Canada Highway, something that they had asked for for 13 years, Mr. Speaker, that had been almost to the point of letting contracts by the previous government, but never was there one mile built; the upgrading of Highway 48 through the constituency which will be extended down to the area of Kenosee Lake; new enriched housing units and new nursing home beds; extended dialling for the communities of Sedley and Vibank, and a much needed help for many farmers in the area. Yes, the people of Indian head-Wolseley, as did the people of many other rural constituencies in this province, they looked around and they said, those are the things we really needed and this is the government that delivered. We need to stick with them.

The second message the people of Saskatchewan gave to their government, Mr. Speaker, was that they approved of the direction in which their province was moving. They shared the vision of Premier Grant

Devine of a thriving self-sufficient province, taking its place in the world economy. The people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, are resilient, they're imaginative, and they're industrious. The Progressive Conservative government recognizes the potential of Saskatchewan people and pledges to work with them to build an even stronger and more secure future for our children. By combining our strengths in human and natural resources in new and different ways we can build a solid economic and social structure on the foundation that is already laid.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion I just want to recount a couple of things that have happened to me since the election to indicate what I believe is out there in Saskatchewan and which we can build upon and which we can deliver to help many people find their niche in the Saskatchewan economy in years to come.

I was having supper one night with three young lads that I happened to teach a few years ago in Wolseley. All these boys have been to university. I didn't know at that time that I'd be the Minister of Small Business and Tourism, but our discussion hinged around their great hope of going into business. These three young fellows were all under 26 years of age. Each of them had a splendid idea and I think we, as a government, need to develop mechanisms and opportunities to allow these young people to develop those dreams and hopes and plans of theirs so that they can develop businesses in this province — perhaps go on and employ other people. I was very impressed to see that.

The other thing, Mr. Speaker, that I see, as I travel the province and talk to a lot of people, is that there is an awful lot of the people in the female portion of our country, in our province, who want to get into business, want to start small businesses, who want to, in some cases, have cottage industries and work within their homes. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased that the Premier has given me the opportunity to put those engines of Small Business and tourism to work for the betterment of this province.

I pledge to you and all the members of this House that this priority of the Devine government will be one that gets its full attention from me over the years that I have the responsibility to be the Minister in those portfolios.

Mr. Speaker, once again I want to congratulate you, and I would say in closing that I will be supporting the motion. I will be supporting the initiatives of the Devine government, and I'm proud to be a part of it as we build four more great years for the people of Saskatchewan. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — By leave, I would like to make a ministerial statement with respect to the announcement that just came out of Ottawa, with respect to the agriculture deficiency payment.

Leave granted.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Agriculture Deficiency Payment

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I wish to make a statement regarding the details of the deficiency payment announced by the Right Honourable Prime Minister Mulroney in Ottawa earlier this afternoon.

The Prime Minister announced a \$1 billion cash payment to Canadian farmers.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — this is the largest cash assistance program ever provided by government to the agriculture industry, and it will provide \$415 million to Saskatchewan farmers. Saskatchewan's share of the total payment is significantly larger than any share of any other province. We will receive approximately 42 per cent. This is in keeping with the leadership position that Saskatchewan agriculture industry has within Canada. It also approximates this province's portion of Canada's total farm acreage. Our farmers will be pleased to know that the full pay-out from this deficiency payment will be made by the end of the spring seeding in 1987.

This deficiency payment will have two important results. First it will assist Canadian grain producers at a time when prices are extremely low and financial problems are severe. Secondly, it will send a message to other grain-producing and consuming nations that Canada will not allow its agricultural sector to be devastated by excessive subsidization by other countries.

(1500)

We are pleased the federal government moved as quickly as it did in announcing the deficiency payment before year's end to ensure farmers can make their financial plans over this coming winter.

This payment, Mr. Speaker, combined with the \$859 million payment under the Western Grain Stabilization Act for the past crop year, will dramatically help farmers battle current cash flow problems caused by low world grain prices.

The western grain stabilization payment alone, including the recently announced \$279 million final payment, brought a pay-out of about \$16,000 per farmer for those with maximum contributions under the plan.

In the case of the deficiency payment, Mr. Speaker, there will be a cap of \$25,000 placed on payments for a producer. This deficiency payment is the result of more than a year's consultation and intense lobbying by the government. I believe it goes without saying, the Saskatchewan government is very proud of its role in the initiation of a deficiency payment for Canadian farmers.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: — We pushed to have agriculture placed on the national agenda more than one year ago to reflect the importance of agriculture to all Canadians. Equally important is our philosophical belief in the retention of the family farm as part of Canada's heritage.

In October of 1985 our government held the Saskatchewan agriculture conference in Saskatoon to receive suggestions from farmers, farm groups, and farm businesses on what they considered to be the priorities for developing a national agricultural strategy.

That's the input I took to Halifax a month later, Mr. Speaker, in November of 1985, for the first ministers' conference. It was the very first time agriculture has been placed on the national agenda, and Saskatchewan was successful in securing an agreement in principle for the development of a national agricultural strategy. Following a year of development, a national strategy was officially adopted — just one month ago.

Establishment of a national strategy recognizes the national and international scope of the problems facing the agricultural sector. Farmers have been severely hurt by low grain prices caused by the short-sighted subsidy policies of the United States and, indeed, the European Economic Community. But the Saskatchewan government recognizes that the development of a long-term agricultural strategy is not sufficient in itself.

At the western premiers' conference in Swan River, Manitoba, earlier this year, Saskatchewan led the call for a deficiency payment of \$1 billion to help ease the economic burden facing producers. Once again the federal government has responded to our call for help, announcing today details of a payment which Saskatchewan 65,000 farmers have been anxious to hear.

The formula, Mr. Speaker, which was established for the deficiency payment policy, was the result of extensive consultation – a consultative process – which received input from all sectors of agriculture. It is representative of the feelings expressed by farm groups and individuals alike and is one which the government supports.

Payment to farmers is based on a combination of seeded acreage multiplied by the regional yield, with a built-in hurt factor. That hurt factor represents the repercussions which farmers have felt from the international subsidy process. In other words, how much did the price fall in the commodities that they grew?

The payment distribution mechanism has been developed after extensive consultation with the provinces, farmers, and farm groups. This consultation process brought substantial agreement on the payment mechanism from the more than two dozen farm organizations consulted. These organizations include the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, the Saskatchewan Pulse Crop Development Board, the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, the National Farmers Union, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Saskatchewan Canola Growers Association, Western Canada Flax Growers Association, Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I wish to remind members in this Assembly of the co-operative effort which Canadian agriculture, and Saskatchewan in particular, has received from the federal government.

When assistance was needed to fight drought, high input costs, assistance was forthcoming. We have a continuing commitment to agriculture in Saskatchewan, a commitment which will ultimately see the restoration of agriculture to a sound economic base and for the good of all Canada.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to reply briefly to the Premier's remarks, and I haven't had long, as you see, to go over his remarks.

For many months now, Saskatchewan farmers have been waiting anxiously to hear this response from the federal government, a response of a deficiency payment, a response that they thought, they hoped, would bring the price up to \$6 a bushel for the wheat they produced in the last crop year.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — It's a national obligation produced by the national obligation of the United States and Europe to support their farmers.

Now this federal government was quick to respond to failed banks. They were quick to respond to I oil companies. The farmers of this province have waited and waited and been hanging on that cliff — hanging in misery, I might add, because I know the situation out there. They have become frustrated. They have become angry, because they wanted details.

And even today, with this disappointment of \$415 million, and I say disappointment because it's not the need . . . Whenever somebody is doing something to construct a building or whatever it is, they do a need study. Where is the need study that was done? The need said \$5 million by Mr. Premier in Edmonton — billion, sorry — \$2 billion to \$5 billion by the wheat pools and other organizations. That's the need study.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — There is nothing in the statement to say what each individual farmer will get or when they will receive it. These people are sitting out there, three weeks before Christmas, loans overdue, hanging there, waiting. We still don't know why you urged the government, Mr. Devine . . . to urge his counterpart in Ottawa to get the cheque out quickly so the people know specifically know what they're going to get because they need it.

They need a much larger deficiency payment. They need a much larger deficiency payment right now, and they need a much larger deficiency payment in years to come if the present trend continues of the grain price war that's going on.

Something that's suggested out of this report is the fact that part of the payment will be made by the end of spring seeding in 1987. That implies May. The government's fiscal year Mr. Speaker, is March 31st — the federal government's. But one question that comes to my mind: is this payment of \$415 million a response to the need in the 1985-86 crop year, which the farmers expected, or is this payment of \$415 million going to be spread over two crop years?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — I hope this does not set the tone for future deficiency payments. Because regardless of what this government has been saying as far as adequacy and meeting the needs, that they know the agricultural problems, we have here a short-term solution to a long-term problem. I add, it's not even a solution, it's a quarter solution.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Upshall: — We need this long-term commitment. I would urge, Mr. Premier, two things. I repeat: we need to know how much each farmer's getting, when they're going to get it, and we need to ensure that it's going to be an ongoing program.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATE

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Martineau and the amendment thereto moved by the Hon. Mr. Blakeney.

Ms. Smart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last Thursday I congratulated you for being selected as Speaker of the House. Today I want to extend those congratulations again to you and to all the recently elected members of this Legislative Assembly. In particular, hearty congratulations to the many members who have been elected for their first time; to the mover and the seconder of the throne speech; and to all my colleagues on the New Democrats' team, with special recognition to the members for Saskatoon Nutana and Regina Lakeview.

As one of the three women elected on this side of the House, I am looking forward to working with you on issues of concern to us as women, as well as participating fully in the general debates. Being an MLA is a challenge I take up with great interest and enthusiasm, and hope that the day will come soon when many more women are able to join us beside our male colleagues in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, over the last month the new members have spent time learning about the rules and procedures that govern the conduct of this legislature. We have been encouraged to use these rules for fair and democratic debate. Therefore we were shocked by the way this 21st session began. To hear in the throne speech that the government believes in referring revision of the rules of this Legislative Assembly to a special committee of the Assembly, and then to experience, during our very first day as new members, an attempt by the government to revise a rule without a special committee and without even giving prior notice, was alarming. Even more so was the way the members opposite attempted to dismiss our objections as unnecessary fuss over what they called a simple matter.

Apparently, they don't understand what it means to act in a principled way. They are willing to be devious and manipulative right from the start, promising one thing in the throne speech and doing precisely the opposite the very next day. This behaviour suggests to me that the throne speech must be approached, unfortunately, with heavy doses of cynicism and mistrust. Therefore that is what I now feel forced to do.

I know the constituents in Saskatoon Centre will be disappointed to learn that this session has started on such a sour note. They spoke to me often about the need for this House to conduct its business in a fair and co-operative manner. They find it hard to understand why there has been so much divisiveness. Now, Mr. Speaker, I know why, and I will have to tell them. Like most Saskatchewan people, the constituents of Saskatoon Centre are kind and fair-minded. They will not like what has happened any more than they will like what appears to be the thrust of the throne speech.

Mr. Speaker, the member of the Progressive Conservative Party who ran in Saskatoon Centre was reported in the *Star-Phoenix* of Tuesday, October 21st to have said on election night that he was defeated because, and I quote the newspaper:

The demographic make-up of the riding, with a high number of low- and middle-income people and senior citizens, make it ripe for the NDP.

Well, that time he was right. There are many low- and middle-income people in Saskatoon Centre, but Saskatoon Centre is not unique. Most Saskatchewan people fall into one or the other of those two categories. Many farmers, even with their valuable assets of land, buildings, and machinery, have little cash flow. They, too are low- and middle-income people. And every day more people in the province become senior citizens. If income and age make people right for the NDP, then there can be absolutely no doubt that in the next election we New Democrats will translate our popular vote into seats in this legislature and form the government of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — It's true that the percentage of senior citizens is higher in Saskatoon Centre than other constituencies. Approximately one-third of the voters are over the age of 60. Many of them have recently moved in from the rural areas, leaving a son or daughter on the land. Another one-third of the voters are between the ages of 20 and 29. Many of them have recently left their farm homes and moved into the city, looking for work, education, job training.

The links, the network between the core area of the city and the rural areas is strong. I don't accept the urban-rural split that the government has attempted to promote. And I don't see much in the throne speech to cheer anyone except those wealthy individuals who already have ample resources, don't want to pay their fair share of taxes, and are on the look-out for tax dodges from their Tory friends.

Mr. Speaker, during the election campaign the constituents of Saskatoon Centre expressed their concern that the policies of the PC government are harsh and cruel. While the cost of living continues to climb, more and more people are slipping into the low-income category.

=so there is nothing like the experience of going door to door during an election campaign to give a sensitive person an awareness of other people's situations. A great number of people have been thrown out of work, are threatened with losing their jobs, or can't find work to start with, and they are hurting. These people, I suggest, are among the many who will not be cheered by the throne speech, and nor am I.

(1515)

One of the solutions to our employment problems that the throne speech promotes is computer and information technology and the high-tech industry in general. Fifty million dollars of taxpayers' money has already been promised to business firms to spur new technology in Saskatchewan industry, supposedly to create thousands of jobs, and to quote the *Star-Phoenix* of Friday, November 28th:

... assist Saskatchewan in becoming another Ottawa Valley, Canada's acknowledged high-tech centre.

Mr. Speaker, since 1982 this government has been on a high-tech roll. I heard the Premier at the fanciful Futurescan conference, some years ago, tooting the promise that Saskatoon was about to become a world-class Canadian prairie version of Silicon Valley, U.S.A. But even as he spoke the competition in Silicon Valley was collapsing under the force of monopoly capital as giant firms like IBM corner the market. Of course, technology is changing and changing rapidly, and of course Saskatchewan industry should have every opportunity to benefit from it, if it will mean stable job opportunities for our people. But does it?

In Saskatoon we have seen the take-over of SED Systems, the effective closure of Microtel, Develcon is losing money, and the recent lay-offs at Northern Telecom have thrown another 124 workers out of their jobs.

Mr. Speaker, we have to question seriously the employment value of high-tech industries in Saskatchewan. We have to ask: does this throne speech promise more job opportunities or just more lay-offs; more stable jobs or more family stress?

Mr. Speaker, I say it is irresponsible of the government to promote high-tech without planning for all the consequences. I'm thinking of one young man I met during the campaign who confided in me that he was deeply worried about possibly losing his job with Northern Telecom. He was obviously educated, obviously trained, obviously skilled, yet he worked in a section of Northern Telecom where at that time rumours were flying that the place was going to fold.

I ask you to put yourself in his shoes and in the shoes of the many others like him. Imagine what it's like to hear the constant boosterism of high-tech and yet live with the reality of technological change. From one day to the next you don't know what's going to happen to you and you can't control it. Will you have a middle income or no income at all? Will it be this week or next month or the spring. If you live in an apartment, as this man does, and as at least 65 per cent of the people in Saskatoon Centre do, and have a landlord demanding 400 or 500 or \$600 at the end of the month to keep a roof over your head, and when you're facing the possibility of social assistance payments of only \$345 total amount per month as a single employable person, you are scared.

What good does a 1,500 home improvement grant for a hot tub do you? What good does a \$3,000 down payment on a home do you? Or a nine and three-quarter per cent mortgage? What plans can you make for a life? Can you risk having a family at all?

Another person I met recently was an older woman, someone around my age, living in a stark, one-room basement apartment. She was just moving in. By the standards of the others living there she was well dressed. She had been a receptionist and a secretary, and she had just lost her job after 30 years of steady employment. She faces at least fifteen years on a \$345 a month income before her old age pension kicks in. And why had her employer terminated her? Because he considered her too old to be retrained on the new word processor. She had been thrown out on very short notice in favour of high-tech.

And, Mr. Speaker, there is even another side to these technological changes – their impact on the work place on the worker's themselves. This government seems to ignore the threat to Saskatchewan jobs posed by technological change. And where do we find the government commitment to protect the safety of workers forced to handle new and hazardous chemicals where do we find the government commitment to protect the safety and job security of those forced to work with new microchip technology The impact and hazards of video display terminals, for example, warrants attention and yet the throne speech ignores these disruptive effects of technological change on the lives of working men and women.

I hope that young man and the older woman I mentioned earlier, and the thousands of others like them, find another job. But right now they are walking the streets, using up their savings looking for work, being told they are over-qualified or not qualified or qualified in the wrong way, or not experienced or too experienced, or one of two or three hundred applicants for the same job, and being told by this government to retrain for the millennium, the coming information society.

Mr. Speaker, computer technology, high technology is a two-edged sword. It has its uses, but it benefits us only when we plan its introduction wisely. High-tech, like farming, is risky. It restructures work places to make people redundant. It introduced new hazards which must be understood by all those affected, and it must be controlled. It promises efficiency and sometimes ends up costing a fortune. It's a capital intensive industry, easily monopolized by giant corporations, especially if we pursue the free trade tack of the current government.

Mr. Speaker, in the throne speech the government says it will continue to protect people from events beyond their control. What events, Mr. Speaker? Acts of god, like drought and grasshoppers? Yes, perhaps. Acts of employers and landlords of multinational corporations and agri-businesses? No, not very likely.

The PC government sees nothing wrong with those interests having power over the lives of the rest of us. The PC government sees nothing wrong with destroying the supports that people have built up over the years to protect themselves from the worst effects of illness, disability, unemployment, unfair business practices, work place hazards, or the escalating cost of living.

This throne speech also says the government intends to take further steps in the area of so-called regulatory reform to relieve small business and the public from unnecessary regulatory pressures. Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that the former government's rent controls were not an unnecessary regulatory pressure on the tenants in Saskatoon Centre. Neither were the Labour Standards nor The Trade Union Act for working people. When the federal government deregulated the transportation industry, farmers were burdened with even more costs. The provincial government must have seen those transportation regulations as unnecessary because it said nothing to support the farmers.

So I must ask: is the government preparing to further abdicate its responsibility to provide authoritative regulation in the public interest? And which regulations are to go – those which help ensure fair competition and protect the consumer's interest; those which help protect working people; those which help protect us from hazardous and toxic environmental dangers? Is it regulations such as these, Mr. Speaker, that this government proposes to eliminate?

On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the need for genuine regulatory reform. But when this government had an opportunity to help the Saskatoon farmers' market co-operative with a reform that would have allowed the small food concessions to continue operating as an attraction tot he farmers' market in Saskatoon Centre, it refused to do so. The pressure from large commercial enterprises won out over the pressure from a group of market gardeners. They were proposing regulations similar to ones already in effect in Alberta that would guarantee hygienic practices without forcing them to conform to the same regulations that govern commercial eating establishments. But the government did not support them. So while the PC government likes to talk about supporting small business, among which I count the market gardeners, it seems to care little for their prosperity and success.

Many of my constituents are small business proprietors and many, many more work in small business in Saskatoon. They know firsthand how this PC government's economic policy failures have increased the stress on Saskatchewan small business. One objective indicator of this is the federal government's bankruptcy data. In 1981, the last year of the New Democratic administration in Saskatchewan, there were 167 business bankruptcies in the province. After the PC government took office in 1982, there were 280 business bankruptcies – over 100 more than in 1981. And there were more than 300 per year in 1983, 1984, and 1985. Thus far, in 1986, the number of Saskatchewan business bankruptcies is well ahead of the 1985 level.

Saskatchewan small businesses are an important part of our economy, providing services to Saskatchewan people and jobs for Saskatchewan workers. But under this government's policies they are under duress, and there are not encouraging or hopeful statements for them or their employees in this throne speech.

The throne speech was especially disappointing in its failure to address or even to acknowledge the many pressing problems facing women across the province. The women of my constituency and the women of Saskatchewan listened in vain to any reference to day care, pay equity, family violence, job benefits and job security for working women, affirmative action or income security for those left with no income before age 65, the majority of which are women.

This government seems not to realize that without special measures to provide full and equal opportunities, many Saskatchewan women will remain unable to make their fullest possible contribution to our society. So often in the past this government's policies have been particularly hard and unfair to women. The freeze on the minimum wage, the cut-backs in social assistance, the failure to enforce labour standards legislation – these policies should have been repudiated in the throne speech, but they were not. We should have seen some measures to increase people's income to a level above destitution; we did not. Instead of helping women and all those who need support, the government proposes to create a monstrous department of human resources.

Mr. Speaker, calling people human resources suggests to me that this government sees us as commodities, like oil, potash, hogs, or grain. We are to be developed, by government decree, for trade in a market-place which has no room for us. This government does not care that 42 per cent of the people receiving social assistance are children under the age of 16. This government has no concern for the complexities of the relationship between the dominant culture and our minorities. This government has no respect for request from our native people that they be given the dignity to make their own decisions on the issues that affect them. In spite of its rhetoric, this government does not honour the roles all of us play as members of our families and nurturers of our children.

Mr. Speaker, last week's Speech from the Throne seemed to suggest that the government intends to reduce the range levels and quality of public services in Saskatchewan. Nowhere in the government's program, as outlined in the speech, was there a clear recognition of the value of public services to Saskatchewan people. Those with a conservative or backward-looking approach may ignore or neglect the importance of public services, especially to those of us who are lower- and middle-income earners.

Important public services such as consumer protection, human rights protection, occupational health and safety, labour standards, and environmental regulation help protect the citizen from some of the most harmful forces in our economy. Other services, such as libraries, schools, highways, the arts and more, help us to do together what we cannot do as individuals – help us together build a civilized society where we may hope to lead productive and fruitful lives.

(1530)

And no public service touches the lives of so many, so directly, as the basic provincial health care system. And yet this government has allowed that system to become eroded. Failure to commit itself to a badly needed new city hospital for Saskatoon, a resource not only for the city but for a major portion of the province, failure to provide adequate funding for our hospitals, forcing them to resort to lotteries, bingoes, and charity to furnish and equip themselves; failure to provide adequate staffing. Nursing staff

and other health care workers can document case after case of deteriorating standards of patient care. Failure to provide enough funding for home care; failure to provide adequate nursing homes, and failure to recognize that health care is far more than expensive and complex machines. It takes trained staff – staff provided with the time and opportunity to learn the new technology on the job.

When this throne speech fails to acknowledge the importance of public services to Saskatchewan people, when it fails to commit the government to protect and expand a high quality health care system, when it appears to warn that Saskatchewan public services may be reduced and cut back, it is a warning that this government may have some badly misplaced priorities.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, this PC government has, over the past few years, attempted to drive a wedge between urban people and rural people. Although it has failed to do that, nevertheless there is some fear that they may try to do so again. But if they believe that urban residents are insensitive to rural issues, they are wrong. Similarly, rural people are very much aware of the issues such as job opportunities and job security that are sometimes called urban. There is a very real community of interest in Saskatchewan, a linkage between rural and urban that is far stronger than PC strategists may realize.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Smart: — Saskatoon Centre constituents, like many rural residents, have been disappointed by this PC government's approach to major issues facing Saskatchewan. They are concerned about the federal and provincial PCs' infatuation with free trade, despite the obvious dangers for Saskatchewan farmers and Saskatchewan jobs.

They are disappointed by unfair PC tax policies – unfair to both rural and urban people. They are alarmed by the financial stress driving farm families from the land, leading to greater concentration of ownership, large farms, fewer farms, and agri-business.

Expensive projects like the irrigation of an additional 250,000 acres announced in the throne speech concerned both urban and rural people. They want to know the rationale for such a development. What crops are to be grown? Where are the markets for the expanded yields if this project is for grain production? The international market is already glutted with grain. Who will have access to this irrigation? What impact will it have on our water supply? How can small farmers afford this added expense? Both rural and urban people are asking the government if it really has plans to help the family farms or if it is just furthering the interests of agri-business.

The PC government opposite may be tempted to try to divide rural people from urban residents, but such attempts will be negative, divisive, harmful to Saskatchewan and, I believe, doomed to failure merely as a partisan ploy.

Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that my colleagues will mention other issues that I have not had time to speak on in detail, but which concern me and the constituents I represent as much as the topics I have been able to touch on today. I urge the government to pay close attention to all these concerns because of the very difficult times we are living in right now.

We must not let men, women and children continue to line up at food banks. We must not send people home to wait a year for surgery – waiting for others to buy enough lottery tickets to equip the province's hospitals. We must not continue to blindly retraining as a panacea for all unemployment, nor short-term

job creation projects as the answer to the need for meaningful work. We must not treat people like cogs in an economic machine, letting them be crushed when circumstances go against them, or forcing them to fit into a prescribed mould. We must not let more farmers go under.

We must recognize the value of parenting and of children, and put our human resources at the heart of this business of government. We are here to serve the people of Saskatchewan, not abuse them. Let us proceed to make this province a happy and beneficial place for us all.

Mr. Speaker, I am obviously supporting the amendment to the throne speech and voting on behalf of Saskatoon Centre against the motion to accept the throne speech.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Mr. Deputy speaker, I am humbled today to rise in this Assembly and to accept this honour and privilege – indeed this opportunity – to speak to the House in response to the throne speech delivered by His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor.

I would be remiss, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I did not take this first opportunity to extend to you, and to Mr. Speaker, my warmest congratulations on your election to the office as Speaker of this Assembly, and I am sure Mr. Deputy Speaker, that you will convey this message to Mr. Speaker.

Yours is a difficult but vital function in the smooth operation of our democratic process. I trust that with the co-operation and commitment of all members of this House you will find your new position a challenging but at the same time, a richly rewarding one.

My initial address to this Assembly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, must begin with the acknowledgement that it is a special privilege to be representing the good people of the Rosthern constituency, and I want to thank them for their strong support which permits me to represent them in this legislature. I want to assure them that I will listen to their concerns, listen to their ideas and make sure they are heard where it counts.

The people of Rosthern are consistent, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They are, you might say, as constant as the northern star in that they have consistently – consistently rejected socialism.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Since 1905 our constituency has sent representatives from the Progressive Conservative Party, Liberals, and yes, even a Social Credit. But not once, Mr. Speaker, not once has it sent a socialist member to sit in this Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — And indeed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am proud of my heritage. As well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must acknowledge the many years of exemplary service given to the Rosthern constituency since 1975 by my predecessor, Ralph Katzman.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Rosthern is among the more unique constituencies in our province, Mr. Deputy

Speaker. It is a mosaic of satellite communities to Saskatchewan's largest city and training centres of a diversely agricultural economy, where people have easy access to the amenities of the large city, but are still able to enjoy the pleasures of living in a rural setting. It is, perhaps, the best of both worlds.

The aspirations and the needs of my constituents are much the same as those throughout the entire province. They understand the vital importance of our agricultural industry. Saskatchewan's heritage is very much an agricultural affair.

The land was settled for farming, and that is the very backbone of our economy; somehow, prior to 1982 the province and the country had forgotten that. And that is what the Devine government is working so hard to correct. In the constituency of Rosthern, most of our jobs and businesses are directly or indirectly related to agriculture. A healthy, agricultural economy means a healthy Saskatchewan. Unfortunately, the converse is also true. And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, quality agriculture is job one.

At the same time, my constituents fully understand and believe in the need to create new opportunities through the diversification of our economy. As strong supporters and active players in the small business community, they are fully aware of the importance small business can band will play to build future growth through economic diversification.

Mr. Speaker, they also realize the importance and absolute necessity for the continued strengthening of our education system. They know that our future depends on our children, and want every opportunity to be made available in order to challenge and prepare the young minds of today.

Mr. Speaker, they also realize the importance and absolute necessity for the continued strengthening of our education system. They know that our future depends on our children, and want every opportunity to be made available in order to challenge an prepare the young minds of today.

As well, Mr. Speaker, all they ask of their government is that it provide the direction and access to opportunities and protection from the economic problems that they cannot solve. It's a fair exchange, and one that I am proud to say has been the base of your Progressive Conservative government since 1982.

Mr. Speaker – Mr. Deputy Speaker, excuse me – I want to take just a few minutes and focus on some of the action taken by your government over the last four and a half years or so to improve the quality of life in our constituency and provide new opportunities for everyone.

We can look at construction and renovations in the school system: the W.W. Brown School in Langham; the Laird School; Martensville High School, and Valley Manor elementary, also in Martensville; the Prairie View elementary in Dalmeny; the Hepburn School; the Rosthern Junior college, the Osler, Clavet, Dalmeny and Hague schools.

In health care, Mr. Speaker, a replacement special care home was completed in Dalmeny with nine new beds and 27 replacement beds, and there are many more on the drawing board.

Under the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation a total of 56 rural housing, non-profit housing, and seniors' public housing units have been built in the communities of Dalmeny, Hague, Martensville, Warman, and Langham.

Through the Saskatchewan Water Corporation, the upgrading of the water system was provided at a cost

of \$3.8 million for the communities of Osler, Dalmeny, Martensville, and Warman.

Mr. Speaker, these examples are only a few of the accomplishments of your Progressive Conservative government within our constituency and our people are fully appreciative. And they realize that through co-operation and consultation, that more benefits can be realized for their communities.

(1545)

They understand too that the priorities established by our PC government, its direction and commitment to the people, comes as a result of the leadership of our Premier, the member for Estevan. They know that he understands the problems that they face in agriculture, because of his background, his education, his experience and, indeed, his upbringing.

They know, too, Mr. Speaker, that he is not afraid to fight for their rights, no matter what the forum. We have heard this afternoon a very critical and a very timely announcement being made with regards to the deficiency payment. This is the largest support program ever brought forth in Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — We are talking, Mr. Deputy Speaker, according to forecasts for 1987, instead of a farmer taking a reduction of 18 per cent in income, the Saskatchewan farmer now is going to be taking a look at an increase of 35 per cent. That is the difference that \$415 million can make to the economy of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, a few moments ago when the announcement was made, we heard in this House members opposite saying that \$415 million for the Saskatchewan farmer was a miserable amount – miserable amount, \$415 million. They did not applaud. They were not happy with that. They ridiculed that announcement and I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the people ultimately will decide whether that was a miserable amount.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — I was shocked, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to hear and listen to the member from Humboldt get up in his seat after the announcement was made and indicate to the people of Saskatchewan: don't send that \$415 million to us now, we should first of all have a needs study – set up a committee, set up a commission, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to look into it whether we really need it or not. That is the response that we are listening to here. Does this mean then that the money is going to be handed out . . . I suppose the next step will be a means test to see whether or not they really do need it.

The question I would have, Mr. Deputy Speaker, comes to my mind is, \$415 million is not enough. Certainly we would like to have seen \$4.7 billion as the opposition suggests, but, Mr. Deputy Speaker, my question to Saskatchewan is: do you really believe that if we would have had another individual representing Saskatchewan in Ottawa, that that person would have come up with \$415 million? Is there anyone across this House that would have been able to accomplish that? I suggest to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it takes a man like Premier Grant Devine.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — In that same vein, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I take great pleasure at this time to indicate to the House a very significant happening that occurred this morning in the city of Regina where, to the credit to this government, we have just added to our deal with Bulgaria, where on a 707 we were able to ship from the city of Regina — not in Toronto somewhere — from the city of Regina first time ever, a plane load of 75 Polled Herefords that have now been sold to Bulgaria.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — That, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you is a result of the progress and the leadership that we have in this Progressive Conservative government in the form of Mr. Grant Devine. He is a Premier that has achieved their respect, the respect of the people of Saskatchewan Mr. Deputy Speaker, because of what he has delivered and because of his vision of the greatness that this province can achieve.

Mr. Speaker, and I call you now correctly, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for joining the Chair. Mr. Speaker, I mentioned before, the vital importance of a strong agricultural community industry in our province. And I want to briefly continue in that vein.

No government in the history of Saskatchewan has been more aware of the fact than your Progressive Conservative government. Through the production load program, the farm purchase program, the farm fuel rebate program, improvements to crop insurance program coverage, and the livestock cash advance program, farm families in Saskatchewan were provided the opportunities and protection they had to have in order to survive these last few difficult years. Mr. Speaker, amidst all of the problems in agriculture, your government took steps to provide for the future.

The establishment of the \$200 million agriculture development fund was designed to finance the research, development, and testing that is so absolutely necessary if we are of the farming community are going to remain competitive on the world market. Those living in rural areas and small urban centres can now enjoy the same advantages as those in larger areas when it comes to the saving of energy costs, when it comes to our program of the distribution, the implementation I should say, of the Saskatchewan Gas Distribution program. Mr. Speaker, the agricultural policies of your PC government are not only innovative, they are among the most effective in this country.

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The men and women who seed and harvest our fields, who arise the livestock, they are quick to tell you that your government has done a good job in agriculture. They are quick to point out that there is much more that has to be accomplished, but they are confident that your PC government is more than capable of resolving the problems and building our number one industry.

Mr. Speaker, I believe their confidence is well placed and well founded. Already your government is moving to increase the manufacture of agricultural chemicals and fertilizer in order to reduce the input costs of our producers. Your government is also proposing legislation to extend the provisions of The Farm Land Security Act during this very session, continuing with the protection that it established in 1982. This government is going to continue working with the producer to develop programs of practical and lasting value on the farm.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated previously, economic diversification in the Rosthern constituency is also of paramount importance. We all realize the need to provide new jobs. The Speech from the Throne has addressed this subject with renewed emphasis for agriculture, for business, for tourism. Put simply, it

means that Saskatchewan is going to work harder than ever before at building opportunities based on our strengths, our resources, and our people.

Saskatchewan people are exceptional in their enterprising spirit. As an example, we have the largest recreational vehicle dealer in the country in North Battleford and they are now going to manufacture motor homes – jobs previously reserved for British Columbia, they are now in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — The world's largest Versatile dealer is located in Kinistino. Western Canada's largest farm truck dealer and North America's largest, four-line General Motors dealership are located right in our constituency of Rosthern, in fact, in my home town village of Hague.

The list could go on and on. All of these are the work of ambitious, dedicated hard-working people who live in rural Saskatchewan towns == people who are builders, people who are the movers and the shakers of this world. I firmly believe that it is the purpose of government to serve that energy and to reward individual initiative.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Mr. Speaker, these are the same people who have helped make other success stories across Saskatchewan, who just need an opportunity to repeat that miracle time and time again.

Mr. Speaker, the towns and villages in Rosthern constituency want to become more a part of the economic diversification that is vital in stabilizing our economy. Since more than 70 per cent of all jobs are created by small business, it only makes sense to us to look to our rural areas as a location. Here we are close to the supply, service, and transportation facilities of a major city; yet, Mr. Speaker, we can offer a quality of life and sense of community only available in our towns.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few minutes to talk about a subject that is very close to my heart. Having been a teacher and an education for some 22 years in this province, I was proud to see your Progressive Conservative government commit itself to a process of renewal and development in our primary and our secondary schools, and yes, our universities.

As evidence, Mr. Speaker, I must note that this government has increased education funding by almost 52 per cent since 1982 — 52 per cent. Through a partnership with all participants of the education community we are now ensuring that our children have the solid education they require to meet the demands presented by a changing, a dynamic, and challenging work-place.

Your PC government committed \$275 million for kindergarten to grade 12 students in order to improve learning resources, promote efficiency measures in areas such as the sharing of services, program cut reductions, and energy conservation, and develop initiatives to increase school effectiveness, improving student performance and reducing the drop-out rate. To ensure we have the resources to develop Saskatchewan's great potential, our PC government committed \$125 million to our universities over five years.

Mr. Speaker, our commitment to education is borne out by the following statistics. Your PC government has provided \$22 million more to students and approved over 1500 more applications, and increased the average student loan by \$1100. This, all more than the previous administration.

(1600)

In addition, Mr. Speaker, your Progressive Conservative government has increased graduate scholarships by 155 per cent over 1982. Your government, Mr. Speaker, extended its commitment to the students of Saskatchewan by offering 6 per cent interest rates on student loans with no parental means test.

Mr. Speaker, I submit, your government has led the nation in providing for the educational needs of our children. While other jurisdictions are holding the line, or cutting back in education, Saskatchewan was wisely using its resources to meet and conquer the challenges we face.

Mr. Speaker, your government has been charged by the people with the responsibility of provide a new sensitivity in protecting the needs and creating new and exciting opportunities for all residents.

We must maintain the quality of health care that has been renewed since 1982. Our commitment of \$1,200 million per year is designed to accommodate that objective. That translates to \$1,200 for every man, woman and child in this province of Saskatchewan, and that commitment is unparalleled any where in Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: — Further, Mr. Speaker, we must continue to improve the quality of life of our senior citizens. We must continue to improve and provide the women of this province every access to the opportunities that are available. We must continue providing protection for our home owners and their families. We must continue working hard to increase the efficient and effective operation of government.

Mr. Speaker, the challenges are many. There are no easy solutions. We have brought forth imaginative programs, fiscally responsible programs, designed to stimulate the economy while crating much-needed employment and security. Indeed, other parts of Canada and the United States recognize Saskatchewan as the leader in many of our policies, and we must continue to provide and enhance that leadership role.

Mr. Speaker, I believe in Saskatchewan. I believe in its people, and I have faith in our future.

Our problems appear overwhelming and they are of deep concern, no doubt about that. But we have risen to the occasion in he past and we will again. The appalling negativism and cynicism pervading the election rhetoric degraded us all down to the lowest common denominator and we were subjected to more of that fatalism yesterday and today. In spite of these attacks, for those of use on the Devine team, there's optimism on our vision for the future.

Mr. Speaker, in their heart of hearts, the people of Saskatchewan and, indeed, the people of the Rosthern constituency share that optimism and they share that vision. It is one of building – Saskatchewan building – government and people working together while helping those who cannot help themselves.

The Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, outlines very clearly that our intentions are to lead this province closer to what we all can become. To that end, I commit myself to the service of the people of Saskatchewan for the next four years and for many years thereafter. It has been a pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to speak to the Speech from the Throne and I fully endorse it, Mr. Speaker, as I urge every sincere member in this Assembly to endorse it as a document that shows clearly the way to the future for this great province. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: – Mr. Speaker, I wish to enter this debate by congratulating the newly elected members from both sides of the House, and I'm sure that we all realize the importance of the task ahead and we will work to serve this House to the best of our abilities.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to take a moment to speak about my riding. Prince Albert-Duck Lake. Prince Albert-Duck Lake is a unique riding because of its diverse nature. The riding is two-thirds urban, one-third rural – an interesting combination. Prince Albert-Duck Lake is home to a fascinating mosaic of people – people from many ethnic backgrounds and many vocations. It is home to labourers, business people, tradespeople, professionals and farmers. Métis, Indian, German, Polish, French, Ukrainian and Asian people, people of other backgrounds make their home in my riding. Income levels in my riding vary from those who have much to those who have little. The riding stretches from Steep Creek, east of Prince Albert, to west and south past the town of Duck Lake. The riding runs between the North and South Saskatchewan rivers. The urban part of my riding covers the west side of the city of Prince Albert. There are two major rural trading areas. Macdowall and Duck Lake, and the member opposite is right. With the legislation that may be before us, it's very possible that the ridings in this province may not be recognizable, if the gerrymander comes that we're expecting.

Some Hon. Members: hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, as well, I would want to indicate that Prince Albert-Duck Lake is home to two Indian reserves, Muskoday and Beatty-Okemasis.

Mr. Speaker, I listened to the throne speech. And as I listened, it became clear to me why my constituents are saying they cannot trust this government. The speech didn't address the issue of jobs for our young people. It offered no hope for the unemployed or the underemployed. It offered no hope for those who have been forced to live in poverty because of this government's inaction. It offered no relief from the debt load that our farmers are facing as they struggle to stay on their farms. Mr. Speaker, it was a disaster.

Mr. Speaker, I'm a small-business man, and I can tell you that my colleagues on Central Avenue in Prince Albert weren't jumping for joy over this piece of work that was done by a cash-starved government. This throne speech did not address the dangers facing our education system because of under funding. It didn't address the dangers facing the health care system through under funding. It threatens our citizens who are dependent on social programs.

Mr. Speaker, because of the severe under funding of the universities by this government, they're forced to cut back on programs in place and they can't afford to introduce new programs. School boards in this province are forced to make decisions regarding the future of our children's education based on the fact that they don't have enough money because the government has failed in assigning a priority to education.

The throne speech promised to continue its review of social service and incoming support programs. That worries me, Mr. Speaker. When this government talks about social services and reviews of support incomes, it means cut-backs. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's poor and temporarily poor cannot be cut back any further. They are now depending on private agencies for food, clothing, and emotional support because this government has failed so miserably in its sport of the underprivileged.

The government has promised to review the changing requirements for health care. Mr. Speaker, what changing requirements means to this government is cut-backs. Adults may have only one free eye examination every two years. Children, who were once covered under the dental plan, are no longer. Waiting time for assistance from SAIL (Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living) has lengthened.

And now the government says it's going to introduce technology into our health care system. Mr. Speaker, I'm concerned what the government means is machinery and computers, and not trained nurses or other health care professionals. I'm concerned that the government will be cutting back on health care professionals.

Mr. Speaker, as I travelled through my riding in past weeks, and as I talked with people in Steep Creek, and in Davis, and as I met with people from Macdowall, Lily Plain, and Duck Lake, it became clear to me that the damage done by this PC government in the past term must be repaired and repaired soon.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite have the opportunity to take on the old guard of that government. New members can force them to correct the mistakes that the government made in the past term. The corrupt, insensitive, misguided direction of the government in the last four years doesn't have to be repeated. When the veterans of corruption and destruction want to keep on building the deficit by handing out favours to their same old friends, the new members across the way have got to say no. And, Mr. Speaker, I'm concerned at what I've heard and what I've seen from the new members in the past few days because I'm afraid that that direction isn't going to change; we're going to have more of the same, and I don't believe it's right. They've got a chance to correct it and they should start now.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — When the old guard wants to replace the fair and impartial electoral boundaries commission with a group of Tory political hacks who will gerrymander this province, who will twist and bend and convolute and divide, and will say whatever is necessary or do whatever is necessary to keep them in power, the new members have got to say no, enough is enough.

Mr. Speaker, the government has got to take control of the monster deficit that they've created. And they can't do that by cutting back on the people that have the least amount of money. They can't do it by under funding our health care system and our education system and our municipal governments. But they can control the deficit if they cut out the lavish, irresponsible spending. They can control it if they stop heaping cash gifts on their friends, the multinational oil companies; if the government would quit giving away pulp mills in Prince Albert and adding to Weyerhaeuser billions; and if the government quits giving away our forests; and if the government quits allowing the Pocklingtons of the world to take our cash, abuse our workers, like they have in Alberta, our neighbouring province; the deficit can be controlled.

It can't be done with record-size cabinets and bloated expense accounts from the members of that cabinet. That's got to stop. Mr. Speaker, the people of this province are tired of the give-aways, the gifts and tax breaks to those who don't need it.

Business people in this province are also tired of the corruption that the government has introduced in the tendering of government contracts. I've received calls from many business people that tell me they've been unfairly dealt with. The Saskatchewan business community still remembers a tendering system where the low bidder won the contract, even if that system hasn't been used since the election of this government over four long years ago.

Mr. Speaker, the former members for Prince Albert, and Prince Albert-Duck Lake, and The Battlefords, and Moose Jaw North, and Moose Jaw South, and all those in Regina, and Saskatoon seats were returned to the private sector to seek employment – not because they were particularly bad MLA's – they were returned to the private sector because the people of this province are tired of having a corrupt, inefficient government determine their futures based on political support and background.

(1615)

Business men are tired of losing government contracts because they don't donate money to a political party. And, Mr. Speaker, this government must realize that it's their unfairness and inconsiderate actions that make the people in this province tired. The government must return to the practice of fairness and decency in awarding contracts and hiring.

Mr. Speaker, the members of this House have an opportunity to give the people of Saskatchewan an early Christmas present by supporting our amendment and committing this government to being decent – soundly run, soundly managed – and being fair to all.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the new members opposite to remember the history of this great province, Saskatchewan, when they caucus with their old crew. I ask them to remember that our province was built on the concept that we are our brother's keepers, not just the keepers of our brothers who are rich and healthy, but of our brothers that are infirm, poor, and struggling.

There are those in communities that need help from the rest of us who have the resources to share in upholding the fine tradition that makes Saskatchewan what it is. We have a moral obligation to share. Our parents and our grandparents came from all over the world to make their homes in Saskatchewan. My grandparents came from Russia and, Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons they came to Saskatchewan was to avoid the type of life that this government seems determined to create here.

My grandparents, and thousands like them that settled this land, had a vision of a country and a province where the government accepted the principle that, regardless of whom you are, you have the right to a decent standard of living, the right to a first class education, and the opportunity to work with your friends and neighbours to make a strong community, a strong province, a strong country where not one person suffered in need.

Mr. Speaker, this government is creating in this province a way of life that my grandparents came here to avoid. They're creating a province with two classes of citizens – the elite super-rich on one hand, and on the other, those of us who survive from the crumbs that fall from their tables.

Let me give you some examples of past actions that show the insensitivity of this government. The government introduced a flat tax. The flat tax is not a tax that bothers the super-rich but, Mr. Speaker, it's a tax on middle- and lower-income groups in this province.

The government for a time had a used vehicle tax, Mr. Speaker. The super-rich don't buy used cars; they buy new cars. The used vehicle tax was a tax on the people who can't afford new cars. It was a tax on the middle-m and lower-income groups. Well this government across the way finally recognized that the people of Saskatchewan wouldn't tolerate the tax and they removed it. But they've never offered to pay back those who were forced to pay that tax.

That's the kind of unfairness that this government has shown the people of this province. You had to lose a by-election in order for you to understand that the people wouldn't accept that kind of taxation. You learn your lessons hard, Mr. Speaker. There's no Robin Hood on that side of the government.

The government removed the home owner's grant. This grant was a pittance to their fat cat friends, Mr. Speaker, but when I talked to my friends and neighbours in Prince Albert about what that grant meant, they talked to me about money that would help them pay their annual house insurance, or money that they used to buy winter coats for their children, or it meant food on their tables.

Mr. Speaker, the lack of caring and understanding shown by this government is deplorable. Food banks have sprung up across this province because of the policies of the members opposite. The members should be embarrassed that in a province that once could feed its people, the need for food banks exists, and it exists because the members across the way do not believe that government must care for her citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I, like all my colleagues in this House, admire and respect the volunteers and donors, the people that run these food banks and help to feed Saskatchewan's hungry. But, Mr. Speaker, I and the people who donate, and the volunteers who help run those food banks, deplore the fact that their existence is necessary because of the conditions created by a PC government that doesn't care.

Mr. Speaker, middle- and lower-income families are being taxed into poverty. Farmers are being starved off their farms and the only people that seem to be benefiting under this government are friends and supporters of the government. The large corporate farms appear to be the vision of Mulroney and his spokesman in Saskatchewan, the Premier of Saskatchewan.

We heard no commitment in the throne speech to restructuring the enormous debt load the farmers are facing. We didn't hear a commitment to support the family-owned, family-run farm. We heard no new direction, no new ideas, no solutions for our farming communities – the backbone of the economy of this province.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan have rejected the open-for-business mentality of this government; they have rejected the Pocklington give-away in North Battleford; they have rejected the give-away of the pulp mill in Prince Albert; they've rejected the callous treatment of potash workers in Lanigan. Northerners have rejected them for their inaction in the north. This government has lost the respect of the people in our largest cities, Regina and Saskatoon, and I see my colleagues sitting around there who represent those ridings.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — they've lost trust in the good people of Moose Jaw. This government has lost respect of over 55 percent of the people in Saskatchewan, and that was shown clearly in the last election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, I challenge the members on the other side of the House to work with the members on this side. Work with us to restore fairness and honesty to government. Work with us to draft legislation that will allow all residents in our province a decent standard of living and an opportunity to help build this province for the future.

I will be voting for the amendment, Mr. Speaker, as will my colleagues. And I ask the new members on the other side of the House to consider doing the same. They've had an opportunity to judge this speech for what it is. Simply put, it's more of the same. And the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, deserve much, much better.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Britton: – Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with a feeling of pride and humility that I rise from my seat to speak in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to add my personal congratulations to you on your election as speaker to the Assembly – a very important position and I am sure that you will fill it with honour and distinction. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to add my congratulations and a few words of praise to the member from Saskatoon Eastview for moving the Speech from the Throne, and also to the member from Pelly who seconded the speech of a very forward and positive and complete document.

Mr. Speaker, congratulations also to all the members on their election, and especially to those who, like myself, was elected for the first time. Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to thank the residents of the Wilkie constituency for displaying their trust in me, and thank all those who helped me in any way. I will do my utmost to deserve that trust and will tackle my duties and responsibilities with sincerity, always placing the needs and concerns of my constituencies as my major priority. Mr. Speaker, I will continue to support the very positive and forward-looking thrust of the Progressive Conservative government in creating new jobs and diversifying the economic base of Saskatchewan, expanding our markets outside the borders of this great province. Our majority representation on this side of the House is a positive sign that the people throughout Saskatchewan all support these initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt in my mind that under the dynamic leadership of our Premier, the member from Estevan, the Progressive conservative government will continue to produce the kind of legislation that will build this province and improve the quality of life well into the next decade and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, I must congratulate the Premier and his government for coming to the aid of the farming community during the past four and one-half years. We all realize the importance of agriculture. It forms the largest part of our economic base. In my constituency of Wilkie the \$25-per-acre production loan program at 6 per cent was very positive. Mr. Speaker, without it many farmers in our area would have found it very difficult, and in many cases indeed impossible, to have planted a crop in 1986 without the support of that \$25 an acre.

The Farm Land Security Act was another very positive and effective piece of legislation. By offering protection against foreclosure, it enabled many grain farmers and ranchers to readjust their financing, improving their ability to ride out the economic crisis that has surrounded the farming community. Without it many of our friends and neighbours would have lost everything they had worked so hard throughout their life to obtain.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, it was very positive assistance, and when used in conjunction with the counselling made available it was, without exaggeration, the difference between staying in business and bankruptcy. And, Mr. Speaker, what better way to assist farmers than providing farmers who have proven skills in management and production to provide the counselling, Mr. Speaker, farmers helping farmers, and the

government clearing the way.

Mr. Speaker, our Progressive Conservative government never wilted under the many pressures and obstacles it faced in dealing with the agricultural industry. It never once suggested that the responsibility of assistance was for another jurisdiction. Mr. Speaker, our Progressive Conservative government did not offer to buy anyone's land, but instead it provided initiatives to ensure the right of every farm family to own their own property.

Mr. Speaker, there were many more programs that were of significant value developed by our government. Mr. Speaker, I want to take just a few minutes to mention just a few of them and the benefits they provided to the constituency of Wilkie.

The livestock cash advance provided \$5.9 million to the farmers in our area. The irrigation assistance resulted in over \$2.7 million, Mr. Speaker. The production loan program, which I have already mentioned, providing \$32 million to the Wilkie constituency – very positive assistance indeed. The assistance with the grasshopper control amounted to \$16,000. The farm purchase program provided over 41.4 million to allow young people the opportunity to purchase or expand their operation. The livestock transportation program, over 41.8 million in assistance. And, Mr. Speaker, the hog assured returns program (SHARP), delivered \$1.1 million for the local producers in my area.

(1630)

Mr. Speaker, the beef market insurance program contributed \$2.9 million to the Wilkie constituency. The livestock investment tax credit and the livestock facilities tax credit combined to provide \$1.4 million in benefits.

Mr. Speaker, over \$21 million came into the Wilkie constituency through the Canada-Saskatchewan crop insurance program. No government in the history of this province has provided more for agriculture than the Progressive Conservative government since 1982.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to concentrate on the Wilkie constituency for just a few minutes. Mr. Speaker, new school construction or renovations has been assisted by our government at the St. Peter's Elementary School in Unity to the tune of \$139,000; the Macklin School, \$1.8 million; \$1.5 million; the James Charteris Composite High School in Kerrobert, \$414,000; the Denzil Composite High School, \$1.5 million; Tramping Lake School, \$30,000; Unity Composite High School, \$183,000; and the St. George Separate School in Wilkie; \$38,000. Education has not been neglected by this government in the Wilkie constituency.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Britton: — Mr. Speaker, I must also point out that a new hospital has been approved in principle for Macklin and that special grants totalling \$45,000 were provided in this year for the central home care district and the Greenhead district, in recognition of the high level of service needs in those districts.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier has promised to protect and provide opportunity for Saskatchewan people, and there is no doubt that he has kept his word.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Britton: — As a “for instance”, Mr. Speaker, this afternoon, \$415 million in cash money – no reason to repay.

Mr. Speaker, our government’s accomplishments are far too many for me to mention in my first speech to this Assembly. However, Mr. Speaker, I must point out a few.

In the area of health care, our Progressive Conservative government eliminated extra billion and the moratorium on nursing home construction, providing 1,500 new nursing home beds since 1982.

In education, Mr. Speaker, our government provided long-term protection for our students and guaranteed our children a solid education through the development of both the education development fund and the university renewal fund. Again, Mr. Speaker, education has not been neglected.

Mr. Speaker, for our senior citizens, who are the pillars of our communities and the builders of our province, the Progressive Conservative government provided the senior citizen’s home repair program, the senior citizens heritage program and approved increased assistance that will amount to 100 per cent on seniors’ income. Mr. Speaker, our government has not forgotten our senior citizens. In my constituency there are many retired people who appreciate the assistance that has been provided and applaud our government for having the foresight to create the first-ever pension plan in the country. Mr. Speaker, they whole-heartedly encourage every eligible person to take advantage of this opportunity to prepare for a secure retirement.

Mr. Speaker, I must also mention the benefits of the Saskatchewan home program, providing the opportunity for home owners to improve the quality of life while at the same time providing long-term security and new job opportunities. It is not only commendable, Mr. Speaker, it is exemplary.

Mr. Speaker, the direction established by the Speech from the Throne is a result of the communication between my government and the people it serves. People want to see economic diversification. They want continued protection from economic crisis that they cannot control themselves. And they want to see more effective and efficient use of government resources.

Mr. Speaker, again I support our Progressive Conservative government and the excellent Speech from the Throne. I will be supporting the motion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: – Mr. Speaker, I must apologize for minor impoliteness when I rose to address the Assembly the other day, and take the opportunity now, Mr. Speaker, to congratulate you on your selection to serve as Speaker of this Assembly. And I wish for you the rewards and satisfactions of chairing meaningful debate which will be in the interests of Saskatchewan people over the period of time that is ahead of us here.

I would also like to extend my congratulations, Mr. Speaker, to all new members of this Assembly and, in particular, to those members from the opposite side who had a special privilege - the member for Saskatoon Eastview who had the privilege of moving the Speech from the Throne, which was seconded by the member of Pelly. Special congratulations to those two members through you, Mr. Speaker.

I’d like to begin my maiden speech in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, by making some reflection upon my 84-year old grandmother who my children refer to as Grandma Great, and she truly is. Grandma was

born, and has deeply entrenched roots, here in Saskatchewan, and in fact many years ago in the western part of this province had the privilege of influencing, I'd like to believe, in some small way the formative years – she baby-sat Woodrow Lloyd who went on to become the premier of this province to introduce the now-famed medicare system to Saskatchewan, and that spread from here across the country.

I like to make reference to Grandma Great, Mr. Speaker, because of mainly two things, and one which is a plaque that hangs prominently on the wall of her kitchen that was given to her some years ago. And the plaque very simply, Mr. Speaker, reads: “What this world needs is fewer politicians and more grandmothers.” Now I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that that is not so much as a statement about grandmothers, but it is definitely a statement about politicians and reflects the sentiment that a growing number of people are expressing these days.

Now I would also like to share with this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, as well, a conversation that I had with my grandmother, both this summer speaking to her in a hospital in Calgary, and also the day after the election when I called and shared with her the joy of being elected to represent the people of Moose Jaw North in the Legislative Assembly.

My grandmother said to me, “Before I die I would like to see one of my grandchildren in the Legislative Assembly.” And I say that, Mr. Speaker, knowing and hoping that my grandmother has many, many years of good life and health and happiness ahead of her, but reflecting and understanding that she is one of those who seem to be fading in number, who believe that politicians are to be respected, that politicians are to provide leadership and to find solutions to the problems that face people here in Saskatchewan today, rather than to be contributing to those problems.

Mr. Speaker, it is my wish that in serving the people of Moose Jaw North and the people of Saskatchewan that I will be able to do so over the next four years, or however long it will be, in the manner that is befitting the trust of Grandma Great and many like her.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: – Well there are many like Grandma Great in Moose Jaw North, Mr. Speaker. Moose Jaw North is a constituency which encompasses the northern half of Moose Jaw's third largest city, or I should say of Saskatchewan's third largest city.

The constituents represent a cross-section of the people of Saskatchewan, and I also would like to join many other members of this Assembly by expressing my thanks to those people of my constituency. My thanks to those who worked for me in earning the right to represent them here in this Legislative Assembly. And I would also like to express my thanks for those who voted for me.

But I would equally like to express my thanks, Mr. Speaker, to those who did not vote for me but worked and took part in the election campaign. I would like to thank them for making democracy work, and I pledge myself to say that it is now my turn to work for you and for the people of Saskatchewan.

That cross-section that I referred to of constituents in Moose Jaw North, Mr. Speaker, is made up of a number of people. About a sixth of my constituents are senior citizens. There are also located in Moose Jaw North a large number of labouring people, farmers – both retired and still active, business people, professionals, young and middle-aged families, students who are attending either the Saskatchewan Technical institute or the Coteau Range Community college. And also, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of people who are handicapped living in my constituency, as well as a number who have been forced to

receive social assistance in order to survive.

I've said many times that Moose Jaw North is a riding that is in effect a microcosm of the province and can be referred to as your average riding, Mr. Speaker. It is the home . . . Moose Jaw North is the home of Saskatchewan's first and foremost post-high-school technical school, the Saskatchewan Technical Institute, referred to fondly by the people of Moose Jaw North as the STI.

And just as . . . Interest aside, Mr. Speaker, I point out that in the recent election there were four communities in this province who have within their boundaries the post-high-school educational institutes – either technical institutes or universities – and I point out that those communities sent 20 New Democrat representatives, of a possible 24, to represent them in the Legislative Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — And I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that there is possibly a message that was being sent to the government in that. With that fact there is a message about employment and there is a message about education, and unless anyone is foolish enough to ignore it, it is a message that cannot be forgotten by the members opposite.

Moose Jaw itself also, Mr. Speaker, sent a message to the Government of Saskatchewan about being ignored, as the city of Moose Jaw sent two New Democrat representatives to the Legislative Assembly and sent both of those representatives, I might add, with the largest majority that has ever been held by New Democrats MLA's in this House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, I come bearing some messages from Moose Jaw to this Legislative Assembly. It will be known by some that within my riding of Moose Jaw North there are located the Moose Jaw exhibition grounds which are run by the Moose Jaw exhibition Company. And the Moose Jaw exhibition grounds are the home of Saskatchewan's finest horse shows, our annual fair, horse-racing, and a large number of other events. And the people who operate the exhibition grounds are in need of funding, Mr. Speaker, for capital expenditures and would be most happy to simply receive a prorated equivalent by population to the grants that have been given recently to the Regina exhibition board. Now, these people of the Moose Jaw Exhibition Company, Mr. Speaker, are dedicated and reasonable people; with a good reputation, and I simply ask that they be fairly and properly included in future government plans.

Let me turn my attention as well, Mr. Speaker, to the issue of downtown revitalization in Moose Jaw. Moose Jaw is a city not unlike some others in this province who have experienced the need for downtown revitalization – cities like Prince Albert and Regina and Weyburn, which were privileged to have some development assistance. I am afraid to say, for the members opposite, it was assistance that they received from the former New Democratic Party government. And Moose Jaw was in need of that assistance when the government changed hands in 1982. Discussions were under way at that time with the previous government; however, since that time simply nothing has happened.

However, Mr. Speaker, with the typical character of the members opposite, just before the election it was announced by the provincial government that it intended to pay half the consultation study fee to recommend a redevelopment plan to the mayor's task force on downtown development. And that plan has now been tabled, Mr. Speaker, and we of Moose Jaw are looking forward to an exciting concept for

downtown redevelopment, focusing on Moose Jaw's famous – or in some people's opinion, infamous – river Street, capitalizing on the city's steamy history, both real and mythical.

And I note the government opposite – albeit uncloaked in rhetoric about tourism and diversification – committed itself both during the election and since to assisting and supporting tourism, and committed itself during the election to working in support of the redevelopment plan in downtown Moose Jaw.

Mr. Speaker, in this House, I look forward to working in co-operation with the government opposite to make firm strides forward for the people of Moose Jaw and the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, there are also a good number of small-business people in my riding who also sent a message on October 20th. There is no mention in the Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker – and conspicuous by its absence – there is no mention of programs for small business, and in particular for small businesses which in fact are family businesses. And that's the typical small business not only in Moose Jaw but here in Saskatchewan.

The small-business people in my riding and around the province badly need tax relief and also look to the kind of relief, through funding from the provincial government to the municipalities, to allow them to withdraw the unfair business tax, which is a double taxation for small businesses, Mr. Speaker.

Also, the small businesses in my riding and elsewhere, Mr. Speaker . . . Or small-business people tell me that they need security for expansion of their small businesses and that they have no reason to feel confident in the economy, based on the current levels of unemployment and the escalating deficit that has been initiated by this provincial government.

Mr. Speaker, small-business people in Moose Jaw, family-business people in Moose Jaw, want to be a part of the solution of getting Saskatchewan working again and look to the province for leadership. And they are no different from small-business people from other parts of the province as well.

Well let me turn my attention, Mr. Speaker, to some issues of provincial interest. Many of us noted with a great deal of interest that there was one line at the end of the Speech from the Throne which made reference to a correction or an amendment to the election boundaries Act. And I am sorry to say, Mr. Speaker, that my constituents are beginning to cynically refer to that Act as the gerrymander Act.

I am disturbed, as well, by the cynicism that's being expressed in terms of the government's commitment to fairness and the commitment to democracy, Mr. Speaker, and that saddens me. And let me repeat a comment that I made just the other day. Mr. Speaker, when all three of the Lieutenant governor, yourself, Mr. Speaker, and the Premier of this province called on the members of this Assembly to conduct themselves in the best interests of Saskatchewan people and set aside their partisan political interests.

And I call on the Premier to lead by example, to make clear the intentions of the side opposite, and to consider following his own advice when it comes to considering the electoral boundaries review Act. I believe that Saskatchewan people are informed and dedicated and they will not take gerrymandering lightly. And if anyone doesn't believe that, they can simply ask the predecessors of the member from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg.

Let me also, Mr. Speaker, turn to the issue of drug abuse which was discovered by the government opposite just days before the provincial election. I, like many others, welcome initiatives to deal in very real ways with addressing this very, very serious social problem that has, by the way, Mr. Speaker, has been around for a long time around the province of Saskatchewan. And like many others, I have to question the sincerity and the motives of a government that officially opens a facility for treatment of youth who were suffering from alcohol and drug addiction, opening that new facility just days prior to the election, a facility which has not yet finished its renovations and which is also lacking in residents and staff.

And I point out, Mr. Speaker, that the province of Saskatchewan introduced a program in 1975 to address the issue of deaths related to the abusive use of alcohol and other drugs. And that was introduced, Mr. Speaker, specifically to focus on deaths on the road. I am referring, Mr. Speaker, of course to the Saskatchewan driving without impairment program. It's a program which has experienced some success, Mr. Speaker, and for the last two years in this province of Saskatchewan, I am pleased to say that for the first time in over 15 years, in the last two years we lost fewer than 100 people on the roads of Saskatchewan in accidents that involved a drinking driver.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, there has been a significant reduction in the rate of recidivism for convicted impaired drivers, for those who have attended and participated and completed the driving without impairment program.

Members opposite who take interest in the treatment of drug abuse – the problems – will be, I am sure, familiar with SASKAADAS, the Saskatchewan Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Societies – a collection, Mr. Speaker, of volunteer groups who are community based and trying to address drug abuse in our society in meaningful kinds of ways. And those societies, Mr. Speaker, for the last several years have called for compulsory attendance of driving without impairment programs prior to the reinstatement of licences for convicted impaired drivers.

Now on November 19, 1983, the former minister of Highways who loved to fly and has now flown the province, I note, stated a commitment to DWI people who were gathered in Saskatoon, that by January of 1985 he would have completed the preparatory work to introduce the regulations that would require compulsory attendance at driving without impairment programs prior to licence reinstatement. And I note, Mr. Speaker, that January 1985 has come and gone. And January 1986 has also passed, and January 1987 approaches shortly. And I ask the government opposite, Mr. Speaker, to consider that in a very specific way – in a very publicly acceptable way, I might add – it is possible for the government to demonstrate commitment to reducing the carnage on the road caused by the abuse of alcohol and other drugs, and to introduce a regulation requiring the attendance at driving without impairment programs prior to the reinstatement of driver's licence; to show some real leadership and to save some real lives of Saskatchewan people on the roads in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — But let me turn my attention as well, Mr. Speaker, to the Department of Social Services. People have been referring to the stated, and probably just as much as stated, rumoured restructure of the department as the creating . . . bringing into existence here in Saskatchewan the creation of a department in charge of oppression. And we await specifics of that restructuring, Mr. Speaker, with the hopes that we are not, as a matter of fact, going to be creating in this province a department in charge of oppression.

But let me comment on some specific statements made in the Speech from the Throne, having to do with

socials services. There was a statement that stated . . . It said, I quote, “Special attention will be given to the methods of delivery . . .” And if this means that there will be more local control over the type and the quality of delivery of social programs through well-managed, non-government organizations with sufficient resources, then the Minister of Social Services, Mr. Speaker, will have an ally on this side of the House.

However, Mr. Speaker, if this means that there will be a shifting of responsibility to non-government organizations without the resources, in order to be able to deliver, to do their jobs, or if it means that there will be a shifting of financial responsibility for social services to local governments . . . And I note yesterday in question period, Mr. Speaker, that the minister indicated that shifting of financial responsibility to the local governments is an option that is being considered by this government. Then in that case, Mr. Speaker, the minister will have a fierce opponent on this side of the House.

And I also sincerely hope, =sop, that in reconsidering the delivery of services to handicapped citizens in our province, that changes, if any, will promote the opportunity for normalization, for independent living for handicapped people, and that will allow them to more equally be able to determine their own fates and their own futures in this province of ours.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — The Speech from the Throne as well, Mr. Speaker,. Stated, and I quote, the government “will continue to review its social assistance and income support programs . . .” And the members in this House will be aware, I’m sure, that a recipient who is defined as fully employable in this province receives a maximum – a maximum of \$345 per month; \$345 a month to cover rent, food, clothing, utilities, and other personal expenses. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that there will be many in this House who will spend more than that amount on Christmas presents alone this year.

A person who is fully employable, I may describe as a person, for those who may not be aware, who is fully capable of working but who is no longer eligible for unemployment insurance – it has run out – and because of inability to find employment has been forced to receive social assistance from the province of Saskatchewan.

And if the Minister of Social Services is proposing that there will be rate increases to bring the allowances for social assistance recipients in line with the real costs of survival in Saskatchewan, then the minister again will have an ally on this side of the House.

However, if the minister of Social Services proposes rate changes as an attack of oppression on the least fortunate of our citizens, couched in the rhetoric of reform as we’ve seen before, then the minister will have a fierce opponent on this side of the House.

Let me make some comments before moving on, about the facts because I think, Mr. Speaker, the facts speak for themselves. And I refer to the facts related to unemployed, fully employable people who’ve been forced to live on social assistance. In November of 1981, Mr. Speaker, in this province there were 2,584 people – and I’m not proud of that fact, but it is a fact – there were 2,584 fully employable people who were unemployed in the province of Saskatchewan.

Now, let me be kind to the government of the day, Mr. Speaker, and use the most recent statistics available and refer to the numbers of fully employable people who were unemployed in August of this year. The number in August, Mr. Speaker, was 10,073. Five years ago 2,500 fully employable people

who were not able to find employment and forced to live on social assistance. Now, five years later, that number has increased fourfold to over 10,000.

After five years of conservative government rule, Mr. Speaker, is it fair to say that we have four times as many people in this province who have grown lazy? I suggest no. After five years of Tory government is it fair to say, Mr. Speaker, that we have four times as many people who have grown shiftless? And I suggest not.

But I do suggest, Mr. Speaker, that after five years of Conservative government in this province we have four times as many people who have experienced disappointment; we have four times as many people who have become disillusioned; we have four times as many people who have been deserted by the province of Saskatchewan in carrying out its number one responsibility: to provide the opportunity for employment to make a living and provide for their families.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: — Finally, let me turn, Mr. Speaker, to the crucial issue of employment, an issue which got no mention whatsoever – virtually no mention whatsoever – in the Speech from the Throne. I repeat that I believe that, Mr. Speaker, it is the first responsibility of the provincial government to provide an environment in which people have the opportunity to be employed and to provide for themselves and their families.

And what did we find the Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker? There was no strategy referred to for employment of our young people. There was no mention of a winter works program. There was no reference to government leadership for northern employment. There was no reference to meeting provincial needs through employment-stimulating measures such as highway construction and repair and the construction of nursing homes. There was no reference to assistance to small businesses to encourage this important sector to create new jobs. And most seriously of all, Mr. Speaker, there was no reference to a long-term strategy to get Saskatchewan working again.

And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that in this province we have an opportunity to provide meaningful employment – rewarding employment – to Saskatchewan people related to the development and the processing of our abundant natural resources. And at the very least, Mr. Speaker, we deserve an economic development strategy tied to a training development plan to prepare Saskatchewan people for Saskatchewan jobs with a future. The failure of this government is no more clear than its record on employment. It is a disappointment that it got no mention in the Speech from the Throne.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, may I say that I believe that the Speech from the Throne misses badly in the crucial area of employment for Saskatchewan people. It does not address the topic, it bodes ill omen for those who are least fortunate of the Saskatchewan citizens, and it ignores blatantly the small-business people and particularly family-run business people in this province.

I cannot support the motion, Mr. Speaker. I would be happy to join my colleagues in support of the amendment moved by the Hon. Leader of the Opposition. I look forward, Mr. Speaker, to addressing issues of importance to Saskatchewan people over the next four years. I eagerly look forward to serving the people of Saskatchewan and the fine folks of Moose Jaw North at the Legislative Assembly, and thank you for the opportunity to deliver my maiden speech today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.