

December 15, 1986

EVENING SITTING

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

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

Mr. Van Mulligen: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I would extend to you my congratulations on your appointment. I can appreciate after only a few days of sittings that your job is a difficult one indeed, and my best wishes go with you, as do the wishes of the people of Regina Victoria.

Mr. Speaker, I want at the outset to thank the people of Regina Victoria for their support on October 20th. Their very strong support provides pause for reflecting upon the trust that they have placed in me. I can commit, Mr. Speaker, to speak without fear on their behalf. I can commit to work hard and long hours on their behalf. I can commit, Mr. Speaker, to be available to hear their thoughts, their concerns, and their problems no matter who they may have supported in the election. I look forward, Mr. Speaker, to the coming years and to doing the best job I can for the people of Regina Victoria.

The members of the House may not be too familiar with Regina Victoria, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to take just a few minutes to tell them a bit about my part of the province. Regina Victoria is that part of east central Regina bounded on the west by the Regina General Hospital and on the east by the Ring Road. The northern boundary is the CP Rail tracks and the southern boundary is primarily Broadway Avenue. Significant landmarks include, of course, Victoria Avenue, the *Leader-Post* building, the Al Ritchie centre, the Embury Heights senior citizens' residence, and churches —many churches, Mr. Speaker, churches that reflect the faiths and also the industry, the efforts of the many people who settled this area of Regina. In the main, these were people who worked in labouring, hourly-wage occupations, people who worked in the packing plants, in the industries, in the steel mills, in the shops; people who worked hard to make a better life for their families and who were committed to building a better community.

Many of these people were immigrants to our country. They came from Germany, the Ukraine, Romania, Poland, Hungary, Austria, China, and many other countries to start a new life in this great country. They took pride in their jobs, in their homes, and in their community. They didn't ask for much except the opportunity to work, the opportunity to educate their children, the right to their beliefs, and a fair shake from government.

Today Regina Victoria is experiencing a transition. As some of the first settlers pass on, new people are moving in. Young families, especially those getting a start as a family unit, are taking advantage of the moderately priced homes in our area. New immigrants from south-east Asia and other parts of the globe are adding a new vitality and diversity to our area.

We are also experiencing another type of migration – people from within Saskatchewan from the farms that would no longer support them, from the reserves that provided no opportunities. We welcome them all, Mr. Speaker. It makes Regina Victoria an interesting, dynamic, and diverse place in which to live.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the member from Saskatoon Eastview and the member from Pelly, and indeed all members from the government opposite for their contribution to this debate. Theirs is a very difficult job – that is to be praiseworthy about something that is unnoteworthy.

Now let me qualify that, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps there is something noteworthy about the Speech from the Throne. I think the throne speech clearly signals that the massive net immigration out of -Saskatchewan may have lessened, and that's because Peter Drucker has moved in. And I say this, Mr. Speaker, because according to the *Leader-Post*, Peter Drucker played a major role in the Speech from the Throne. And you might well ask who is Peter Drucker, Mr. Speaker. The back flap of his most recent book claims that Drucker has earned a reputation. I quote:

. . . as a trenchant, unorthodox, independent analyst of politics, economics, and society. Drucker has been required reading in many business courses for several years.

And it now seems that a 23-page article written by Drucker in the spring 1986 issue of *Foreign Affairs* is required reading for the members of the government.

What does this article have to say, Mr. Speaker? It opens with the line that:

. . . the world economy is not “changing”; it has *already changed* – in its foundation and in its structure – and in all probability the change is irreversible.

Now this is very deep stuff. Now the concept of change may come as a surprise to the members opposite, who are locked into the past – but not to New Democrats, who have been traditionally at the forefront of positive change, especially in Saskatchewan.

Drucker then goes on to discuss the three fundamental changes which have occurred in the world economy. The changes, I think, are given a moral tone by the use of the term “uncoupling” – better to be coupled with than an unworthy uncouple.

Firstly, Drucker states, “The primary products economy has come ‘uncoupled’ from the industrial economy.” Drucker suggests that world commodity prices are no longer tied to overall levels of industrial production.

And the question is: is this new? The reality is that potash prices have long had a cycle of their own. Grain prices have moved up and down with supply and demand. The price of energy products have been manipulated by an OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) cartel. And is this what the Premier calls the new world reality, Mr. Speaker? I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this is not new to anyone but the Premier.

Secondly, Drucker states, “In the industrial economy itself, production has come ‘uncoupled’ from employment.” Drucker claims that increases in manufacturing output have not led to more jobs in manufacturing. And I question whether this is news, Mr. Speaker.

The service sector has been the major source of jobs over the last two decades. According to Statistics Canada, from 1975 to 1981, service jobs grew by 5,300 per year in Saskatchewan. And between 1981 and 1985 they grew by 4,250 per year. Manufacturing grew by less than 1,000 per year. Most jobs that have been created in Saskatchewan have been in small business. Is this news or is this simple history? Yet the throne speech would make us believe that Drucker is news.

The shift to an information- and knowledge-based economy is also not news, Mr. Speaker. Policies of the NDP in the ‘70s to encourage the growth of high tech industries helped to establish the sector in the province —far-sighted policies, Mr. Speaker, from a party with a vision.

Thirdly, Drucker states, “Capital movements rather than trade . . . have become the driving force of the world economy.” Capital movements and trade” . . . have not quite come uncoupled but the link has become loose, and worse, unpredictable.” Capital movements have always been significant to the world economy, Mr. Speaker, and in the past NDP policy was aimed at encouraging capital to move into the province as well as encouraging savings of Saskatchewan people to remain in the province. Both Crown corporations and the private sector have a role to play in the Saskatchewan economy.

Mr. Speaker, there is one aspect of Drucker’s article which received scant attention in the throne speech. Drucker warns against deficits. He suggests that:

The American budget has become a financial “black Hole,” sucking in liquid funds from all over the world, making the United States the world’s major debtor country.

I wish the Premier had read Drucker in 1982, Mr. Speaker, because under the PC government Saskatchewan has become the financial black hole of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: -- Perhaps the deficit will receive more attention from future economic students as they puzzle over the reasons why, for example, the PC government provided significant tax incentives for an oil industry that at the time was enjoying its highest prices in history, meaning the government had to forego an estimated \$1 billion in revenues.

Mr. Speaker, Drucker also provides an explanation of why this uncoupling, or near uncoupling has taken place. He states, "We may never understand what has caused them . . ." He adds, "It may be a long time before economic theorists accept that there have been fundamental changes . . ." He concludes that, "Practitioners, whether in government or in business, cannot wait until there is a new theory. They have to act." And I would say that Drucker's views are similar to that of the PC government: act now, pay later. And simple concepts like, let's do some thinking and questioning before acting, seem to elude this government, Mr. Speaker. I certainly agree with the notion that you shouldn't say "whoa" in the middle of a mud hole, but I'm an even stronger believer in the notion, Mr. Speaker, that some careful planning will allow you to miss those mud holes altogether.

And just some examples, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member from Kindersley established what he called a "revolutionary flat tax." Flat tax from the flat earth society. The only question he asked, but after the fact, was, why did I not ask more questions before I did it? I guess the answer seems to be his shift out of the Finance department, Mr. Speaker.

Push for free trade and ask questions later. And that's what our Premier did. He endorsed free trade and then began to wonder what free trade was all about. He began to use terms like "freer trade" and then "assured access to world markets." In July he decided, after the fact, to ask the people of Saskatchewan what free trade really meant. And we're still waiting for the answers from the trade negotiations commission which toured the province in August.

Now Drucker reaches one major conclusion: economic dynamics have decisively shifted from the national economy to the world economy. If the Premier believes that this is news, then one has to wonder what economic textbooks he was using at university.

What does Drucker believe the U.S. should do about its problems? Because he was writing about the U.S.. And I quote directly from the article that the Premier is circulating:

Benign neglect – the policy of the Reagan Administration these last few years – may be the best policy that one can hope for, and the only one with a chance of success.

Benign neglect, Mr. Speaker: is that the PC approach? Benign neglect: is that going to be the new reality? Benign neglect: is that what Drucker is advocating? And is that the prophet that the Premier is trumpeting?

Mr. Speaker, Drucker states that the causes of economic change are rarely simple, and I agree with that, but obviously the government opposite doesn't. The PC government has always looked for simple answers to complex problems. Whatever happened with open for business? The Reach for the Future slogan, Mr. Speaker, of the last campaign, is another simple solution.

This government has yet to move beyond simple slogans and produce actual results, and there is nothing new in the speech except for the rhetoric. There is nothing new in their analysis of our problems and nothing new, I might add, in yet another assault from a right-wing government on the poor and defenceless.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: -- I want to turn now, Mr. Speaker, to a serious omission from the throne speech, and that is the lack of any program, clear or otherwise, for the province's urban municipalities. There is no recognition at all of the serious problems being faced by local government in the 1980s. There was no statement that property tax levels are an area of concern. There was no indication that there would be any attempt to reduce the property tax burden. And I thought that whatever song Brian was singing in Ottawa would find a chorus here. But I looked in vain for any provincial initiative, Mr. Speaker, for tax reform in concert with recent federal initiatives.

(1915)

Surely there was an opportunity to say something in light of the final report of the Local Government Finance Commission. Surely measures to strengthen local government and improve the fairness in taxes paid at the local level are important matters for a government to deal with. Mr. Speaker, a government that truly cares about its people would have made tax reform a matter of priority rather than ignore the issue.

Mr. Speaker, a government that was in touch with urban issues would also be aware of the very real need that municipalities face, and that municipalities need assistance to rejuvenate the municipal infrastructure throughout Saskatchewan. Indeed a government that was in touch would be aware of the need to expand that infrastructure. The estimates may vary, Mr. Speaker, but one thing is clear, in that there will be a major shift in population from our rural areas and into our urban areas as farmers give up the struggle in the face of falling prices for their commodities and increased costs of production and transportation. This migration will place a severe stress on municipal infrastructure and on municipal programs and services. Yet there is no recognition of this simple fact, Mr. Speaker.

The government's own program, Mr. Speaker, of building and diversifying ourselves, if it is to be successful, will mean increased demand for municipal services and infrastructure. In fact, a good infrastructure is needed to promote this program of building, and diversification. Just like we need facilities for tourists before we can promote tourism, we'll need to invest in roads, and water, and sewers, and sidewalks, and parks, and

culture and recreation, police, fire protection, health, and education, and social services, in order to build and diversify ourselves, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's municipalities have done a creditable job in managing their affairs over the years. By and large, our municipal leaders display a real sense of responsibility, foresight, imagination, patience, compassion, and intelligence, as they continue to keep tax increases to a minimum while maintaining services. Saskatchewan municipalities provide an excellent example of Saskatchewan people working co-operatively to run things themselves and to do it extremely well.

The PC government, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, could do much worse and probably not much better than to learn from our municipalities and other local institutions on how to provide services effectively and efficiently. If the government had done so, perhaps we would not have the financial mess we have today.

And in this context, Mr. Speaker, it is especially difficult to understand why the Minister of Finance for one, continues to exhort Regina city council to get its financial affairs in order. Expenditure growth, Mr. Speaker, as one example in the city of Regina, has been less than that of the PC government. Less. They do a better job of holding the line. It is simply incredible that a Finance minister who presides over an unprecedented lowering of the province's credit rating, and who is up to his neck in a fiscal swamp, would seek to admonish a jurisdiction that is maintaining its rating and is, simply put, doing a much better job. It's incredible, Mr. Speaker, simply incredible.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: -- Mr. Speaker, in April 1985 the president of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, Herb Taylor wrote to the then minister of Finance to indicate that organization's concern with the lack of support for urban government. In summing up Mr. Taylor said, and I quote:

To sum up then, it seems to us that the overall attitude towards local urban government is to hold the line in so far as provincial contribution is concerned, and to let property tax burden increase and increase substantially. The property taxpayers are going to be severely burdened, in our view, this year by virtue of the fact that you have put on a 1 per cent flat tax on that income. You have removed the property tax rebate. You have increased our local tax burden by simply not providing any more funds to revenue sharing.

Nothing seems to have changed, Mr. Speaker, except that the challenge for municipalities has become even more difficult, and nothing in the throne speech would suggest the government is about to adopt a more responsive attitude to the concerns of local government and to the concerns of urban people.

Mr. Speaker, it's not too late for the PC government to show it cares for the concerns of urban people. They have a new mandate, and even if they are under-represented in our

urban areas, they can and they should start anew to forge a better relationship with the people in our cities, towns, and villages. And to do this, Mr. Speaker, they must be prepared to work with urban people and their local government in a spirit of co-operation, with a real sense of understanding of urban concerns and with a commitment to respond. Continued arrogance and forcing their agenda on urban people will not work. It hasn't worked and will not work.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: -- Mr. Speaker, I just want to touch briefly on the basic theme that prevails throughout the throne speech, and that is that times are so tough, the future is so bleak, resource revenues have fallen so significantly, the cost to the taxpayers of providing services in programs must be constrained. There is a sense here, Mr. Speaker, of: we can't help ourselves; the situation is so bad; and therefore services and programs that help people must be put on the chopping block.

And as I listened to His Honour, Mr. Speaker, I kept thinking of another American. – not Peter Drucker, but of the American comedian, Flip Wilson. And Flip Wilson created a character called Geraldine Jones. And Geraldine Jones would explain every transgression from accepted behaviour and every falling by the wayside by, "The devil made me do it." And, Mr. Speaker, whether it's the devil or Drucker that's making them do it, I want to put the government on notice that you had better move above-board, caringly, sensitively, cautiously, and intelligently, as you set out to remake the social framework of this province. If you do that, you can expect to receive some co-operation from our side. Anything less than that, and you will find out what opposition really means in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: -- Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute to our leader, the hon. member from Regina Elphinstone. I need not dwell on his considerable achievements as premier of Saskatchewan. I think those are a matter of record – a record that will indicate intelligent and strong leadership; a record that will note a period of strong, sustained growth and excellent management under his leadership, and will also record no deficits, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: -- I do want to say something, Mr. Speaker, about his tenure as Leader of the Opposition. And it is truly awesome and inspiring to have witnessed the excellent job he did as our leader since 1982. To lead the New Democratic Party in the legislature with so few members, and lead it so magnificently, is a testament to his skills and abilities, and strong evidence, I think, of his love for Saskatchewan and for his party.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: -- And as a member of the legislature, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased and proud to benefit from his leadership today.

Mr. Speaker, as I went through the throne speech, as I listened to the self-serving accolades of the members opposite about the government's programs and so on, I looked back at the October 20th election and the results of that election, Mr. Speaker. And I think to myself: are we talking about the same province? Because surely the things that concern people and surely the things that matter to people are not contained or addressed in that Speech from the Throne. Surely you haven't addressed jobs; surely you haven't addressed fairness in taxation; surely you haven't addressed caring; and it's for all those reasons, Mr. Speaker, and those omissions, that I simply cannot support the motion that is before us. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muller: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the constituency of Shellbrook-Torch River, it's a privilege for me to enter into the throne speech debate this evening. I must, of course, add my congratulations to the long list that has commended you on your election as Speaker of this Legislative Assembly. Having had the opportunity to work with you in the past and certainly looking forward to working with you in the future for many years, it's going to be really interesting and a challenge to myself.

I congratulate too, Mr. Speaker, each member elected to the legislature. Especially I welcome each new member. I want to welcome them all and I look forward to working with them all.

I will never be able to fully express my deep appreciation for the efforts of my supporters during the recent campaign. When my confidence seemed to waver, they picked up the slack and put me back on my feet. And as you can easily see, Mr. Speaker, these people are indeed very special to me.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech delivered by Lieutenant Governor Frederick Johnson could not have come at a better time. Fresh with a new mandate to serve the people of Saskatchewan, your Progressive Conservative government is determined to continue diversifying and developing an economy which depends so heavily on agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, in a few minutes I will provide some examples which have already been developed by our government, but for now I want to continue with our government's commitment to build a strong and more secure future for its people.

Mr. Speaker, since 1982 we have established and followed through with our commitment to provide for the needs and aspirations of individual families and communities. As indicated in the Speech from the Throne, that commitment is alive and well.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech also focuses on the need for effective and efficient use of government resources, and certainly, given the economic situation surrounding us, this is essential direction for our PC government to take.

The plan to introduce legislation in allowing rural development corporations to utilize local initiatives and capital will undoubtedly assist in our province's growth. The five-year, \$50 million commitment to assist our small-business community to keep up with the latest technology available is a future step toward strengthening our economic situation.

Mr. Speaker, the priorities of the PC government were made very clear over the past four and a half years. In agriculture, job creation, education, no effort or resources were spared in order to meet the demands these areas faced.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan farmers have gone through some of the toughest times – droughts, floods, low commodity prices, unfair international competition, to name just a few – yet our PC government has stood beside them every step of the way.

Our programs put the necessary cash in their pockets, and as evidenced in this Assembly on Tuesday, the determination of our Premier has further added substantial flow of new money and to farm families throughout Saskatchewan.

In the throne speech, Mr. Speaker, we are moving to reduce input costs for producers by encouraging the manufacture of agricultural chemicals and fertilizers. And, Mr. Speaker, the throne speech also identified further protection for farmers through legislation to extend the provisions of The Farm Land Security Act and The Farmers' Counselling and Assistance Act, both measures I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, that farmers are not unreasonably foreclosed upon and that they receive appropriate counselling and loan guarantees.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few of the initiatives contained in the Speech from the Throne. And of course, Mr. Speaker, we will continue to work closely with individuals, organizations and business, and industrial concerns, co-operating on every opportunity to make this province a better place to live.

Our PC government's determination to diversify the economy is based on the benefits that will be derived. Mr. Speaker, I'm talking about more new jobs. It is this government's responsibility to provide the opportunity for employment, a responsibility we met since 1982 and furthered through our support for small business and industrial growth.

(1930)

And, Mr. Speaker, to prepare our young people to assist in ensuring our province's future economic development, new educational opportunities are being provided along with an assurance that they are getting an education they require.

Mr. Speaker, I said a few minutes ago that I wanted to provide some specific examples of economic development created through our Progressive Conservative government's initiatives. I want to note the following examples: the bacon plant in North Battleford; the Phillips cable plant in Moose Jaw; the new pharmaceutical plant in Swift Current; expansion to Intercontinental Packers in Saskatoon; and, Mr. Speaker, the purchase of the Prince Albert Pulp Company, PAPCO, by Weyerhaeuser Canada. And just to elaborate on that a little bit, it happens to be in the city of Prince Albert. That part of the city of Prince Albert is represented by one of the members on the government side, which is myself. I represent the largest land mass in the city of Prince Albert, everything north of the river, and it's certainly going to be a pleasure to me when we open the new paper-mill in Prince Albert. I really feel that that's going to be one of the biggest things that's hit that ... Other than Northern Institute of Technology, but I'll say a few words about that later.

Mr. Speaker, with the purchase of PAPCO (Prince Albert Pulp Company) by Weyerhaeuser, the current pulp mill will be modernized, preserving jobs already there. The new paper-mill will create new permanent jobs as well as hundreds of indirect jobs and related economic benefits. In addition, Mr. Speaker, there will be up to 500 jobs at the peak of construction.

Mr. Speaker, our PC government believes in action, not reaction. And since 1982 we have taken action to develop our economy. Mr. Speaker, the people that I represent in Shellbrook-Torch River constituency understand and appreciate our PC government's dedication to strengthening our economy.

Mr. Speaker, one other incentive developed just recently by our government will have a major and beneficial impact on our constituency. Mr. Speaker, our constituency has for decades called for further development of tourism in our province – and that's very important to me.

The development of a new tourist and hospitality institute in Saskatchewan, and a five-year, \$50 million program to stimulate tourism industry expansion, is truly great news.

I have the only rural municipality in the province of Saskatchewan that doesn't have one farmer. The Lakeland R.M. is all resort and lakes and cabins and small business. And of course I have the area of Candle Lake, Prince Albert National Park, and Waskesiu. And there isn't a much more beautiful tourist area in all of western Canada than the constituency of Shellbrook-Torch River.

And this is a real incentive for the people in that area, small-business men and outfitters, to attract tourists in there.

Mr. Speaker, the record of delivery of our PC government to the people of Shellbrook-Torch River is well noted. New school construction and renovation. And this is really important, because there's many new schools and additions to schools in my constituency. And it certainly fits right in with the whole education system, with the

Northern Institute of Technology which this government built in Prince Albert, and the expansion to the community college.

The other two members from Prince Albert will try and tell you that the Northern Institute of Technology was budgeted for in the 1982 budget. But that budget never passed the legislature. It's easy to put something into the budget if you don't pass it, if you just call an election and then lose. So they never did intend to build the Northern Institute of Technology. They never intended to make Prince Albert the northern educational centre that it is today. And certainly the expansion of the community college, which certainly allows the young people in that area to take two years of university study before they go on to further education, is certainly a plus for our area.

They've tried to take credit for it. But certainly the former members there could take a little credit, and probably myself, had a lot to do with getting that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muller: -- But I want to relate to you, Mr. Speaker, the new schools and the additions that have been built in my constituency and are going to fit right in so that children are going to be able to take their grade 12 education at these schools and then move into the specialty education in Prince Albert in the northern institute and the community college.

There's new school construction and renovation at the Meath Park School totalling \$693,000 – this is since 1982; there was very little done prior to that – the Spruce Home Elementary School totalling \$940,000; Wild Rose totalling \$77,000; the Paddockwood Elementary School totalling \$1.34 million – that's a brand-new school that they'd waited there for years and years. They've been trying to get a new school in that town for many, many years and were unable to turn their local MLA's head at all in that direction. And certainly they're proud of that school; and of course the W.P. Sandin Composite School in Shellbrook totalling \$1 million. So these people that go to these educational facilities now will have other better facilities in Prince Albert to further their education on as soon as they are done with their grade 12.

And, Mr. Speaker, the one thing that I'm very proud of is the new 30-bed special care home has been approved for the village of Canwood for the spring of 1987, and I've certainly worked very closely with the former minister of Health to get that put in place.

I must stop here for a couple of minutes. I have to make some comments on some comments that were made towards us the other day from the other side of the House. The member from Regina North West said that if he looked across here, all he could see was people with oil on their boots and leather letterheads on their stationery. Well I would like to tell him and the member from Humboldt who said that we were all rich farmers on this side of the House, I would like to tell him, or both of them, that if it wasn't for small- and medium-sized farmers like myself getting interested in 1982 and coming into this

legislature and making policy, the family farm as you know it today would no longer be there.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muller: -- The uncaring government of the day let interest rates go to 24 per cent. They didn't really care what happened to us, but they were willing to buy our farm. That was the only way that they could see keeping farmers in business. Well I'll tell you, our low-interest policies and the things that we've done for agriculture in Saskatchewan have certainly helped farmers more than purchasing their farm.

An Hon. Member: -- And they're appreciated.

Mr. Muller: -- And they certainly are appreciated and I think it shows.

As far as me having leather letterheads on my stationery or oil on my boots, it's not very likely. If you were to come up into my country in July, it may look like light crude to somebody from the South, but I assure you it isn't.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud of our government's record. We feel privileged to be part of the building we are continuing to provide for our great province.

Mr. Speaker, I fully endorse the Speech from the Throne and look forward to representing the needs and desires of my constituents in this Assembly. With that, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to take part in this throne speech debate this evening and to be representing the constituents of Saskatoon University here in the Legislative Assembly.

I'd like to begin, Mr. Speaker, by thanking my constituents who have returned me to the legislature after an absence of four years. I'm deeply grateful to the constituents of Saskatoon University for the support that they've demonstrated for the New Democratic Party and for myself. And I pledge myself to do my very best to represent them in the coming four years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: -- Mr. Speaker, I also want to express my thanks publicly here tonight to the more than 200 people who gave of their time during the months of September and October to send me here to the legislature. I appreciated their support and their help a great deal.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: -- And I want to, Mr. Speaker, on this my first opportunity to speak formally in the Assembly, extend my congratulations to Mr. Rick Folk and Mr. Bob Crowe who represented the conservative and Liberal parties in my constituency in the last election. They conducted a gentlemanly campaign. They were worthy opponents, and I want to extend my congratulations to them.

Mr. Speaker, I have two more comments that I'd like to make in terms of expressions of thanks before I go into the main body of my text tonight. One is that I'd like to express my thanks to my family who've been a great source of support over these past years: my mother and father, Trudy and Reg Prebble; my wife Christine; and my father-in-law and mother-in-law, Ben Smilie and Adele Smilie, who have a long tradition of political activity in this province and have been a great source of support to me personally.

Mr. Speaker, finally I would like to express my congratulations to you on your election as Speaker. I know that you'll serve this Assembly well and I wish you well in your endeavours.

I'd like now, Mr. Speaker, to turn to the main text of my comments this evening. My constituents have sent me here to represent them, I think, for five basic reasons which I'd like to elaborate on briefly tonight. And essentially, Mr. Speaker, those reasons largely explain why I will be opposing the motion in support of the throne speech this evening, instead of supporting it, because the things that my constituents are concerned about are primarily the things that are missing in the throne speech.

The first one, Mr. Speaker is that there's no reference in this speech to a job creation strategy for this province. There's no plan for long-term job creation outlined in the throne speech.

The second reason, Mr. Speaker, and one of the major concerns of my constituents was that they were upset about the unfair tax increases that the Government of Saskatchewan imposed over the last four years. They were upset about the removal of the property tax rebates. They felt that the flat tax that was imposed two years ago was unfair, because while the average person would have to fork out their share of the flat tax, a well-to-do person, who had a number of investments that they could use to write their flat tax off, didn't have to pay anything. They basically felt, Mr. Speaker, that that was unfair.

A third concern that they had was the rapidly growing hospital waiting list in Saskatoon. And we see no indication in the throne speech tonight that that problem is going to be dealt with.

A fourth concern that they had was that they felt, Mr. Speaker, that this government was not serious about making a long-term funding commitment to our universities and our technical institutes in this province. And they were concerned . . . My constituents are concerned about what they see as a deteriorating quality of education on the university campus, and rightly so.

Mr. Speaker, about a third of my constituents are students. And one of the things that they were very unhappy about was the fact that two years ago there were major cuts in the Saskatchewan student bursary program in terms of students who had accessibility to that program. And we see no indication in the throne speech tonight, Mr. Speaker, that that situation is going to be reversed.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, I believe that my constituents sent me here because they saw in the New Democratic Party a voice on behalf of the environment and environmental protection that they did not see in government members opposite. And again, Mr. Speaker, we see no reference in the throne speech tonight on that concern.

Now what I'd like to do, in the time that I have this evening, is elaborate on each of these points, if I may, and explain therefore, why I cannot, in good conscience, support the throne speech as it's been presented to us this evening.

The first thing as I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, that the throne speech doesn't offer is that there's no blueprint in the throne speech for solving what I consider to be Saskatchewan's most urgent problem, and that is our rapidly growing unemployment rate.

(1945)

I go along in parts of my constituency, Mr. Speaker, particularly in a lot of the areas in my constituency where there's a high density of apartments, and I can visit in a set of apartment blocks and find 15 to 20 per cent unemployment among a lot of the people that live there, particularly among young people. Mr. Speaker, I consider that this is an outrageous reality in Saskatoon and in Saskatchewan today, and I see nothing in the throne speech that will deal with that.

In my view, the focus of a new job strategy should be the number one priority of the members opposite, the government of the day. Mr. Speaker, what we need is a job strategy that will be based on supporting locally owned small business and co-operative enterprise, rather than depending on megaprojects that are largely controlled by large business interests from outside this province. What we need, Mr. Speaker, is a new job strategy that will be founded on environmentally sustainable economic development that emphasize self-sufficiency.

And I'd like to put forward a few specific proposals for that kind of a job strategy this evening, Mr. Speaker. The kinds of projects that would meet the criteria that I've put forward are these.

First of all, a major energy conservation program is needed in this province, Mr. Speaker. And government assistance is needed to home owners and to small-business people to be able to insulate their homes and their businesses, and their farms, upgrade the energy efficiency of their buildings, thereby reduce the amount of natural gas that needs to be

purchased from out of province, Mr. Speaker, and reduce the amount of money that has to be put into electrical generating stations.

The government opposite, Mr. Speaker, in my view, would be wise to cancel projects like the \$500 million Shand power project and instead put the money into a major energy conservation investment in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Because it's been proven again and again, around the world, that money invested in conservation will generate a far larger saving in energy than any equivalent investment in energy generating projects will ever create in terms of energy, Mr. Speaker.

Yet the government opposite has failed to realize that reality and are charging the taxpayers of this province hefty bills through Saskatchewan Power Corporation for building more and more energy generation projects like Shand, Mr. Speaker, when alternatively, they should be putting the money into conservation instead. And I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that because members opposite are failing to do that, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan will see higher and higher energy bills in years to come because of the failure of their policy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: -- Now, Mr. Speaker, an investment in energy conservation would result in jobs being created in every Saskatchewan community across this province. People in the construction industry, in the glass industry, and the insulation industry, sheet metal workers, people who are interested in renewable energy sources like solar energy, would all benefit enormously in local communities across this province from that kind of an investment. It would create jobs in a way that few other projects would, Mr. Speaker.

A second example of this kind of more decentralized, human-scale, environmentally sustainable economic development would be one of the proposals that we put forward as a party during the election campaign. And that was a 10-year commitment to a major program of reforestation and intensive forest management in this province, Mr. Speaker.

We've got a situation right now in the northern part of this province where we have 900,000 clear-cut acres, Mr. Speaker, that have never been replanted. And it's time, Mr. Speaker, to get on with the job of replanting the northern forest so that we can be sure of jobs in the future from our forestry industry, which generates 8,000 permanent jobs a year, Mr. Speaker. We can't afford to lose those jobs. And we could create new jobs in forestry through a major reforestation and intensive forest management investment, and I urge the members opposite to initiate such an investment.

I want to give a third example, Mr. Speaker, and that is that I've long been of the view that instead of having a fish marketing agency that is controlled out of Winnipeg, as we currently have, what we need instead is a strategy in this province, Mr. Speaker, for marketing the fish that are caught and produced in this province, marketing them in Saskatchewan. It's time for us to process and market our own fish locally.

I should have no trouble going into a Saskatchewan restaurant, Mr. Speaker, and purchasing Saskatchewan fish, but I do. Most restaurants in this province don't provide fresh Saskatchewan fish right now, but I think that's unfortunate. And it reflects the fact that we don't have a local marketing strategy which could create local jobs with a marketing agency, Mr. Speaker, that would be owned and controlled by northern fishermen.

A fourth thing, Mr. Speaker, or fourth initiative that I'd like to see that I think would create a lot of employment in this province and that would be a long-term, environmentally sustainable investment, would be for the Government of Saskatchewan to encourage and support a locally controlled, privately owned vegetable industry and fruit industry in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: -- There is no need, Mr. Speaker, for us to be in a situation in this province where when we walk into the average grocery store, 90 per cent of what we see on the shelves has come in from out of province. Mr. Speaker, every time people purchase out-of-province vegetables and fruits, we see more lost job opportunities in this province. Instead, the vegetables and the fruits should be grown right here in Saskatchewan. And a city such as my own in Saskatoon, or the city of Regina, or any other major centre in this province, Mr. Speaker, is quite capable of supporting that kind of an industry.

Members opposite could be promoting that kind of an initiative by making sure that there are year-round storage supplies for vegetable producers in this province so that they can supply supermarkets on a year-round basis. And there should be financial assistance for new vegetable growers to get into the industry, Mr. Speaker. We're quite capable of growing our own carrots, our own lettuce, our own tomatoes here in Saskatchewan, and it's time we got on with the job of doing it and created work for people who need it, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: -- A fifth area, Mr. Speaker, a fifth example of an environmentally sustainable job-creating initiative would be for the Government of Saskatchewan to start to take seriously the job that's required of promoting soil conservation in this province, and we've seen this for many years now over the last decade. In the spring when we've had heavy winds and there's been heavy soil drifting, we've seen, for instance, the consequences of failing to have a good shelter-belt program in this province. People could be productively employed planting shelter-belts around some of the key wind-drift areas of this province where we've had heavy soil drifting over the last few years, Mr. Speaker.

People could be productively employed starting to clean up some of the dozens and dozens of dump sites in this province where there are large amounts of toxic and hazardous wastes, in many cases that threaten aquifers, and that the government has

failed to do anything about over the last few years. It's urgent, Mr. Speaker, that that kind of an environmental hazard be cleaned up. Why not take this opportunity to get on with that job while there are people looking for work and there is a job to be done?

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this government should establish an environmental protection fund and use some of the revenues that are generated from resource development in this province, place them in that fund and use the environmental protection fund as a source of employment for people who are going to undertake environmentally sustainable activity, or who are going to be involved in projects and job creation designed to clean up the environment.

Mr. Speaker, I want to move on now to another topic, and that's the question of taxes and tax reform. And one of the things I want to say, Mr. Speaker, one of the greatest disappointments about this throne speech, is that there is no indication of any kind of tax relief for the average taxpayer of Saskatchewan, while companies like Weyerhaeuser are able to buy the Prince Albert Pulp Company and make no down payment, had have to make no annual payment unless they make a profit of 20 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

While that's going on on the one hand under the policies of the government opposite, on the other hand we've seen the average taxpayer of this province lose over \$200 as a result of losing the property tax rebate; in many cases have to pay out another \$180 to \$300, depending on their salary, to meet their commitments for the government's new flat tax. And that's just patently unfair, Mr. Speaker.

And my constituents want to see, Mr. Speaker, a restoration of the property tax rebate. They want to see the flat tax abolished once and for all. The members on this side are committed to working for that, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: -- A third concern of my constituents, Mr. Speaker, is that they are alarmed and perturbed, as am I, about the growing hospital waiting list in Saskatoon. We now have 8,535 people, Mr. Speaker, waiting to gain entrance to one of the three hospitals in our city. I've got constituents, Mr. Speaker, I've got one constituent who's been due for hip surgery that's classified as urgent. Her doctor's been trying to get her into the hospital since June and it's only in December, late December that she's going to be able to get in. Now that's just appalling, Mr. Speaker. She's been suffering a lot of pain as a result of not being able to get into the hospital and it's high time that members opposite, as the Government of Saskatchewan, made a major commitment of funds to hiring additional staff in our hospitals in Saskatoon and Regina so that those waiting lists can be gotten down. Because the problem is not a lack of beds, Mr. Speaker, it's a lack of staff. And that problem has to be remedied immediately. It's a very urgent matter.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: -- Members opposite could also go a long way to remedying the problem, Mr. Speaker, if they would build additional level 4 nursing home beds in the city so that some of the people in hospital right now who are requiring level 4 nursing care could move into a level 4 nursing facility where they would be comfortable, and some of the beds that are in the hospital right now, that through no fault of their own they occupy, could be freed up for people requiring elective surgery. An initiative of that kind, Mr. Speaker, would go a long way to resolving the problem in Saskatoon, and I urge the government to implement it.

Mr. Speaker, one of the major concerns of my constituents is the deteriorating quality of education at the University of Saskatchewan and at the University of Regina that's come about as a result of a lack of funding commitment by this government to post-secondary education. We heard members opposite, Mr. Speaker, during this throne speech debate and during question period, claim that they'd done a good job in terms of looking after the needs of our post-secondary educational institutions.

Well I beg to differ, Mr. Speaker, because the constituents whom I represent in Saskatoon University – many of whom are faculty, staff, and students at the university – their experience has been that there has been a series of tight budgets which have resulted in an unprecedented funding crisis at the University of Saskatchewan.

There is a severe shortage, Mr. Speaker, of funds for basic, essential services on our campus, like our library, for instance. Our library, unfortunately, was recently ranked as 98th out of 104 libraries surveyed in North America as a result of a lack of funds to put in place new books, new periodicals, and other new library acquisitions that are essential to maintaining a high quality library. And that's as a result of the lack of a funding commitment, and we see no evidence of change of that in the throne speech, Mr. Speaker.

I've got a situation in my riding, Mr. Speaker, where my constituents who are students at the University of Saskatchewan are forced to go into classes of 250, 350 – introductory classes. You can't have a meaningful relationship with a professor in a class of 350, Mr. Speaker. That's what a lot of classes like the first year psychology classes at the University of Saskatchewan are right now, and that's simply unacceptable. And it comes about as a result of a lack of a funding commitment by this government to the University of Saskatchewan.

There has been a 30 per cent enrolment increase at the University of Saskatchewan over the last few years, Mr. Speaker, and there has been no additional money for permanent new faculty or permanent new staff despite that funding increase. Now I don't call that a commitment to quality education, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite may, but I do not.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: -- I call on the government to make a long-term, five-year operating funding commitment to the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina that will guarantee, Mr. Speaker, that the real cost increases that those two campuses face

each year are covered every year; and the, that in addition to that, Mr. Speaker, that the government provide supplementary catch-up funds each year for the hiring of additional faculty and additional staff so that we, in fact, over a four- to five-year period can see a real improvement in the quality of education on the university campuses.

That's what's required, Mr. Speaker. Not idle rhetoric to a commitment to quality education but a funding commitment – a long-term funding commitment to quality post-secondary education, Mr. Speaker. That's what the members on this side of the House stand for and that's what we call on members opposite to implement.

Mr. Speaker, I want to now turn to a final area of concern to my constituents, and that is in general the question of a commitment to peace and a commitment to a safer environment in this province and globally, Mr. Speaker. I want to specifically address four issues in talking about this commitment that's required.

(2000)

The first one I want to talk about, Mr. Speaker, is the Rafferty dam which I find to be a very interesting project – a project being promoted by the members opposite, a project that's going to involve a large financial commitment which taxpayers in Saskatchewan will have to pay for some time, in the range of \$100 million. And, Mr. Speaker, I call tonight upon members opposite to cancel the Rafferty dam immediately – to cancel it because it's an unnecessary project. It's going to cause a great deal of environmental damage, and it's a project, Mr. Speaker, that's filled to the brim with patronage, no matter how you look at it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: -- Now, Mr. Speaker, what the Rafferty dam really translates into when you look at the details, is the creation of a giant mud-flat, Mr. Speaker. That's what we're going to see in the Souris Valley when this is all done. Some people, Mr. Speaker, have suggested that the mud-flat will be so big that perhaps members opposite will want to sponsor the international mud wrestling contest.

But, Mr. Speaker, I have a different sense of perhaps why the member from Estevan wants to build this project. He's looking for a mud hole to say "whoa" in, Mr. Speaker. That's all I can think of, because Rafferty is going to be an environmental disaster. This beautiful valley, Mr. Speaker, is going to be flooded. Thousands of valuable acres of hay land and grain land are going to be destroyed, Mr. Speaker. We're going to see three community pastures flooded by this unnecessary dam, Mr. Speaker. One of the nicest parks in southern Saskatchewan, the Doctor Mainprize Park, is going to be destroyed by this project, Mr. Speaker.

And what's it all in aid of, Mr. Speaker? It's in aid of two things. One, supplying water to the Rafferty dam, which is not . . . or to the Shand power project rather, which would not be needed at all if the government would decide to air-cool the project; and second, it's

being built for the purposes of providing 100-year flood control relief to the city of Minot.

Well I say, Mr. Speaker, that it's not the responsibility of the taxpayers of Saskatchewan and the residents of Saskatchewan to provide flood control to the city of Minot. That's their responsibility. Our responsibility is to make sure that taxpayers' dollars are well spent, and to protect the environment. And the Rafferty dam project does neither, Mr. Speaker. It's a disgraceful project, and the disgrace is added to by the fact that some of the notable personalities in Saskatchewan Power Corporation's leadership happen to have land in the vicinity. Now, Mr. Speaker, I urge the government opposite to cancel this project immediately.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: -- Mr. Speaker, a second environmental issue that I wish to raise tonight and that I raised in the Assembly six years ago, Mr. Speaker, when I last had my seat here . . . Six years ago I raised the question of 2,4-D being identified as a cancer-causing substance and I urged the minister of Agriculture of the day to begin the process of phasing out the use of 2,4-D in Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, today the evidence on 2,4-D is unequivocal. We've had a recent study done in Kansas, in the state of Kansas, which indicates clearly that 2,4-D is cancer-causing. Now this major weed control agent has been used in this province for the last 30 years, and this means that the farmers of Saskatchewan and the home owners of Saskatchewan in their gardens and their other domestic uses have been exposed to a cancer-causing substance for the last 30 years. Now, Mr. Speaker, it's time to bring this atrocity to an end. If we wonder why cancer is on the increase it's because of things like the use of 2,4-D. We cannot continue to promote and permit the use of a cancer-causing agent on Saskatchewan farms and in Saskatchewan gardens across this province without even any warning to the users involved.

Now, Mr. Speaker, because Health and Welfare Canada is now clearly lobbying the Government of Canada to have 2,4-D banned, surely the time has come for this legislature to provide the leadership that is required to do two things: first of all, to accelerate the phase-out of 2,4-D as a weed control agent by the farm community in this province; and to begin the process of helping and supporting farmers to put alternative methods of pest control into place. And secondly, Mr. Speaker, the time has come for this legislature to ban the use of 2,4-D in homes and gardens.

It's absolutely ridiculous, Mr. Speaker, that consumers of this province, that home owners of this province, should be encouraged and told that they can safely use a lot of the weed control agents that incorporate 2,4-D in their gardens and on their lawns, without being told that it's cancer-causing. Every summer, Mr. Speaker, for the last 30 years in this province, little children have wandered across lawns where 2,4-D has been applied and no one has told the parents involved that the substance is cancer-causing. And it's time to bring that kind of nonsense, Mr. Speaker, to an end.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: -- Third, and finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to address the question of uranium mining, which as members of this House and my constituency know, has been a long-time concern of mine.

And, Mr. Speaker, the first thing I want to say is that over the last four years, since I last sat in this Assembly, there has been a dramatic development in terms of proposed new uranium developments in this province. And the site of most of those uranium mines, Mr. Speaker, has been the Wollaston Lake area. And we now have a situation emerging where we have already one uranium mine, the Collins Bay B zone uranium mine that is located right on the edge of Wollaston lake. It's as close to Wollaston Lake, Mr. Speaker, as the average cottage in Saskatchewan is to a lakeshore. It's about 100 yards away.

I find it ludicrous, Mr. Speaker, that we can tolerate the mining of tens of millions of tons of radioactive material within a stone's throw of a major commercial fishery resource in this province. But what is even more alarming, Mr. Speaker, is that what we're going to see in the next few years, if this legislature doesn't put a stop to it, is three other uranium mines located right along the edge of Wollaston Lake, all controlled by Eldorado Nuclear, the federal Crown corporation. And in some cases Eldorado will be working in co-operation with the provincial government's Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation.

Now it is almost certain, Mr. Speaker, that if we see a situation where there are four to six uranium mines located on the edge of a major commercial fishery resource like Wollaston Lake, that Wollaston Lake will be irreparably polluted in the long term as a result of those uranium mines operating and leaving their legacy of radioactive tailings which will be radioactive, Mr. Speaker, of over 150,000 years.

Mr. Speaker, secondly, I want to alert members of the Assembly and members of the public to the fact that over the last four years there has been a lot of additional evidence pointing to the reality that -Saskatchewan uranium is being used in nuclear weapons – not just by countries like South Korea, where the military government purchases uranium from Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation on an annual basis, and almost assuredly diverts at least small amounts of it into its weapons program – but no, Mr. Speaker, in addition to military dictatorships like South Korea, which the Government of Saskatchewan sells uranium to, we now have clear evidence that some of our major customers like France and the United States are using Saskatchewan uranium for nuclear weapons purposes, Mr. Speaker. In fact, the situation has deteriorated to the point where 5 out of every 6 pounds of uranium that this province sells to the United States becomes part of a military stockpile that the United States draws upon daily to manufacture hydrogen bombs and to breed plutonium for things like the MX missile.

In other words, Mr. Speaker. There's a little bit of Saskatchewan uranium in almost every U.S. nuclear weapon that's being made today. And we don't hear a sound from the

government opposite, Mr. Speaker. They continue to allow Saskatchewan uranium to be sold for nuclear weapons purposes and they don't ask a single question about what happens to us, Mr. Speaker. And this I think, Mr. Speaker, is a disgrace. And it's a disgrace that every Saskatchewan resident who learns and knows about it will share, I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, with members on this side of the House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: -- Mr. Speaker, we see a situation in northern Saskatchewan now, at Cigar Lake, the richest uranium deposit in the world, where the Government of Saskatchewan, members opposite, are going to be going in partnership with COGEMA, the company, Mr. Speaker, that's controlled by the French atomic energy agency -- which in other words, Mr. Speaker, COGEMA is the people who test nuclear weapons in the South Pacific.

COGEMA is controlled by the same people, Mr. Speaker, who arranged the blowing up of the *Rain Warrior* in New Zealand last year, Mr. Speaker. COGEMA, Mr. Speaker, is going to be the partner of the Government of Saskatchewan in a venture, Mr. Speaker, at Cigar Lake. And I find that, Mr. Speaker, to be intolerable because what that means is that COGEMA will be supplying uranium to the French industry, and will be purchasing uranium itself, Mr. Speaker, which it is on record as stating that it is not prepared to separate the military and civilian uses of the uranium that it purchases. And yet government members opposite not only freely sell to it, but they're now going to go in partnership with it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it's my view that Cigar Lake should be cancelled; that this partnership between Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation and COGEMA should be cancelled, and that sales of uranium to France and the United States should be immediately cancelled because neither country is prepared to assure Saskatchewan residents, at this point, that our uranium will not be used in their nuclear weapons programs.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: -- Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to touch on just one other aspect of this nuclear debate before I close, and that is that I was alarmed to see that shortly after the Chernobyl accident occurred in the spring of this year, one of the senior members of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation was in Saskatoon telling a local business audience that Saskatchewan Power Corporation is still actively considering nuclear power as an option for this province in the long term. And, Mr. Speaker, I find that to be absolutely bizarre in light of the consequences of the Chernobyl accident.

Mr. Speaker, I think the consequences of Chernobyl are now well-known to the Saskatchewan public. I want to only touch on two.

First of all, it's been well established that the consequences of that accident in the Soviet Union alone, Mr. Speaker, will result in over 6,000 excess cancers, and that's just in the Soviet Union. It doesn't include the rest of western Europe, for which there is no accurate estimate yet.

And second, Mr. Speaker, I want to say to members of this House and members of the public listening tonight that the longer-term consequences of Chernobyl are just beginning to become clear, and I want to give one example. In Norway, Sweden, and Denmark it's now clear that the residents of those three countries who have long depended for, as a major source of their livelihood, on caribou hunting – namely the Lapps – are now not going to be able to hunt caribou for at least the next decade and probably the next 20 years, Mr. Speaker. The Lapps are going to be forced onto an existence of social welfare as a result of caribou and reindeer hunting being destroyed in their country, Mr. Speaker. And that reason that the caribou and reindeer hunting has been destroyed is because of the legacy of radioactive contamination that the Chernobyl accident in the Ukraine has left. That's just one example of the irreparable damage that has been caused by Chernobyl.

Now the Saskatchewan Power Corporation officials, Mr. Speaker, are contemplating the construction of a nuclear reactor, still, in this province – after Chernobyl – and I find that to be absolutely unbelievable. Why would we want to locate, Mr. Speaker, a nuclear power station in a province that is one of the bread baskets of the world and risk the contamination of crops and water supplies in the event of any sort of a serious nuclear accident? I say, Mr. Speaker, that that's completely unacceptable.

So I call on the government tonight to do the sensible thing in light of the fact that there is no solution in sight to the problem of how to look after long-lived radioactive wastes; in light of the fact that the problem of radioactive tailings in northern Saskatchewan is rapidly growing; in light of the fact that we now know that at least three countries we sell to, three major customers of uranium – South Korea, France and the United States – all allow our uranium, or in some cases very consciously use our uranium, to be used in their nuclear weapons programs, Mr. Speaker. And in light of the disastrous consequences that come with a nuclear power accident, should one occur like the one that occurred at Chernobyl in the Ukraine, it's time, Mr. Speaker, in my view, to ban all sales of uranium immediately to the United States, France and South Korea; and then, Mr. Speaker, in my view, it's time for the Government of Saskatchewan to legislate an immediate moratorium on all new uranium mines in this province and then begin to gradually phase out the existing mines as alternative jobs become available, Mr. Speaker.

(2015)

I believe that that's what needs to be done, not just for the sake of Saskatchewan residents, but for the sake of all residents of this globe, Mr. Speaker, for the sake of the children of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, who will inherit this legacy of radioactive waste if we continue uranium mining, and for the sake of all generations yet to come – the unborn generations of this world who deserve to inherit a clean environment and cannot

hope to do so if the policies of members opposite, if policies like the Government of Saskatchewan continue to be pursued.

Mr. Speaker, for the reasons I've outlined I cannot support the throne speech, and I urge all members of the Assembly to vote against it. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muirhead: -- Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure for me to rise to speak on another throne speech in this legislature. This Speech from the Throne contains an impressive list of programs this Progressive Conservative government will introduce in our second term.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your office, your high office. I had the pleasure of being a colleague of yours over the last four years, and I know all colleagues of yours have great confidence and wish you the very best, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to also take this time to congratulate the mover and seconder, the member from Eastview and the member from Pelly. They did a very commendable job. And also I wish to congratulate each and every person that was elected and re-elected for a first, second term or more to this legislature. This is a high office.

When you're elected to the legislature, it's a great process of making law. I say to all new members that being elected to the legislature. I ask them to take it very seriously. We are very fortunate, Mr. Speaker, to live in such a great country that we have this system of making laws.

I heard one of the members opposite one day saying that they felt that we were a dictatorship-type of a government. Well they are wrong, Mr. Speaker. The people of the province of Saskatchewan know they are wrong because we were elected by the people of the province of Saskatchewan and that isn't what happens in dictatorship governments or countries.

Mr. Speaker, in my remarks today I wish to take a look at the record of the Progressive Conservative government and our plans for the future. Eight years ago I was elected as the MLA for Arm River. Eight years ago the people of Arm River chose me to be their MLA. And during those eight years I have seen many changes in Saskatchewan, changes for the better since the election of the Progressive Conservative government in 1982.

The record of the PC government has been a record of solid performance. The PC government has been dedicated to proving protection and opportunity for all Saskatchewan people.

We have always believed it is the Saskatchewan people who build Saskatchewan, not big governments, Mr. Speaker. We have built a strong health care and education system at a time when other provinces were reducing theirs.

I have great respect, Mr. Speaker, for the member from Saskatoon University. I was his colleague for four years. But I do have to contradict on some of his statements. I know that he's genuine in what he believes, but when he stands up in his place tonight and says that health care has slipped under the Progressive Conservatives, well I have to contradict him.

We listened to this in 1978, Mr. Speaker, when they used their scare tactics that under the Progressive Conservative government they will lose medicare. They won several elections this way. But I can tell you that I was very, very proud to go throughout this province for the last four years, especially this last year in election time throughout every bit of this province, and people were very proud of the Department of Health under the member from Indian Head-Wolseley – very, very proud. And I know now that the member from Meadow Lake will be carrying on the same type of health care facilities that the last member did for four years, and I wish to congratulate the new Minister of health.

Any time anyone says that health care slipped, Mr. Speaker, just stop and go back into real reality, back into time. Since 1944, there has never been a decrease in the budget for Health, and in the last year I think it's about \$2 billion designated in this province in the budget for health care, education, and social services. It has increased every year; so services have not gone back; they have gone ahead, and which they will under the Progressive Conservative Government of Saskatchewan.

The Saskatchewan home program, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, the Saskatchewan Builds, are all examples of our belief in protecting people and improving opportunities. Mr. Speaker, we have stood up for small businesses; we have stood up for seniors; we have stood up for farmers. And I am proud of that record, Mr. Speaker.

The Progressive Conservative government has done more for farmers than any other government in Saskatchewan's history. And I'm very proud to be a part of a government that has done just that.

Let us take a look at a few examples of the excellent programs the Progressive Conservative government has established for farmers. I'm just going to run through a few of them. The production loan program. Now the members opposite – only the few members that they had in the last four years would remember what they did – they were against that Bill even though in the end they did vote for it. But what they wanted, Mr. Speaker, was \$25 an acre for just a select few. That's the difference in concept between our philosophy and their philosophy, Mr. Speaker. We said, it shall be for every farmer in the province of Saskatchewan. We put \$1 billion . . . 1.4 billion, to be exact, into the hands of the economy of this province. So if everybody is spending \$1.4 billion, then all people get part of the action and it helps the economy of this province.

But under the New Democrats, Mr. Speaker, their philosophy was just a few dollars to a select few. They would take it in . . . The bank would take the money and give them a . . .

squeeze out a few dollars to sow a crop, and it didn't create any excitement in this province at all. And that is one of the main reasons, Mr. Speaker, why we are back here as government — at \$25 an acre for each and every farmer in this province of Saskatchewan.

Farmers' oil royalty refund, that was another program. I'll just go through some of these to remind the people what we did for farmers. The farm purchase program; livestock cash advance program.

Now as I travel throughout the province, Mr. Speaker, the livestock cash advance is one of the greatest things that came under the member from Weyburn when he was the minister of Agriculture. And I think we owe a lot to him when he brought this into this legislature -- \$125 for cash advance; free interest for everyone that has any type of a cow, calf, steer, whatever; \$25 I believe it was for hogs, and 125 for horses. Now this was a great program because it was interest free. It wasn't a gift; it was interest free. And as I talk to farmers, Mr. Speaker, they were just really pleased with this program to help keep that facility going on their farm, try to keep that cattle operation going.

We also had the livestock investment tax credit, Mr. Speaker, and the feeder associations loan guarantee. There was a meeting out in the member from Thunder Creek's riding the other night, at Tugaske, and some constituents of mine were at that meeting and they're starting up an association there. That's another reason why farmers voted for this government, Mr. Speaker.

The feeder-to-finish market insurance; Farmland Security Act — we're going to be discussing that Bill here probably tomorrow — the natural gas distribution — farmers were very pleased. We know that when we made that promise in 1982 to bring natural gas, we know the farmers were pleased about that program because we know that approximately 85 or 90 per cent of the farmers in Alberta had gas and we were sitting here with about 10 per cent, and it's about time that they had a government . . . they knew in 1982, it was time they had a government that would bring these kinds of facilities to their farm so they were equal as their counterparts in Alberta.

Our Premier, Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Agriculture, has won the respect of the federal government in his protection of farmers. That is why Ottawa was committed to \$1 billion for farmers. Some day here last week, I believe it was, when that announcement came about the deficiency payment, I almost felt sorry for the members opposite, Mr. Speaker. I almost felt sorry because I haven't talked to a farmer that isn't happy and pleased to get \$450 million in this province. And we had the member from Quill Lakes stand up that day — he stood up in this House . . . But I'll you, Mr. Speaker, that the people from Saskatchewan are not cheering the member from Quill Lakes, because it was a sad day.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to take a moment just to tell a story about a neighbour of mine of mine that talked to me on the coffee row the first day I was home and after the member from Quill Lakes made the statement in the House. He was not a supporter of mine but he was a good friend of mine and he said, "I read in the paper where the member from Quill

Lakes made a statement about a miserable payment.” And he said, “Will you show me that in *Hansard* because,” he said, “it will make it a lot easier for me to vote for you next time because I’ve had enough of those kind of remarks in this legislature.”

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muirhead: -- And I just want to, before I put this book down, Mr. Speaker, I think we need to remind all Saskatchewan tonight exactly what he said:

I ask you, Mr. Premier: do you think that the miserable 420 million that you extracted to win an election . . .

He called it a miserable payment to win an election.

I have never, Mr. Speaker, seen any government that didn’t do things to win an election. Naturally we do things to win an election, but we do things that people want to so they will vote for us. And that is the way it always has been and the way it always will be. And if you don’t do it, you’ll end up where they are, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: -- Because it’s right.

Mr. Muirhead: -- Because it’s right.

Mr. Speaker, I’m a farmer myself, so was my father, and I’m proud to be a farmer. And the farmers in the Arm River constituency believe in this Progressive Conservative government and the way it stood up for the farmer. One of the key reasons farmers believe in this government is because this government believes in farmers.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne contains even more for Saskatchewan agriculture. When our pioneers came to Saskatchewan, they came here because they believed in hard work. They had faith and determination. Our pioneers did not come here because of big government and socialism.

One of the reasons I first ran for MLA in 1978 was to work on behalf of effective and efficient government. That is why I’m pleased that in the Speech from the Throne there is an announcement that this government is going to bring in legislation to reorganize the Saskatchewan government.

Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative approach to government means effective and efficient government. The constituents of Arm River will welcome this news that we intend to restructure provincial government.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan put their faith in Progressive Conservative government because they believe in farmers, small business, seniors, women, and young people. Saskatchewan people want to build, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan people want to

look at the future with confidence, and that is why they elected a Progressive Conservative government.

Mr. Speaker, the voters gave us a vote of confidence on October 20th. They re-elected this government because they have faith in our plans and programs, Mr. Speaker, this government has the leadership to build for the future.

Mr. Speaker, since 1982 the population of Saskatchewan has gone to over 1 million people. Our unemployment rate has been the lowest in Canada. This government has made job creation a number one priority.

The Saskatchewan builds program will create even more new jobs in tourism and small businesses. The new department of human resources, labour and employment will be essential in taking care of the needs of Saskatchewan people.

(2030)

Mr. Speaker, job opportunities are important for the future of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, how does all our records compare to that of who sit in opposition? They have no new ideas; they have no vision for the future; they were rejected and put back in opposition.

Mr. Speaker, not only are they without policies, they have a ship without a captain. The crew of that ship is going to be so busy fighting each other over the captain's job, they will forget what their real job is. But, Mr. Speaker, that is their problem, their choice, and that is why they sit in opposition. I'd rather talk about the excellent record of our Premier.

We in Saskatchewan have a lot to be proud of. This past year our pavilion at Expo '86 was on all accounts one of the best at Expo in Vancouver. And I'm very proud of that, and I heard some of the members say they wouldn't even think of wasting their money to go there. And I'm proud and proud that Saskatchewan people went there and enjoyed themselves and said it was the best in all Canada.

Mr. Speaker, tourism is a new growth industry for Saskatchewan. The Speech from the Throne announced the new programs for tourism development, the new tourism and hospitality institute. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan will become the tourism centre of the prairies. That is because this Progressive Conservative government has the leadership to build tourism.

Mr. Speaker, take a look at the building of Saskatchewan's economy that this government has done since 1982. Over 45,000 new jobs for people, hundreds of new businesses, record new home construction . . .

An Hon. Member: -- No.

Mr. Muirhead: -- Somebody over there is saying no, Mr. Speaker. Well I tell you, this home construction is one of the biggest things that's ever happened in the province of Saskatchewan.

When I was travelling throughout the province this summer, just after we announced that program, Mr. Speaker . . . I want to tell a story about the \$1,500 program. In fact, this took place in Lanigan. Mr. Speaker, this individual, when we were talking in a local café said to me, "Are you Mr. Muirhead, the MLA?" And I said, "Yes, I am." "Well," he said, "Mr. Muirhead, I liked many things that the Devine government has brought in, but I'm not too pleased about \$1,500 for 30 and \$40,000 swimming pools." I said to this gentleman, "Do you know of anybody building a \$40,000 swimming pool?" He said, "Yes we have a gentleman that is building one not too far from this area, and it's just about \$40,000." And I said, "Well, I think that's good business on behalf of this government to put up \$1,500 to get that man to write a cheque for \$38,500."

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muirhead: -- And that, Mr. Speaker, is the difference again between the philosophy of this government and the philosophy of the opposition.

All of these things did not happen by chance, Mr. Speaker; they happened because of planning, vision, and determination of a good government. The Progressive Conservative government was the people returned to office on October 20th.

Back in October, Mr. Speaker, I visited every community in Arm River and many throughout the province. I had a chance to talk with hundreds of people in their homes, on the farm, at work, and at coffee rows. I've always believed in keeping close touch with my constituents. That is why I believe they elected me as their MLA three times in a row, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, when I visited with these folks in Arm River, I of course heard many comments from them about their hopes, their concerns, and their ideas about Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, these people told me time and time again that they wanted a government that listens to the people, that has the courage to take problems head on and deal with them. And that is exactly, Mr. Speaker, what our Premier did these last four years. We were under real bad economic times and our Premier met them head on.

They told me they wanted to continue helping with such programs as farm debt moratorium, the home improvement program, the mortgage program, etc., etc. But they also told me they wanted a program that will build for the future, Mr. Speaker, that will work hard to strengthen their economy. All these things the people of Arm River told me are what this government believes in. That is why I was returned to this legislature.

In the next four years we shall see Saskatchewan move ahead even more than the last four years. People from the other provinces are taking notice of Saskatchewan. They like what they see, Mr. Speaker. People are saying Saskatchewan is a province where the

action is. Mr. Speaker, that action is the excellent programs of a Progressive Conservative government – this government. The Speech from the Throne spells out our plans for the future. They are the solid and practical plans for the betterment of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close with a message to the constituents of Arm River. I would like to have this put on the record. Eight years ago in October 1978 to be exact, they elected me to serve as their MLA for the Arm River constituency. Since that time I've been honoured to be of service as their MLA. No call, no letter, no personal concern of theirs has ever been too small for me. They elected me to be their MLA and work for them. John Diefenbaker said that your constituents always come first. I believe that and they've always come first to me.

Mr. Speaker, Arm River constituency means a lot to me. Both my wife Helen and I were born in the riding. As a matter of fact I was born on the same section that I grew up on and still live there today. When they elected me MLA, it was the second time in history their MLA was born in this constituency. The other MLA was Wilbert McIvor of Girvin.

For all my adult life I have been active in our communities, in the church, civic groups and charity groups. Serving the public is a priority of my life. When our pioneers came to Saskatchewan, they came here because they believed in hard work. They had faith and determination. Our pioneers did not come here for socialism and big government. Somehow, all over North America during the past 30 years socialism has worked its way into government.

One of the reason I ran for MLA in 1978 is to work for less government and a return to common sense. Back in the old days people got together to build church halls, community halls, and rinks. They didn't wait for a government hand-out. I believe we must return to the kind of government where it is the servant and not the master of the people. The Progressive Conservative approach is less government, helping when help is needed, and free enterprise.

The Socialist attitude is government control of everything. Think about it. Which way of life do you want for yourself, your children, and grandchildren?

Four years ago you elected our Premier and the PC government because you believed in the future of Saskatchewan. We have helped farmers, small businesses, seniors, and young people. We did so because we believe in the future – building a greater Saskatchewan.

In the election campaign, the one we've just gone through, the choice was very clear. The NDP, the party of big labour union bosses, big government, state ownership, land bank, and socialism, or it was, Mr. Speaker; our Premier and the PC government – the government that has best responded to helping protect the family farm, the government of good old-fashioned common sense and virtues, leadership to build for the future. We abolished extra billing on health care, provided lower gasoline prices, mortgage protection, and help for home owners. You wanted a change four years ago.

As the MLA for Arm River, I'm proud of that record. My pledge to the constituents of Arm River is to give you the same kind of hard work and representation I have given you for the past eight years. I give you my word, and my word is good.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to say Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to each and every one in this legislature; may God bless everyone. And I will be supporting the Speech from the Throne.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Brockelbank: -- Mr. Speaker, my first words in this debate today will have to be, obviously, to congratulate you on being elected to the highest elected position in the province of Saskatchewan.

The Government of Saskatchewan can take the view that they have collective responsibility and are viewed collectively. The opposition the same way; they have a collective responsibility. But you sir, have a singular responsibility. And it's a most difficult position to occupy; and I speak with some experience on that. I want to offer you every bit of assistance I can in carrying out your mandate. I realize it will be difficult at times, and I hope that with good feeling on both sides of the Chamber we can assist you in that most difficult job to which you have been elected.

I want to say a word or two to the new members in the Chamber. I don't know whether I'm in a position to welcome them to the Chamber because I've been absent for some time; however, I do feel that I can say a word or two about this Chamber to the new members and hope that over the years that they're in here, if that should be a long time, that they respect the rules of the chamber and take part in its activities in a serious way.

Their job is to serve their constituents first and their party second, and to co-operate in this legislature to be able to serve all of the people of Saskatchewan. I want to encourage all new members to do that in their term of office.

I was checking the record, Mr. Speaker, and I believe it's about 11 or 12 years – through no accident of mine or no fault of mine – that I've spoken in a throne speech debate in this House. And my words now, of course, must be directed to the people of Westmount constituency. They have been good enough to re-elect me to the legislature and I want to thank them by groupings.

In Westmount constituency, which is a central constituency, an older part of the city which is encompassed on all sides by other constituencies which are growing and newer in the age of the housing in the area, we have a lot of senior citizens. And I must say, Mr. Speaker, the senior citizens of Westmount constituency are among my strongest supporters; even in defeat, were among my strongest supporters. And I've wondered from time to time, why is that so? And I think that over the years the senior citizens have seen some of the things we've done for them, such as hospitalization plan, medicare plan,

prescription drug plan, senior citizens' home repair program, and many other programs – too numerous to mention – that affect directly senior citizens of Saskatchewan and Saskatoon Westmount.

In Westmount constituency we have many, many working people. And I ask myself again, for what reasons are they supporting me and the New Democratic Party – I might say almost religiously, Mr. Speaker – over many, many years? And the reason is quite simple: the New Democratic party over the years has brought in sound labour legislation for the working people of Saskatoon Westmount. Progressive health and safety legislation has always been the backbone of legislation of New Democratic governments. Meaningful minimum wage has always been part of the package that New Democratic government has brought to the people of Saskatoon Westmount.

In Westmount constituency we have one of the largest technical institutes in the province of Saskatchewan. There are a large number of students live in the constituency and go to Kelsey Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences. They are aware of the value of continuing expanding education facilities and programs.

And I was interested the other day when the Minister of Education was speaking in the House. The way he approached the subject was to stand on the shoulders of previous governments and wave his hands and say what fine job he was doing in education. Well that's quite easy to do, Mr. Speaker. We will see, as time passes, whether the programs of this government will truly benefit the young people who are attempting to get an education, whether it's in technical schools or in our universities. We will find in due course whether the policies that he advocated in the last four and a half years stand up to the test of time of 20-odd years of New Democratic government which has brought good education to the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I regard the voters of Saskatoon Westmount constituency as being intelligent voters, and I am pleased to be here today as their member in the legislature.

Four and a half years ago, Mr. Speaker, I received a Dear John letter. And it was most interesting because it was on the letterhead of the province of Saskatchewan, the Premier's office.

(2045)

And he was telling me in this letter that he was pleased that I was able to provide a certain amount of service to the people of Saskatchewan over the years. And I must admit, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the time I read the letter. I read it with mixed emotions since I had just been defeated. However, since it was the Premier of the province that sent it to me, I set it aside and saved it.

However, in the Dear John letter, for those that are unaware of what a Dear John letter is, that's a letter that is sent, the story is said, to a soldier who had gone off to war and his

intended in due course had grown weary of waiting and had sent a Dear John letter to him which was telling him that he no longer stood in affection of that person.

Now over the next period of time after that letter, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I watched this government begin their term of office. And they started almost immediately with the water purifiers in the Legislative Building so the cabinet ministers could have clear water to drink. I guess that was to allow them to make good decision on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan.

I watched with interest the unjustified mass firings by the transgression team that this government set up at the change of government And I watched government extravagance grow upon government extravagance. And within six months, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I started getting requests from the people in Saskatoon Westmount area. The intelligent voters of Saskatoon Westmount were saying to me, run again John. And I took them at their word. And I ran for ward 4 in the civic scene. And let me tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, ward 4 completely encompasses Westmount constituency except for two polls. I ran in that election and was elected with I believe it was the second highest vote of all the aldermen that got elected that year.

Now I don't suppose it was because they were electing me. I think the people of Saskatoon Westmount, in ward 4, In their own way wanted to send some kind of a message. They were seeing what I was seeing. They were seeing the government extravagance. They were seeing the firings. They were seeing the start of a kind of corrupt practice in the government. Now that is unfortunate.

However, I spent some time in city council, and I want to say a couple of words about that a little later, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But soon the people, these intelligent voters in Westmount constituency were saying to me, run again, John. Run again. So I did. And we had, I might say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the largest nominating convention ever in the history of Saskatoon Westmount constituency. And when the votes were counted, after the election, I had obtained a substantial number of those votes, and that's why I'm here today, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Now the voters in Westmount constituency have asked me to bring you a message in this Chamber – as we've all been asked to bring a message to the Legislative Assembly. The message that the people of Westmount have said to tell this government is that they don't like their extravagances; they don't like their debt; they don't like their expensive advertising.

And I just want to take a moment or two to deal with some of that advertising, because I've brought some samples with me, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I just picked one day, and this was in the spring of 1986. There was discussion and rumour that there was an election due and the advertising in the daily paper was mounting each day. And on March the 22nd . . . I just cutout all the ads in the *Star-Phoenix* and here they are here. Oh, there is several, and I didn't get them all, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but there's a numerous amount of them. And if you add them up it would – and I assume they appeared in all the daily

papers in Saskatchewan – the total would be well over \$25,000 of advertising for one day. And just in the newspapers. At the same time this was going on in the newspapers it was going on in radio and television as well. And the people in Westmount constituency said, we don't like this.

The first ad shows the MLA for Saskatoon Centre, Mr. Jack Sandberg – he was an MLA then – and I was trying to figure out why would he appear in a government ad with regard to a corporation in Saskatoon. Then I got thinking if I'd seen something about Mr. Sandberg a while before. And it was that in late '85 the Premier had appointed him the vice-chairman in charge of urban activities. In other words, getting Conservatives elected in urban Saskatchewan. Now I'm curious, Mr. Deputy Speaker, whether the Premier has had Mr. Sandberg into his office to have a talk with him about how he did on his project in urban Saskatchewan. So this is some of the advertising, and there is much, much more of it, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Here's another one. This one appeared in certain newspapers all over Saskatchewan . . . And this is a very multi-coloured ad. Both sides. Very expensive. And this appeared in the *Meadow Lake Progress*, the *Lloydminster Daily Times*, the *North Battleford News-Optimist*, *The Nipawin Journal*, *The Melfort Journal* and *Advance* . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I know, I know, you want me to take it as read. But I want to put this on the record, all the newspapers in Saskatchewan that this ad appeared in. *The Tisdale Recorder* and *Parkland Review*, *The Kindersley West Central Crossroads*, *Yorkton This Week*, *Swift Current – The Sun* and *Grassland Advertiser*, *Weyburn Review* and *Booster*, *The Estevan Mercury* and *Southeast Trader (Express)* in the week of March 24th, 1986, right at the height of the feeling about the province that there would be an election in Saskatchewan. And I would suspect this one advertisement, on one day, would cost well in excess of \$75,000 of people's – taxpayers' money, and the taxpayers in Westmount constituency did not appreciate it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, did not appreciate it at all.

There was much more advertising. Of course that was the spring an election did not come, Mr. Deputy Speaker. However, we're moving into September and it looks like time for some more advertising by the Conservative Party. And I've pulled just a few of the ads. Now these ads were not occurring alone, without any support. They had support ads on radio and television at the same time that the newspaper ads were on. Here they were, page after page after page and getting bigger and bigger as we got closer to the time for the election, all paid for by the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, running into thousands, if not millions, of dollars. And the people in Westmount constituency did not appreciate their hard-earned taxpayers' dollars being used for this kind of advertising.

And then we come up to just two days before the election was called. We'd been running continuous ads in all the newspaper in Saskatchewan – radio, television. Then came the one on the upgrader – a full insert into the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* – probably appeared in all the other papers in Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And it has some very interesting pictures. I'm not going to spend much time dealing with it, but I would suspect that the advertising budget for the upgrader – and I think this is a fairly close estimate of the size of that advertising budget – would exceed, in the public relations

department dealing with this, would exceed \$1 million. You could watch television ads pretty well any time you turned on your television – the upgrader, the housing program, other programs. The people of Westmount constituency didn't appreciate their hard-earned taxpayers' dollars being spent in this way, and I suppose that's part of the reason they decided to send me back to the legislature, to bring that message to the Government of Saskatchewan.

The people of Westmount constituency didn't appreciate the conservative government of this province supporting Brian Mulroney when he was trying to de-index senior citizens' pensions and it was easy as could be to go out in my constituency and have dozens of people remark on this particular subject to me during that time it was before the public.

The workers of my constituency, leaving aside the senior citizens, the workers of my constituency didn't like your changes in labour legislation in Saskatchewan. They didn't like it at all. I suppose that's why they sent me back to represent them in the legislature. The people in Saskatoon Westmount did not appreciate the fact that the government took away their property rebates and grants. They didn't appreciate that at all, and they didn't appreciate any of the things that the senior citizens of Saskatchewan didn't like either. So they didn't like it either – the working people didn't like it.

Now what about the students in Saskatoon Westmount? Well I must thank the member for Kindersley for appearing at Kelsey Institute during the election campaign. It was wonderful to have him there, and I would welcome him any time he wants to come back to Kelsey Institute. And they are still, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they are still on the same track. The throne speech says:

. . . important in the development of people will be the work of the Departments of Education and Advanced Education and Manpower.

And they go on to say:

My Government is committed to enabling each of the province's educational institutions to play its role in developing excellence.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the students of Kelsey Institute, before the election, didn't appreciate the cut of \$1.3 million in the Kelsey Institute budget; they didn't appreciate the order that came from on high that the staff should be cut by 20, to be obtained by allowing attrition to take place in the staff, which is a shotgun approach to reducing staff and one of the worst ways that staff could be reduced. And they didn't appreciate the consequential cuts in classes that occurred because of this. They don't appreciate it now after the election, either.

None of the people of Westmount constituency appreciate your patronage list, and it's been referred to in other times in this Chamber. We have the name of Dutchak, and we have the name of Mr. Pringle, and we have Mr. Hill, and we've got the ones left over

from the previous set of appointments – Mr. Petersen. If you run through, there's a huge list. The people of Saskatoon Westmount did not appreciate that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Now this record of patronage, extravagant spending, huge debt, wasteful government, and Crown advertising, special deals for special people, was followed by a headline in the *Star-Phoenix*. And this headline, Mr. Deputy Speaker, occurred right in the middle of the election campaign. And the headline was, "RCMP mistake Devine aides for robbers." That's easy. And I was out on the campaign trail, and the members opposite will be interested in some of the comments I got. Some people said, well, I'm sure it wasn't a mistake. And some people said, well, leave the aides alone; why don't you go right to the top after what's been happening in Saskatchewan?

So the people of Saskatoon Westmount I'm afraid, like some other people, became a bit cynical about some of the things the government was doing. And that's one of the reasons they probably changed their mind in Saskatoon Westmount.

I listened to the member from Arm River speaking just now. And he said how wonderful it was in Arm River – I believe Arm River constituency where a person that was building a \$40,000 swimming pool was able to get \$1,500 from the government, and that, in fact, caused him to spend the \$40,000. Well, it's an interesting theory, and this government has practised it before – it's called a trickle-down theory. And the idea is if you throw enough money at the top, come of it will trickle down to the bottom. And I've never heard it expounded more adequately than a document that was just circulated in Westmount constituency within about the last month.

An Hon. Member: -- Who did that? Who authored it?

Mr. Brockelbank: -- Well I don't know whether I want to say who did this, but this document was circulated in Westmount constituency, and I'm going to quote directly from it, word for word:

The poor do not get poorer while the rich get richer. When the rich get richer, the poor get more and better paying jobs and services. When the poor get poorer, the rich get less rich.

This is a direct quote from somebody expounding Conservative policy in Westmount constituency.

An Hon. Member: -- Who was it?

Mr. Brockelbank: -- Now I wouldn't want to mention that person's name because they're not here to defend themselves today.

(2100)

Now this particular document, the throne speech, is a difficult document to deal with because it doesn't say very much, Mr. Speaker, but I do want to deal . . . I said I would refer to civic government because I spent three years in civic government, had an opportunity to watch civic government up close, to see what decisions they had to make, what pressure they were under in making those decisions. And I know this will be of special interest to the Minister of Finance because he will have to deal with this problem, and I hope he determines a different way of dealing with the problem than he has over the last number of years, or his predecessor before him.

And I have here the assistance received by the city of Saskatoon under various cost-shared programs. And I listen to the Minister of Urban Affairs over there the other day saying how well they were doing by the cities and how appreciative the cities were of them. Well I'm here to tell him that that's not altogether true.

I have the cost sharing and these are the items: urban assistance, transit capital, transit operating, RAP program (regional assistance program), community capital, culture and recreation and so on down the line, library and so forth. And I have a period of time from '78 up to '85, and I want to put these figures on the record to show that the urban governments, whether they're urban or rural governments, as long as they are municipal governments, they are not satisfied with this government.

In the period 1978 to '79 under a New Democratic government, the grants rose by over \$1 million for the city of Saskatoon – over \$1 million. In the period '79 to '80, those same grants, in total increased \$6.6 million. In the period '80 to '81, those grants rose another \$3.8 million. Then came the change in government – 1982. This is when we got a new minister of Finance. Now he's had a lot of trouble with figures over the last few years, so much so that that someone else was put in charge of the figures. And in his first year the grants to the city of Saskatoon in total dropped \$3.6 million. Then in the following year they dropped \$649,000 – wasn't much drop that year.

Then in the next year they dropped another \$2.5 million just in the city of Saskatoon. And it happened because in the first year of office this government said, we're going to abandon that formula that a New Democratic government brought in which would allow you to plan ahead on your municipal financing. We're going to abandon that; we're going to freeze the grants; you're not going to get more than 7 per cent increase this year. And the second year they said, you're not going to get more than 5 per cent increase. And the third year they said, you're going to get zero. Wow! And the drop in grants to the city of Saskatoon over this period of time, when this government was putting the screws to urban financing, was \$5.69 million.

The city of Saskatoon during that period tightened their belt every year while this government tightened the screws on them. The city of Saskatoon emptied virtually every reserve that they had. And this government has not got their message yet and I suspect, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because of the imprudent financing that this government has carried on, in the next budget the situation will be just as grim for Saskatoon city and other urban centres in Saskatchewan.

And this is not good enough. And I think that's part of the reason that the people of Saskatoon Westmount decided that they should send me back to the legislature to tell the government this.

An Hon. Member: -- It was a tough choice to make.

Mr. Brockelbank: -- I can imagine it was a tough choice to make, as the member for Souris-Cannington says.

And while the city of Saskatoon . . . There was some tough decisions made, but the voters didn't have a tough decision to make in Westmount constituency.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Brockelbank: -- Now there's something else that's been causing the city of Saskatoon concern, and the House Leader for the government cannot accuse me of engineering this, but it's the business about low competitive bids. And this happened since I was out of city council so that I in no way influenced it one way or the other. But the end result of this is that the city of Saskatoon is saying to the Premier of Saskatchewan and his government, please keep your nose out of our government because the Government of Saskatchewan, in accordance with what appears to be a policy, is telling the city of Saskatoon when it comes to contracts that are tendered that they should not take low bid, but they should take something other than low bid. And this has been central to municipal governments, urban governments, for many years – that unless there's a very, very good reason, you stick to low bids.

And the question that comes up in my mind was, who opposes this? The Government of Saskatchewan opposes it. Now how is in favour of low tender getting the job? Well, the Saskatoon Construction Association is; and they said so during the time the Government of Saskatchewan was interfering in the civic government. The Saskatchewan construction Association said so during the time the Government of Saskatchewan was interfering in the business of the city of Saskatoon.

And I just issue a warning, if the government needs any further warning, that they should cease and desist in interfering with the operations of the government such as the city of Saskatoon. And I'm sure other civic governments would like to be able to say the same thing. But unfortunately the budget's coming up, and they don't want to suffer any more than this government's made them suffer over the last three years on municipal financing. So therefore they probably won't be saying too much about it.

I did in my comments, Mr. Speaker, want to say a few words about unemployment in the province of Saskatchewan. And suffice to say, it's become a very serious problem – and unfortunately I may have lost a note here. I've been going by memory more than some people have in their speeches, Mr. Speaker, you will note.

The gist of what I had to say about unemployment in Saskatchewan was that the unemployment, the creation of employment in the economy of Saskatchewan, has been insufficient. And I have a quotation from the construction association indicating that the record of job creation by the Government of Saskatchewan has been dismal. And this is right from the construction association. And this is one of the things that the people of Saskatoon Westmount feel the most, is the serious situation with regard to unemployment.

And I implore the government to please do something about it. They've in the past done great amounts of advertising with regard to what they're going to do on employment. And I notice about a year ago they were running all kinds of ads relating to winter works. This was in the fall of 1985. And they started the true blue, Tory blue machine ads here. And I just collected a few of them. They started way back in October 23, '85; and October 26, '85; and again December 7, '85. And this is not an exclusive list; there were many more of them.

Talking about our winter works program, we're now half-way through December; the unemployment situation is more serious than it was, at this time. The only thing that's changed, Mr. Speaker, is that the election is over. The election's over now. No need to wave the blue flag because the election's over now.

The unemployment figures that I was referring to earlier are a matter of serious concern. From October, 1986, to November, 1986, the number of employed has dropped by 15,000; the number of unemployed has dropped by 4,000 in the province of Saskatchewan. Job creation is not good enough.

The consequences or the reason for this is, in part, Northern Telecom lays off 34; CPR lays off 145; Cominco, winter shut-down which is in effect now or very shortly. The prospects for young people in jobs is dismal – this is not my world; it's someone else's. I said I had the article from the Saskatchewan Construction Association commenting on the government's job-creation record.

Here's what they say. This is their September, 1986 review of the construction association of Saskatchewan. Under labour force growth they say, the second worst in Canada; under unemployment rate they say, third behind Manitoba and Ontario; on job growth they say, second slowest in Canada. This is the report of the construction association which members opposite attempt to gloss over at every opportunity, to suggest there are no problems in this area.

I say: where are the programs that are going to create employment this winter? Many of the people in Saskatoon Westmount and other constituencies in this province face a bleak winter and a bleak Christmas because there are no jobs. During the election campaign I talked to many people who had not worked at their trades for one and two and longer number of years. This is unfortunate.

I think the government has to address this. They have to admit that their record in job creation has been dismal and they should be doing something about it because the people in Saskatoon Westmount are crying out for an answer to this problem, and something must be done.

It's unfortunate that I have to spend time talking about a serious problem like this. I would have thought that it was easily recognized and action would be taken at this time, but apparently none is prepared and none is going to happen. No action is going to happen. So it will be a long, cold winter in Saskatchewan for these people. I would suggest while the unemployment in Saskatoon city went up last month from 9 per cent to 10 per cent, in Westmount constituency it would be approaching 15 per cent or worse.

That's why the people of Saskatoon Westmount were dissatisfied with their voice in this Chamber and wanted somebody to come here and tell the government, or take action themselves to try and get more jobs for the people of Saskatchewan who, through no fault of their own, are unemployed.

I would have found it easy, Mr. Speaker, to support the amendment which was before us earlier today. However, due to the many things that this government has left out of the throne speech which are serious for the people of Saskatoon Westmount, I cannot support the motion before us. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Along with all other members of the Assembly, I'd like to join with them in congratulating you on your election to the office of Speaker. I would also like to congratulate the mover and seconder. And I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate the many speakers in this Assembly who gave their maiden speeches. I think all did a very creditable job and I look forward to a few more years of debate with many of the members. And I think it should be lively, to say the least.

(2115)

Lively it may be, Mr. Speaker, but obviously many of the new members on the other side did not bring new ideas to the Assembly. We've simply seen a rehash, over the last few days of the debate, of what we had heard over the last four years.

And I was somewhat disappointed that with the number of new faces that perhaps the occasional new idea would at least bubble to the surface. Unfortunately that did not happen.

We had the member from Regina Rosemont, newly elected, delivering to this Assembly the rehash and a recommitment of the land bank. Now surely, surely, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite know that the people of Saskatchewan rejected the land bank in 1982. And people of rural Saskatchewan rejected it in spades in 1986. And I'm a little

surprised. I'm a little surprised for a party that did so poorly in rural Saskatchewan, so poorly that the only ideas that they brought forward to deal with the very serious problems of agriculture was the re-institution of the land bank which was part of the problem, the cause of the problems in agriculture today. And then we have the token farmer from Humboldt, the member from Humboldt, who stood up and called for a needs test.

Now the people on this side of the House, and most fair-minded people in Saskatchewan know the difficulties that farmers face. They don't need to be told to have another needs study to find out the problems of agriculture. Perhaps it exemplifies the results of the last election that when members opposite still really don't know the problems facing agriculture, and obviously they have no solutions.

They asked for the federal government to take some action to lower interest rates. And yet it is the province of Saskatchewan that have the lowest interest rates for farmers of any jurisdictions in North America.

As I said, it's surprising to me that members opposite did not pick up a signal in the most recent election and realize that the land bank is dead as far as the farmers and the people of rural Saskatchewan are concerned. And those that wish to resurrect it will be doomed to losing every single seat in rural Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: -- We get another example, Mr. Speaker, of the old ideas. They've opposed every project -- and we went through the litany over and over again of Weyerhaeuser -- how much they oppose it; the opposition to any packing plants in the province, they've opposed those. I suppose the surprise came from the new member from Saskatoon Centre who has decided in her initial speech to this Assembly that now we must question seriously the employment value of high-tech industries in Saskatchewan.

Now Saskatoon, as a city, benefits by high-tech industries in terms of employment, jobs, opportunities, more than any other community in this province. And here we have a newly elected member from Saskatoon. We have to question seriously the employment value of high-tech industries. You know it reminds me, Mr. Speaker, that at the time of the industrial revolution there were some people that wouldn't accept change, and they were called Luddites. And what they used to do is they would take sledge-hammers to the new machines that were being invented, and they tried single-handedly to stop the industrial revolution.

And, Mr. Speaker, what we've seen through this throne speech is the New Democratic Party have become the 20th century Luddites. That is really what's happened. They've opposed every new project for economic diversification and now, right out of Saskatoon, the heart of Saskatoon, one of the members stands up and says we don't want the high-tech industries. We don't want that because it means change and it means uncertainty and perhaps they don't have a long-term life span.

But there better become a realization and a recognition of the members opposite that the world has changed out there, that there is a new society and it's based on new rules. It requires imagination, and it requires the ability to take some chances, and it requires governments to respond in new ways to the problems of the 1990s and into the 21st century. Saskatchewan people have always shown a willingness to make those adjustments. The province basically was created, as the throne speech indicated, in a time of great change. This government has the confidence that the people of Saskatchewan will take the new opportunities in the new society and respond and build and develop and change, and continue to look for new opportunities.

But I would like to make another comment. The members opposite . . . And I hope the delusion continues, because they say that they had no urban-rural split, that they really did well in rural Saskatchewan. As matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, if you listen closely to the speeches, the members opposite believe that they won every single rural riding in the province of Saskatchewan. They talked about how close it would be. Oh and only if, and only if, and only if – they would have won every seat in rural Saskatchewan.

Let me quote one of the leadership hopefuls of the members opposite now who doesn't have a seat in the legislature, the former member from Shaunavon, who stood up after the election and talked about how he had the biggest percentage increase of any member in the New Democratic Party, any candidate in the New Democratic Party in the last election in rural Saskatchewan. That's what he said and that's his campaign theme, and probably many of you have heard it already. And I see some heads nodding, so I'm assuming that the message is out. He said that he had a 5 per cent increase in the popular vote. It was the largest increase in the vote of the NDP in the last election in rural Saskatchewan.

Well, I went back and checked because I thought it was a little high. It turns out, though, he was right. It turns out he did have the biggest increase, and it was 5 per cent. Then I took a look how many votes that was. And do you know how many votes increase that member had in Shaunavon, the candidate in Shaunavon? Seventy-one votes – 71 votes as what the member in Shaunavon had, and he's going around telling everybody that was the biggest increase – the biggest percentage increase – that percentage increase turned out to be some 71 votes.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that the speeches made by members opposite, by the Leader of the Opposition . . . I'm quoting for the hon. member from Saskatoon – who looks somewhat surprised that this statement would be made – Mr. Eisler's column where he is quoting Mr. Lingenfelter who said that he had the biggest percentage increase in rural Saskatchewan at 5 per cent. No one mentions it was only 71 votes.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Humboldt, he said that we haven't tried to do anything for the women in rural Saskatchewan. That we've ignored the farm wife. I suggest that the commitment of this government to a Saskatchewan Pension Plan – which is the first anywhere in North America, the first voluntary plan with a government matching

contribution in any jurisdiction in the world – will do much to give some financial security upon retirement for the women in rural Saskatchewan. And I suggest this commitment by this government and by our Premier indicates that – at least for most fair-minded people, as they recognize it, see it as a sincere effort to try and help those in rural Saskatchewan have some financial security upon retirement.

We've had criticisms by the members opposite that the government is into irrigation. Well obviously we have a totally different philosophy. We believe we should be diversifying in rural Saskatchewan. The NDP – and the new members I'm talking about, Mr. Speaker, not the old ones that you would expect to rehash what they've been saying for four years – the new members are the ones coming out opposed to new programs, new initiatives like irrigation for rural Saskatchewan.

We did have a sense from the members opposite of, you know we've been there before. We used to have in the 1960's, the "ban the bombers." Well we now have the 1980's equivalent of the "ban the bombers." And I see the member from Regina Rosemont is proudly holding out his ban-the-bomb label again. What do we have now? We have the call for the nuclear free zone.

Now certainly no one supports the proliferation of nuclear weapons. But let me tell you the record of the members opposite. They call for a freeze on cruise missile testing and yet I happen to have before me an agreement signed: one, there was a former member by the name of J.H. Brockelbank. That name may be familiar to some of you. But that agreement was signed by the former CCF-NDP government giving part of the province of Saskatchewan up to missile testing – the Primrose weapons range. That agreement was signed, not by the Conservatives, not by the Liberals, not by the Social Credit – that was signed by the CCF-NDP.

And if you think that was past history, it was just CCF, let me tell you there is an addendum. There is an addendum to that agreement giving more time for cruise missile testing in the province of Saskatchewan. That was signed in April of 1981 by the former minister of intergovernmental affairs, the new member from Riversdale, one Mr. Romanow, extending and allowing cruise missile testing in the province of Saskatchewan. That was signed by the New Democratic Party, not by anyone else, and renewed in 1981.

It makes you wonder when here on the one hand they want a nuclear free zone, which means of course that you get out of NATO and that our obligations as a country to NATO are ended. On the one hand they complain because they say that the government didn't support Manitoba on the Bristol Aerospace controversy. On the one hand they want to get out of NATO. On the other hand they want the weapons being built in Manitoba. Please, please, for the sake of a rational debate, would you tell us where you really stand on this matter.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: -- Mr. Speaker, I may remind the hon. members as well that when they want to get out – and we've heard the speeches again about no more nuclear mining or uranium mining in the province – that it was the New Democratic Party that signed the agreements with COGEMA, not the Progressive Conservatives; that it was that government when it was in office that signed virtually all of the uranium mining agreements.

So again, we may hear the debates, Mr. Speaker; we may have heard the rehash from the new people. And I think all of us will be disappointed, and were disappointed, that here was an opportunity for newly elected members to divorce themselves, to divorce themselves and come with a clean slate with some new ideas, some new programs, some new initiatives – and all we got was the same old thing. Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the throne speech.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas

Devine
Muller
Duncan
McLeod
Andrew
Berntson
Lane
Taylor
Smith
Swan
Muirhead
Maxwell
Schmidt
Hodgins
Gerich
Hepworth
Hardy
Klein
Meiklejohn
Pickering
Martin
Martineau
Sauder
Johnson
Hopfner
Swenson

Baker
Toth
Gleim
Neudorf
Gardner
Kopelchuk
Saxinger
Britton

-- 34

Nays

Blakeney
Prebble
Brockelbank
Shillington
Koskie
Romanow
Tchorzewski
Rolfes
Mitchell
Simard
Solomon
Kowalsky
Atkinson
Anguish
Lyons
Lautermilch
Trew
Smart
Van Mulligen
Koenker
Goodale

-- 21

Hon. Mr. McLeod: -- Mr. Speaker, just a couple of regular motions. I move, seconded by my seat-mate, the hon. member from Kindersley:

That the said address be engrossed and presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor by such members of the Assembly as are of the Executive Council.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. McLeod: -- Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Kindersley:

That this Assembly pursuant to rule 84 hereby appoints the committee of finance to consider the supply to be granted to Her Majesty and to consider the ways and means of raising the supply.

Motion agreed to.

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 5 – An Act respecting the Organization of the Executive Government in Saskatchewan

Hon. Mr. Berntson: -- Mr. Speaker, in moving second reading of The Government Organization Act, I don't intend to provide the House with a scholarly lecture on the historical development, Mr. Speaker, of the executive government in the British parliamentary system. Nor do I consider it necessary to speak at length on the legal and constitutional relationship of the legislature and the executive arm of government.

Members are well aware of these concepts, Mr. Speaker. And what is important to reiterate, however, is that the executive is responsible to this Assembly and through it to the people for its actions.

The policies and programs implemented by the executive, under the authority granted by the Assembly in legislation, are what really matter. It is on those policies and programs that the government is questioned by the opposition and for which the executive is answerable to the people.

Secondly, the Lieutenant Governor has asked the leader of the party in whom he believes the confidence of the House rests to form a government. In the British parliamentary tradition, the Premier then calls on individuals whose confidence he has obtained to serve as ministers in his government. It is to these men and women that the Premier then assigns responsibilities for carrying out on his behalf the duties and powers assigned by statute through this Assembly.

These two principles, Mr. Speaker, form the basis of this Bill. Firstly, this Bill permits this Assembly to address its efforts to the development of policies and programs. This Act would delegate to the executive the power to determine how the duties and powers given to it by the Assembly will be carried out. It does not give new powers to the cabinet. It does not permit the expenditure of new money, nor does this Act even allow the re-allocation of moneys for new purposes without the consent of this Assembly. What this Bill will do is eliminate the need for the legislature to consider government structure in its finest detail.

In the past, weeks of time . . . weeks of time of this House have been taken up dealing with volumes of legislation required to effect the re-organization of the structures of government.

Under this Act, regulations establishing, disestablishing, or modifying structure of government departments will be tabled in the House for review by the regulations committee of the legislature.

Secondly, the Bill recognizes the prerogatives of the Premier to determine the mechanisms of delivery of his government's programs and policies. Because the Premier chooses his ministers and sets their duties, he must have the mechanisms available to assign those duties as quickly and as early as possible.

This Bill provides the tools to permit the machinery of government to keep pace with the changing demands. Mr. Speaker, this Bill is not a radical departure in our British constitutional tradition. Similar legislation has been in place in great Britain since 1946; in Ottawa since 1970. This Bill is based on The Executive Government Organization Act in our neighbouring province of Manitoba. That Act was brought in by the Schreyer administration in 1970.

Many of the provisions of this Act are carried over unchanged from The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act. Sections 13 and 21 of this Bill are taken from many existing departmental statutes. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to move second reading of an Act respecting the Organization of the Executive Government of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: -- Mr. Speaker, just a few words on this Bill before I beg leave to adjourn the debate, because quite frankly the government House Leader led us to believe this Bill would be debated tomorrow night or Wednesday, so we're not quite prepared for the full debate. But I think there are some basic reactions to it which we can make.

I think, Mr. Speaker, the first basic reaction that must be made, that this is typical – this Bill is – typical of everything that the Devine government, the PC government has been doing since it's been elected in 1982. It talks once way, but it acts another way. It talks in terms of democracy and in consultation and openness. It talks about going around and listening to the people of the province of Saskatchewan – the farmers and the business men. It says that it believes in an open, democratic process and yet what does it do, Mr. Speaker? It introduces this particular Bill which is the antithesis of that democracy; is the antithesis of that consultation because it empowers the cabinet of this government to virtually do anything and everything that it wants to do to any department of government at any time that it sees fit to do.

Mr. Speaker, there are three or four very bad fundamental features about this Bill which ought to be brought to the attention of the House and the people of the province of Saskatchewan. One point I've already made, and that is the conglomeration of power. I ask the back-benchers of the PC party opposite there, who probably have not even seen this bill, I ask some of you to take a look at this Bill, and particularly sections 5 to 12, and

ask yourselves whether that is consistent with the policies of what you think you stand for? Take a look at sections 5 and 12. Don't be caught . . . don't be captured by what the Premier and the Deputy Premier tell you this Bill stands for. What I ask you to do, Mr. Speaker, for all those in the back benches is to take a look at section 5 and section 12. And I tell you, perhaps maybe the Minister of Finance would be well advised as well to look at section 5 and section 12 as well, because he obviously hasn't read it either.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: -- Mr. Speaker, take a look at section 5. I urge you to take a look at section 5 and section 12. What does section 5 empower this government to do? The following:

The Cabinet may, on the recommendation of the President of the Executive Council (that's the Premier as we know), do the following: it may assign to any minister any power, duty, or function conferred in law; transfer any other power conferred to a minister currently; it may transfer any power from ministers to within departments; it may transfer an Act or a portion of an Act; it may also transfer to the minister the administration of part of the moneys or all of the moneys with respect to the particular Act.

(2145)

Under section 12, Mr. Speaker, to compound this power, you see here the cabinet having the additional authority, again on the advice of the Premier, to establish, to continue, to vary any of the objects and purposes of the legislation, Mr. Speaker. He doesn't have the power to sort of assign responsibilities from minister to minister; that we could perhaps accept as a legitimate power.

No, what this legislation does is it allows, by order in council, the cabinet, on the recommendation of the Premier, to establish new objects and new purposes of the legislation, Mr. Speaker – not responsibilities as to who should be carrying them out, but new purposes and new objects. And on top of that, I may disestablish the department or any department. Mind you, I might say, Mr. Speaker, judging by some of the performance of the ministers opposite, there might be a strong argument made for disestablishing the departments if for no other reason but to doing away with the ministers' jobs and the way they have been performing it. But this is a very large acquisition of power.

I ask the hon. member from Biggar whether he's looked at section 12 or not. You should take a look to tell you . . . and ask yourself this question: is that what the PC party stands for in terms of democracy? Do you believe that cabinet – do you believe that the Minister of Finance – do you love and trust the Minister of Finance so much that he can come forward with an order in council and do away with any of the government on the recommendation of the president of the . . .

Mr. Speaker: -- Order, order.

Mr. Romanow: -- At least your rhetoric says one thing, but if you vote this way, obviously your actions take the opposite point of view.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill is an overkill of the largest magnitude. This, Mr. Speaker, permits the Premier of the cabinet, the president of the Executive Council and the cabinet, to do all of these things. And it purports to do it by, I say, order in council.

I want to make one other observation before I take my place, Mr. Speaker. I think not only is it politically insensitive and unjust; not only do I think that it highlights the duplicitous nature of the government, the rhetoric about democracy and consultation and openness on the one hand, but the action of working behind the back rooms of cabinet on the other hand; not only does it do that, Mr. Speaker, but I think it is an illegal Bill, it's an unlawful Bill, because what this Bill purports also to do, Mr. Speaker, what this Bill also purports to do is, it purports by order in council to do away something which has been enacted by this Legislative Assembly.

I think that surely must be a very dubious legal proposition, a proposition that says that a cabinet in back rooms, by regulatory power and order in council, can "disestablish an entire department." That means, Mr. Speaker, in effect, do away a piece of legislative enactment.

I don't believe that that's the way the law works. I don't even believe that the Minister of Finance, when he was former minister of Justice, would have subscribed to that policy. A regulation is a subsidiary authority. It is subsidiary to the statute. The statute defines the terms and conditions by which the order in council can be enacted, and what we're having here in this Bill is order in council authority to do away with legislation which has been brought forward to this House and validly passed and enacted by all the members of this House.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that that is surely an unlawful provision in the width and the scope and the depth, as proposed by this PC administration, and ought to be beaten by all the members of the House, including some of the back-bench members opposite if they . . . (inaudible) . . .

Now, Mr. Speaker, at first blush some members of the public might assume that all that this Bill tries to do is what the Hon. Deputy Premier would have this House believe that it does, namely sort of effect some forms of efficiency. We're all for efficiency in its administration. This government, more than any government, I suppose, in Canada could become more efficient and start cutting back on the numbers of ministers and start using their functions and purposes more wisely. Goodness knows everybody would agree to that. But there's no reason, Mr. Speaker, for doing it in an omnibus Bill which will for ever more, unless and until repealed, permit the president of the Executive Council – that means the Premier – to effect that efficiency, holus-bolus, if not on a daily basis, certainly on a regular basis.

Mr. Speaker, the reason for that is they don't have to be accountable. They don't have to come to this House with a Bill and justify the reasons for the changes and the objects of that Bill. There are many pieces of legislation which have important objects, Mr. Speaker, that the members of this House ought to be aware of.

For example, the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower. This department is charged, among other things, to look after the question of academic freedom of universities. Section 9 – that is a mandate of the minister charged with the responsibility for Advanced Education and Manpower. It's right here in statutory provision.

If this Bill is passed, Mr. Speaker, the Premier and the cabinet can change that section in the back rooms of the cabinet room without any accountability by anybody on this side of the House.

I ask you sir: is that what democracy is about? I ask you sir . . . I ask the Premier, is that what he believes the democratic process should be all about? Does he believe that he can simply do away with academic freedom? I don't say that they are intending to do that, but that they can pass an order in council on their whim, if they don't like what's happening at a university, and discharge by simple OC that sacred trust that a minister who is charged with this responsibility must uphold, namely the question of academic freedom. Is that democracy?

Take a look at the Department of Justice Bill, Mr. Speaker. There are very many provisions with respect to justice: the question of upholding the responsibility of law and order; the question of making sure the administration of justice is properly conducted. That is a legislative mandate enacted by this House empowering the current Minister of Justice to carry out his duties. That is something by which we can judge whether or not he is, in fact, carrying out his duties. We've got a statutory enactment and we can judge him at estimates time and elsewhere to determine whether or not he is fulfilling that high obligation of office.

Now if we pass this Bill, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice's responsibility – that noble tradition of the administration of justice – could be, quote, in the ingenious words of this Bill be "disestablished" – disestablished, not by coming to this House, Mr. Speaker, disestablished in the back rooms of the cabinet; disestablished at some cabinet meeting; disestablished perhaps even for some partisan political reason. One could go on and on in every department Bill that goes before this House and which makes up the government of this province of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Premier says that has been done elsewhere. It hasn't been done elsewhere like this. In our subsequent remarks, after we adjourn this debate, we're going to bring to your attention, sir, the detailed provisions of how they've done it in other provinces, and it isn't as massive in its scope and width as this Bill – not at all, Mr. Speaker.

I want to tell you something else: quite frankly I don't care if it is done somewhere else. I say that that's not the way that we do it here in the province of Saskatchewan when we reorganize a department.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: -- I say that when we come to the task of efficiency, when we come to the job of reorganizing government, when we have to streamline it – again objectives with which we'd agree – when we come to that task, it is the obligation of the government of the day to lay forward its plans in legislative enactment by which we can judge that enactment.

This Bill denies this, Mr. Speaker. This Bill is an attack, not on just the political process in this House, this Bill represents an attack on the democratic parliamentary traditions of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. It represents a step forward for back room manipulation; it represents a great step forward in the conglomeration of cabinet power.

I say shame on the back-bench members for allowing the cabinet to pull this one on you. I say shame on the PC party which stands for this tradition of democracy. I say shame on all of us, Mr. Speaker, if we allow this Bill to pass in this form, especially in this way – that the Deputy Leader and the Government House Leader have sought to do on this night, the last night of the debate on the Speech from the Throne.

They let us believe that the debate would be debated tomorrow or Wednesday, but they know themselves how onerous and how difficult this Bill is. That's why they introduce it at 9:30. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that this will be a dark day indeed on this power grab by a minister and by a Premier who, I regret to say, is becoming all too much power hungry, too much possessed by a power trip. I say, Mr. Speaker, that if we'd allowed this kind of a development on this kind of a sneaky manoeuvre by the government, we all would have hung our heads in shame tonight.

Well I tell you, Mr. Speaker, it isn't going to happen. It's not going to happen without a fight on this side of the House. It's not going to happen until the people of Saskatchewan know a little bit about it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: -- Mr. Speaker, I'll have quite a bit more to say about this Bill in a few moments, once I get a chance to do some additional research to it. And therefore I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 9:56 p.m.