

April 7/89

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

ORAL QUESTIONS

Environmental Concerns With NewGrade Upgrader

Mr. Tchorzewski: -- Mr. Speaker, thank you. I refer a question to the Minister of the Environment, and my question is about further evidence of yet another threat to the environment from the Co-op refinery because of this government's lack of commitment to the protection of the environment.

And I refer, Mr. Minister, to today's Leader-Post, in which it is said that the plant manager of Twinpak Inc. has said that an incident happened almost a year ago where a noxious gas enveloped his plastics manufacturing firm on Henderson Drive, sickening many of his hundred employees.

It goes further to state, Mr. Minister, ". . . so I contacted Saskatchewan Environment, and I think I contacted the federal Environment people, and nobody could do anything."

Yesterday, Mr. Minister, your department officials couldn't be reached for comment. It's shocking, it's shocking, Mr. Minister, when a Department of Environment cannot provide a public explanation on an issue as important as this, in an immediate sense. And so I ask you, Mr. Minister: can you confirm in this House today that this incidence was reported to your department and that you failed to act?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: -- Mr. Speaker, the incident that the member refers to, that happened about a year ago, was investigated by the staff from the department. They were not able to, at that time, identify that the problem occurred from anything happening at the refinery.

Now when a gas drifts across a city, it's very hard to tell where it comes from. My department has followed it as far as they could, and they were not able to identify. By the time they were called, the gas was not in that particular facility any longer. So what caused it, we're not sure. It could have been caused by the facility itself. We have done the investigation and they were not able to follow it. I guess that's a normal thing in environment, that you can't always trace every individual spill that occurs.

Mr. Tchorzewski: -- New question to the minister. Mr. Speaker, we have had a business place with 100 employees that's been hit, a school that's been hit. We have had residences and property that's been hit, and the minister says he's not sure. Why do we have a Minister of the Environment, and why do we have a Department of the Environment?

Now, Mr. Minister, my question deals with exactly that question, my new question, and it concerns the government's failure to adequately monitor air quality and air pollution caused by the NewGrade upgrader and by the refinery since it began its operation.

On Wednesday you presented in this House what you referred to as a report on the gas leaks from the upgrader, and I submit that that report shows that you, as the Minister of Environment, have not been doing your job. I quote from that report, from Mr. Perras of your quality section branch in the Department of Environment, when he said:

Hydrogen sulphide monitoring commenced at this location (meaning the SaskTel location) on March 22 of 1989.

That's after children at Henry Braun School were affected by the spill and by the leak.

The other day I brought to your attention the environmental impact study of 1985, which said that:

The Consumer Co-op Refinery will continue to monitor hydrogen sulphide and sulphur dioxide at both stations on a continuing basis.

The upgrader, Mr. Minister, has been operating for over six months; why have you not made sure that this monitoring has been going on as required by the EIS (environmental impact study)?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: -- Mr. Speaker, when you refer to the monitoring, that monitoring is done by the refinery itself, not by the department. They have had monitors in place. The department has put a monitor in place because they felt they wanted one of their own. I think we're talking about two entirely different matters here. The refinery's monitors are in place and have been followed by the department. They've been checked by the department fairly regularly.

So the member makes a big issue out of something that I don't think is as big as he is trying to make it. And, Mr. Speaker, the department is available at all times. For somebody to say that they can't reach the department, is very unusual. You can phone that department any time after 8 o'clock in the morning until five in the evening, and the spill line is available on a 24-hour basis. So if the member hasn't contacted that line, then I would suggest to him that he needs to upgrade his information base.

Mr. Tchorzewski: -- Mr. Minister, the problem here is that you're not providing any information. That's the problem.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: -- If you would provide the information, it may allay the fears that many people have, or if you would take action, they wouldn't have any reason for those fears. So, Mr. Minister, your question therefore has been very useful -- your answer has been very useful, because now I want to ask you this question: if you have got and received those monitoring results from the Co-op refinery, why have you not tabled them in the House, but only tabled selective information, which you did on Wednesday, which did not provide all of the information that's required here? What are you hiding?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: -- Mr. Speaker, we're not hiding anything. I indicated to the member before, that when the hydrogen sulphide spill occurred, that it blew out of the site and was not caught by the monitors. So that information is not available. It was not available by the refinery and it's not available by us.

The information that I tabled was good information. If the member would take time to read it, he would find that for the most part the refinery has operated at a very excellent air quality level.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: -- A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, why do you deny this information of

the monitoring which you were to get regularly from the NewGrade upgrader? Why do you deny that to this House and to the public of Saskatchewan? Is it because there's something you're trying to hide, Mr. Minister? Why do you not table it?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Swan: -- Mr. Speaker, the information that's available on the Co-op refinery's own equipment is their information, it's not ours. We have a chance to review it, but that information is not our information, and if the member wants it he can ask the refinery for it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Possible Conflict of Interest in Soliciting for Political Contributions

Mr. Koskie: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, I'd like to address a question to you. Yesterday I addressed it and we were unable to get an answer from you.

I have a letter, as I indicated to you yesterday, from a Mr. Alf Bentley, which identifies himself as the bagman and the finance chairman for the Progressive Conservative Party. What we want to know, Mr. Premier, whether this bagman for the Conservative Party, Mr. Alf Bentley, whether that's the same Alf Bentley that held down the \$95,000-a-year job with Cameco?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, the hon. member wanted to say Cameco (Canadian Mining Energy Corporation) rather than Cominco. I'll say, Mr. Speaker, that in the . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order, order.

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, in the province of Saskatchewan, in the democracy we have, we know that public employees do get involved with political parties. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we employ Miss Barb Byers; had employed Mr. Larry Brown; had employed Rick August, John Weldon, George Rosenau, Mr. Speaker, and I'm not so sure that it isn't fair to say that perhaps they have attended the odd NDP meeting, Mr. Speaker.

Now if that's the case, I can go back and I can find the salaries that we pay our public employees, but I don't think it's fair, Mr. Speaker, to take every public employee and go through and start to pick their salaries out and say, well, that public employee is an NDP-er, Mr. Speaker, or that public employee is a Liberal.

Obviously public employees have the right to participate in democracy, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure Mr. Bentley will be treated the same as any other employee, Mr. Speaker, whether they're with the NDP or whether they're with the PCs or any other political party.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: -- Well I'm glad I came back with this question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: -- I have a supplement. I was a little afraid to come back to the return of the battle, but I'm glad I did. Anyway, I have a supplement, Mr. Premier. I wonder whether you have satisfied yourself in respect to the activities of Mr. Bentley acting as the bagman for the Progressive Conservative Party at the same time as he's holding down a \$95,000 job. And I'm asking you whether or not you satisfied yourself that he is not in breach of

any of the conditions under The Public Service Act.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, I will not acknowledge the salary. I don't know what the salary is. But I'm quite prepared to examine salaries, if he wants to look at them, of people that are employed in government that actively work and go to conventions for the NDP.

Now he said, is this a conflict? Well if it's a conflict, Mr. Speaker, then all the employees, whether they work for the SGEU (Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union) or whether they work for the government or whether they work for any particular municipal government are going to have to have their salaries labelled here, publicly put out, Mr. Speaker, and are going to have to have their political party put down.

Now I don't know what country he thinks he's in, Mr. Speaker, but this is Saskatchewan and this is Canada and we have an open democracy. And people who work in universities or work in the public service can participate in democracy, Mr. Speaker, and they're encouraged to do so.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: -- I have a new question for the Premier. I'm wondering whether Mr. Premier could indicate, in view of the fact that I agree with part of what the letter from your bagman says . . . It says:

Since the government of Premier (blank blank) was re-elected (this is what he says), the economy of Saskatchewan has been somewhat . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order. Order, order. Order. Order. Order. Order. Having difficulty hearing his question, I'll give him a chance to rephrase it. Order, order.

Mr. Koskie: -- New question, and I hope that all members of the House would give me the decency to address the Premier with a very serious question. You might want to laugh, but the taxpayers are not laughing any more.

My question to the Premier is: is the bagman, Alf Bentley, still the bagman for the Progressive Conservative Party, in view of the fact in this letter he states:

Since the government of the Premier (blank blank) was re-elected (that's you), the economy of Saskatchewan has been somewhat precarious, (he said.)

To say the least, I agree with that. It has been very precarious, to say the least. I wonder if you agree with your bagman.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, for the record, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order. I believe that hon. members on both sides of the House should be given the opportunity to put their case and to answer it. So I ask for your co-operation.

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, for the record, just so that the hon. members that are sitting in their seats can know that politics and government and democracy are all healthy in the province of Saskatchewan in the public service, we know that the member from Nutana was the past provincial NDP vice-president, Mr. Speaker, and appointed as an investigator, Rentalsman office in Saskatoon, for \$2,000 a month, Mr. Speaker.

We can go on and say the member from Moose Jaw North, NDP candidate, April '82 election, received an honorarium for \$5,700 from the Department of Education, Mr. Speaker, under the NDP administration.

We find out that the member from Regina Centre . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order. Order! The answer, I should like to remind the hon. member, should be related to the question.

Mr. Koskie: -- Another question to the Premier. I wonder, Mr. Premier, whether you could confirm whether or not Mr. Bentley, the bagman, has been let go, dismissed, or retired. Could you indicate when this happened and can you tell us the kind of severance that he received from Cameco?

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, I can't confirm any of the public employees at a moment's notice in the legislature. I can confirm, Mr. Speaker, that Ted Koskie worked for the government, Mr. Speaker; that Deanna Koskie worked for the government Mr. Speaker; that Linda Koskie worked for the government, Mr. Speaker; that Morley Koskie worked for the government, Mr. Speaker; that . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: -- I have a further question to the Premier. You might want to skip around this, Mr. Premier, but you're not going to. I ask you specifically: has Alf Bentley, the bagman for the PC Party, been dismissed, and what were the terms and conditions of his dismissal? What was his severance package that the taxpayers are paying yet to another Tory bagman?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, we have, I think, in neighbourhood of 25 or 30,000 employees in Crown corporations and the Government of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and you can inquire, Mr. Speaker, at the minister's level, or you can go to the president of the Crown corporations. I believe that Cameco is a private company, Mr. Speaker, so I'm sure that the hon. member can go to the company -- the chairman of the board -- or the president of the company and find out that information. I don't have that information, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure that the hon. member knows of where he can get information on whether people are fired, or released, or what the conditions are.

Study Into Costs of Health Care

Ms. Simard: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Health. The minister may be familiar with a book that has been published recently entitled, Second Opinion: What's Wrong with Canada's Health Care System, written by Michael Rachlis, M.D. and Carol Kushner. And I refer right now, Mr. Speaker, to page 249 in that book where it talks about community clinics, and where it says, and I quote:

A careful evaluation done in the early 1980s showed that overall costs were 17 per cent lower for patients attending the Saskatoon clinic than for those treated in the fee-for-service system. The clinic's patients had 24 per cent fewer hospital admissions, and those who were hospitalized stayed on average 9 per cent fewer days. Drug costs at the clinic were 21 per cent lower.

Mr. Speaker, it's at page 249 of the book.

Now I would like to ask the Minister of Health, Mr. Speaker, whether or not he has seen this study and whether he's aware of it, the community clinic study.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: -- Mr. Speaker, first of all, yes, I'm very aware of the book that the member refers to and quotes from and has read from this morning.

I would say to the hon. member and to the House, Mr. Speaker, that within the health care community across Canada, certainly all across this country, there is a significant debate, and a good healthy debate, if I might say so, regarding the whole area of fee for service. That debate goes on within the medical profession, as well as outside the medical profession, as all of us struggle with the significant problems, frankly, that face health care and the delivery of health care across the country.

The member quotes from a book that I would frankly suggest to all members of the House and anyone listening that they should read. It is an excellent book and an excellent . . . So here we have a little bit of a promo here for this particular book.

The study, the specific study that the member refers to, I am aware of its existence; I'm aware of what the study says. I am also aware that there is a significant diversity of opinion as it relates to that study.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: -- New question, Mr. Speaker. The minister is aware of the study. Dr. Rachlis also indicates that the study was the most scientifically rigorous investigation ever conducted on community health centres, was initiated by the NDP while they were still in power. We obtained its results unofficially because Grant . . . pardon me, because blankety blank's Conservative government has refused, has refused to make them public, Mr. Speaker. Now I ask the minister: will he table this study, and why hasn't he made it public before if there is such a significant savings in cost?

Hon. Mr. McLeod: -- Mr. Speaker, the hon. member, in describing and how the study was commissioned, has reiterated the point I made earlier, and that is that there's a significant diversity of opinion as it relates to that study.

Ms. Simard: -- Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister make that study public and table it?

Hon. Mr. McLeod: -- Mr. Speaker, there are many . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Once again we hear from the bellowing member from Quill Lakes, Mr. Speaker. Allow me to attempt to answer the question.

Mr. Speaker, in the course of any year, under any administration, there are many investigations of certain aspects, narrow aspects, very broad aspects of health care and the delivery of health care. That's not just the case here; that's the case across this country.

Mr. Speaker, we have many studies. Some of them are appropriate to table; some of them are not. I won't say one way or the other today whether we will table the study, and I won't give the member that assurance.

Closure of Pipe Manufacturing Plant in Regina

Mr. Lautermilch: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Premier. Mr. Premier, you may recall a firm called Nardei Fabricators of Calgary which set up a pipe manufacturing plant here in Regina. And I'm sure you'll remember it because on October 14 in '86, less than a week before election day, you staged an official opening at the plant. And that's a classic example of how your government is building and diversifying the economy. And I want to say, on this side, we couldn't agree more with that example.

Mr. Premier, are you aware that Nardei Manufacturing closed its operation in Regina at the end of March?

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of a particular closing date, and I'd have to take notice.

Mr. Lautermilch: -- New question. Mr. Premier, I wasn't asking if you were aware of the date; I was asking if you were aware that the operation closed. New question. Mr. Premier, you announced at that time that Nardei had applied for assistance under the Saskatchewan industrial incentives program and that it was eligible for up to \$150,000.

My question is this: how much money did it receive? Will your government be taking steps to recover it? And could you tell us if SEDCO or any other government agency had money in this operation. And while you're at it, Mr. Premier, with your diversification, you might be able to tell us when the bandage factory at Swift Current came onstream that you announced by around the election time as well.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that I took notice, Mr. Speaker, and I will take notice again. I will say at the same . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well look, you had the opportunity to speak.

The Speaker: -- Order, order. Order, order. I think when the hon. member takes notice and ask another question, rather than seeking information, then you're inviting a response.

Notwithstanding Clause in Constitution

Mr. Romanow: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Mr. Deputy Premier. I've got my tie straight.

I've a question for the Premier. Today's Globe and Mail has a front-page story dealing with the constitution, and on the front page the Globe and Mail reports that the Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. Mulroney, says that one of his next and major objectives on constitutional reform is to do away with the notwithstanding clause, section 33. I'd like to ask the hon. Premier whether or not he agrees with the Prime Minister, Mr. Mulroney, on that issue?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, what I agree with in terms of the Prime Minister's view is, in fact, in 1981 the prime minister, Mr. Trudeau, and with the help of the hon. member sitting opposite, brought home a constitution that left out a major province in Canada -- left it out entirely. I say to the hon. member, if they'd have left out Saskatchewan, would have you signed it? If they'd have left out Ontario, would they have brought the constitution home? I don't think so. But you were part and parcel of that, that said, we'll all have a nice party and bring home the constitution and we will leave out a major province in the country of Canada, Mr. Speaker.

Now every time since that that you try to knit this together, people can stand up and say that they're against Meech Lake or they're against the constitutional accord or against something else, but, Mr. Speaker, it always goes back to 1981 -- 1981, Mr. Speaker, that left out a major province in this constitution. And I think that was a mistake.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Ruling on a Point of Order

The Speaker: -- Order, order. Last evening the member for Saskatoon Nutana rose on what in fact was a point of order. She invoked rule 26 and claimed the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster had used insulting language

while speaking in the budget debate. She said that at several points during his remarks he referred to an hon. member as a "little woman" or a "little lady."

I have had a chance to review the verbatim transcript and I find the point of order is well taken. I agree that expressions, however mild, which are patronizing, can be offensive and ought to be avoided in this Assembly.

When this matter was originally raised, the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster attempted to apologize and withdraw the offensive remarks. Unfortunately his apology proved not to be satisfactory. When a member tries to qualify a withdrawal, it is not acceptable to the House, and often the situation unfortunately becomes worse.

Therefore I now ask the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster to withdraw the offensive remark so that the House can get on with . . . (inaudible) . . .

Mr. Hopfner: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated last night, I will withdraw those remarks unequivocally.

The Speaker: -- Thank you. The withdrawal is accepted.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day, I would seek leave of the Assembly to move a condolence motion regarding Robert Alexander Walker.

Leave granted.

CONDOLENCES

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. By leave of the Assembly, I move the following motion, seconded by the Leader of the Opposition:

Robert Alexander Walker, who died in Victoria, British Columbia on March 28, 1989, was a member of this Legislative Assembly representing the constituency of Hanley from 1948 to 1967. Born March 16, 1916 in Regina, Mr. Walker was raised on the family farm near Mazenod.

Mr. Walker went to normal school in Moose Jaw, and after graduating he taught school at Assiniboia, Abbey, and Killdeer. In Killdeer, Mr. Walker met Rosa Nagel, also a school teacher whom he married in 1941. In 1942 he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force and served as a wireless operator. After the war he studied law at the University of Saskatchewan, and in 1951 was admitted to the Saskatchewan bar.

Mr. Walker practised law in Sutherland, but not before winning a seat in the 1948 provincial general election. At the time he was still a law student, Mr. Speaker, and except for a brief period in 1964, Mr. Walker held the Hanley seat continuously until 1967.

Mr. Walker had certainly a distinguished political career. Between 1956 and 1964 he held the positions of Attorney General and Provincial Secretary.

After leaving politics, Mr. Walker returned to practising law. He served on the board of governors at the University of Saskatchewan for five years. In 1984 he retired and moved from Saskatoon to Victoria.

Mr. Speaker, I move:

That in recording its own deep sense of loss and bereavement, this Assembly expresses its most sincere sympathy with members of the bereaved family.

Mr. Romanow: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me some sadness to second this motion, especially since Bob Walker was my former law partner, political comrad, and political mentor, and I would also say, my friend.

I've missed him all these years that he's been out of Saskatchewan, when he took his retirement and moved to British Columbia. And I definitely am going to miss him now that he has passed on.

I have many recollections on a personal basis, of Bob Walker. I guess my first earliest recollection, Mr. Speaker, relates to this Chamber. I was a young student in the early 1960s and came to the Chamber as part of a University of Saskatchewan tour to see what politics was like in Regina, and I couldn't get over the sight of this tall, lean, thin man seated to the right of Tommy Douglas with his legs out in the aisle-way. He was so long that they stretched right beyond the aisle way and onto the floor, actually, of the Chamber before us. I think he had difficulty knowing what to do with his legs, and invariably they would either be in one position or the other if his desk mate wasn't around.

This is a person who, in that one day that I was at the legislature, was obviously of high intelligence who was able to, with witty repartee in the legislature, make light of an opponent's political argument. Those were the days when debate in the Assembly was, in fact, something which was very cherished, and the interjections which were made by members, while not always perfectly on, were basically intended to be a part of the cut and thrust of eloquence and oratory and advancement, or defeat, of political ideas and political policies.

Bob Walker was a master of that; he took as much as he gave. And this visual image of this big man, this tall man, was the thing that struck me the most that day, although I also, of course, came there expecting to be impressed -- as I was -- with the people like Tommy Douglas and Woodrow Lloyd and others. Somehow the image of Bob is one which has stuck with me all this while.

And later in the cabinet room when we were taken as students to meet with Mr. Douglas and others, the size of this big man, Bob Walker, really was struck home. A very tall, imposing, almost stern, but in some ways very gentle person, was introduced to us. I didn't know it at the time -- and it's funny how life takes us on various courses -- that our paths would cross as frequently as they did in subsequent years.

Bob Walker, in everything that he did, was a man of principle, a man of determination, dedication, and high-minded eloquence. Bob was truly the committed civil servant for the people of the province of Saskatchewan, whether you agreed or disagreed with his views.

He was committed to a number of programs, such as the reform of the judicial system. In fact I think that he was the first attorney general who made the first major attempt at modernization of the court-house and judicial system in the late 1950s and early '60s. To this day, former employees in the department of the attorney general will tell me -- in fact did so on the occasion of his passing -- that those were exciting, halcyon days in the AG's department, as they embarked on what now perhaps might seem to be the routine question of reform, but in those days really was a major change in the way that the court systems and the way the legal systems were being processed and being handled.

But I think that Bob's biggest contribution was more his commitment to people. In a kind of a strange way, this man was austere and imposing and almost forbidding, foreboding. You, at first blush, didn't get the feeling that there was a warm person, but in reality there was.

I guess to be a successful politician you have to have that essential spark of love for people and of people with all of our weaknesses and failings, and Bob Walker had that. And I subsequently, in many of our conversations, would discuss with him what it was he really felt were the big accomplishments. He would tell me the times -- talking about the constitution -- when back in the days of the Fulton-Favreau formula, Saskatchewan virtually

stood alone on an amending formula. He would talk about the judicial and court-house reforms that I've alluded to. He would reminisce and tell me stories about Tommy Douglas and Toby Nollet and Woodrow Lloyd and Ross Thatcher, Alex Cameron. These were political giants, Mr. Speaker, political giants of their day, in some ways -- without denigrating for a moment my colleagues of today, even giants of today.

But he really relished his role of the medicare crisis and the medicare legislation of 1961, 1962, and through that period which I would argue ultimately cost him his seat in 1964, and ultimately cost the government of Woodrow Lloyd in 1964. Bob passionately spoke about people programs, and medicare was a people program of the highest order, of the highest goal.

I've taken some time to go through some of the speeches during that time about the debates on medicare. Mr. Speaker, if you have time -- I know that you don't -- but it's interesting to go back to some of the debates and see the exchanges. And I say that because I know how difficult your job is, sir -- and I mean this very genuinely, especially in the Chamber of 1989 with respect to order -- there, if you look at the transcripts, there seems to be a sense of debate but not a sense of disorderliness, if I may put it that way. And this particular transcript which I had involved a very typical Bob Walker hard-hitting speech, not on personalities but on the issues of medicare and the role of the medical profession and the role of medicare and the role of the medical profession in the implementations plan.

And as you might expect, Mr. Speaker, during that time there were interjections much like there are today. This is an aside, but there was an extended series of interjections, as I came across quite accidentally, involving the late premier Ross Thatcher, between Mr. Walker and Mr. Thatcher. And this was witty stuff in my books. It was not personal but it was an exchange on concepts of taxes, and concepts and visions of the legislation, competing visions. Well I say that parenthetically.

What I really want to say about this is that Bob Walker hit hard and very straightforwardly about his first love, and that love was program for people. And I'd like to just quote, as a sample of how hard-hitting he was, the high-minded tone, as I see it, of this particular speech, volume 11, page 10.

Bob Walker got up -- this is after now several pages of a debate -- and said the following:

The province of Saskatchewan has long been proud of the fact that we believe in what we follow and uphold, the principle of devoting an even larger proportion of our physical and material wealth to meeting the real and basic needs of all of the people of our province.

This is 1964, actually 1962. Mr. Walker continued:

I think that you can judge a society or an individual and assess his social conscience, his sense of human progress, by examining his real attitudes towards spending material wealth, what he proposes to spend it on.

Then he said this, Mr. Speaker:

On this side of the House we have long taken pride in the fact that an ever-increasing proportion of the wealth produced in this province is going to meet the basic human needs of the people of this province. While this represents an additional public burden of some 20 or \$22 million . . .

I note the Minister of Health is in the House this morning, and I had to smile at those figures -- 20 to \$22 million for medicare in 1962. In the debates we know the expenses and the costs today. But Mr. Walker said:

While this represents an additional public burden of some 20 or \$22 million, we think that this is offset by money saved by individual taxpayers. It is money which is put into a special account to be used for medical care. I, and other citizens, undoubtedly find frivolities on our budget drains, on our income, our wasteful and

frivolous expenses. I think that I for one will appreciate knowing that my health needs are being provided, that every man, woman, and child in our province is entitled and has a right, as a result of being born into the progressive province of Saskatchewan, is entitled to have these services, and we ought to welcome the opportunity of providing them and providing the funds for them.

Sometimes I think things haven't changed very much from 1962 to 1989 as we debate in the legislature today about those concepts and the adequacy of the funding. I say that that passage, not because it deals with medicare but because it exemplifies what I remember about Bob Walker's real first love and that is to be a good politician, the first love is people and doing good for people and thinking of them and being decent toward them.

He lost the election in 1964. And I was a young lawyer at that time, or about to enter into law, and we were, in those days, idealistic, really idealistic. We felt the loss of the government was something we couldn't do anything about. The numbers were against us. But in Bob Walker's case, there was a very narrow, slim margin of defeat between him and another very distinguished Canadian and Saskatchewanian called Mr. Herb Pinder, Sr.

(1045)

Herb Pinder had defeated Bob Walker in the Hanley constituency in that general election in 1964 which produced Ross Thatcher as the premier of the province of Saskatchewan. But it was such a narrow victory that Mr. Pinder had over Bob Walker that a number of us immediately went to the task of trying to see if we could unseat the seat and get a by-election and a controvert. And I think you'll agree with me, Mr. Speaker, and other members will, that that's virtually an impossibility, but as luck was have it, or would not have it, Bob Walker succeeded.

And I saw another aspect about the man. Here, to me, in any event, was an attorney general, a former attorney general. I thought this was a man of high position and high stature. This is the great thing about democracy, it's a leveller, and all of a sudden he was out.

He had no help except volunteer help of young men and women, but basically he did it all himself. He went around from voter to voter to voter, where the discrepancies were on the voter's lists, to try to get the sufficient number of voters to get the controvert in effect established, and before the court of law. And in a sense, it was humiliating.

The euphoria of the new government of 1964 -- I'm sure my friends opposite would know what that's like in 1982; I suffered defeat in 1982 -- it was very, very difficult. And in that kind of atmosphere, in this euphoric atmosphere, Bob Walker was so dedicated and so determined, and the party was in disarray, our party was in disarray, that he virtually did this alone with the help of several of us. That's when I really got to know this person that I saw a few years before in this Chamber, and he got the number of names and the affidavits, and lo and behold! as fate would have it, the seat was declared vacant. A by-election was declared by the premier, Ross Thatcher, immediately, and we had a by-election in December of 1964 -- the general election came in 1964 April -- eight or nine months later, in a blinding snowstorm. I'll remember this to my dying day.

Bob Walker was re-elected back to the legislature as the member for Hanley in a by-election, and Herb Pinder actually never took a seat. I don't say this disparagingly of Mr. Pinder. It so worked that the transition change in government didn't permit him, although he was minister of industry and commerce, a distinguished Saskatchewanian -- I have a great deal of admiration for Herb Pinder -- he never took a seat in the legislature. Bob Walker had the love and the support and the admiration of his constituents, notwithstanding the defeat that we took in '64, to be back in with his political comrades fighting for these passionate goals that he believed in, in that particular period of time.

Oh, there were many other interesting sides to this man's history. I won't mention names because I think best these should be left now into history books. But there were a series of very controversial lawsuits and court cases involving stock promotions and stock issues. Bob Walker and prominent Saskatchewan people were at the centre

of that.

I often urged Bob to tell his story by way of a book. I never could get him to do it. He told me about the history as he saw it. This is now some many years later. He told me about the process of the AG's department when these investigations and charges were being processed. Those unfortunately, so far as I know, those great stories, not because they're stories but they're great stories about how an AG should act -- with integrity and honesty and fearlessness, even to political colleagues -- set a standard to which I, as now I'd gotten to know him in that '64 period, decided that I would try to strive for, but I'm sure I've never achieved.

At about that time, I left my association with a law firm called Goldenberg, Taylor, Tallis because I had been nominated in 1967. I got the bug.

Bob Walker met me and he said, Roy, I think you should be in politics. I said, Bob, my interest is federal politics. And I'll never forget this conversation to my dying day. He said, no, what you do, Roy, is you come in, contribute a few years to the provincial politics, and then if you're interested in federal politics I'm sure the voters would permit you, if you get their blessing, to go on to the House of Commons in Ottawa and try federally. As life works out, four years later we were the government in 1971 and, for good or for bad, the rest is history as far as my position is concerned.

He was a mentor, an adviser, a person who said, you have something to contribute to provincial politics. Whether I did or not, certainly I got involved. And as part of the involvement, we structured a new law firm together and we practised law, and we practised politics more than we practised law, and we met people and we travelled endlessly, hours and miles over this great province, meeting thousands of people.

In 1967, Mr. Speaker, again as fate would have it, I was elected for the first time to the legislature. Bob Walker was defeated. After all of that effort of getting in, he lost, and again by a very distinguished Saskatchewan person, Bob Heggie.

In 1971 Bob Walker made another attempt to come back to political life, and this is another recollection. I hope I'm not boring you too much about this, but I'm reminding myself of the man. In 1970-71 there was another election approaching. This time Ross Thatcher had been in office for seven or eight years.

Bob had a nominating convention at the Grasswood Esso service station in Saskatoon, just outside of Saskatoon. I was invited to be his guest speaker, and as always happens in politics, Mr. Speaker, Bob was challenged for the nomination by a young man who I didn't think stood a hope in heck of getting that nomination against this giant, physically and otherwise -- a man called Paul Mostoway.

The first ballot was held and the vote was dead even -- 110 and 110 for Walker and Mostoway. I am the guest speaker. The organizers didn't know what to do. Somebody said, well Roy, you've got to cast the deciding ballot. How could I cast the deciding ballot? He was my law partner and my friend. All I had come there was to say a few words as guest speaker.

Well they thought maybe we should go to the president to cast the deciding ballot. That didn't work. And after about an hour of heated back-room deliberation, something which may be symptomatic of the PC Party as well, but certainly symptomatic of the CCF-NDP, we decided that what we should do is what we should have decided to do right then and there; that is, to have another vote, which we did. And Bob Walker lost the nomination by one vote, and the end of his political career.

And that taught me something too. What it taught me -- apart from trying to organize nominations -- what it taught me was that at the end of our political careers -- for that is the one certainty of this business, there is an end -- that that end can take place anywhere. After a great big provincial campaign, or on the floor of your constituency office on election night if you're the nominated candidate, or in a small Grasswood Esso in

Dundurn, having served for all these years from 1944 to 1971 as Attorney General and distinguished leader in Canada, it can end in a nomination.

The power of the people is really all-knowing, all-consuming, all-effective, and, thank goodness in our democracy, to be respected by all.

And I learned that because I thought Bob would be bitter and disappointed. He wasn't. He plunged in to help Paul Mostoway get elected. Mostoway got elected. When Blakeney took over as the premier in 1971, my association with the law practice ceased totally, and my relationship with Bob on a friendship basis continued, but no longer had we had the close interplay and intercourse of two people who were concerned about improving, in our own small way, the quality of life for the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

I say he was a giant physically. I don't know how tall he was -- 6 ft. 4 or 5 in., at least. He was a giant in an era of giants. Douglas; Jack Corman, Mr. Deputy Speaker, an attorney general that some historians should write, really, about; Fines -- Clarence Fines; and Douglas. Cameron, as I mentioned, Alex Cameron -- now there was debater; Ross Thatcher. When we saw a debate in this Chamber, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you were in the heavyweights. It was debate, and it was debate among heavyweights because we debated policies and issues and programs, not personalities.

Well let me say one last word before I take my place. All of this could not have happened, I don't think -- Bob Walker's contributions, the details of which I purposefully avoided today because I want to reminisce on a personal basis in memory of this great person -- it would not have happened if it had not been for the constant support of his partner, Rosa Walker, and his family, Joan, Doug, Ken.

Rosa Walker was and is really an intriguing and fascinating person. She was a helpmate in the broadest sense of the word, not only in terms of the emotional sustenance which any politician has to receive, but she was an adviser and she was a worker and she shunned public profile. It wasn't because of any, as one might think 25 years ago, belief that politics was for men and not for women -- although I think that was generally the case 25 years ago or so -- it was more than anything the belief that her contribution could be most effective in giving the advice and giving the nurturing and the sustenance which would be required to help this man do his job for all the province.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I think of wives, when I think of Rosa, in politics, with amazement and regret -- amazement of their capacity to do what they have done and continue to do in running the families, supporting the children; and regrets that we don't understand or acknowledge their contribution nearly enough.

If you stop to think of it, the number of times that wives have to meet their husbands, or the other way around in today's world of politics -- the helpmate -- the number of times spouses meet with the political spouse and have that spouse come home after a day of public humiliation or public attack or criticism; or endless of hours, I repeat, on the road in this great province of ours; or all of the intrigues, most of which are petty; of all the insecurity; people trying to build a family -- male or female spouses are politicians; the insecurity of this job.

How those people, male or female spouses, can keep the family together and provide the sustenance and nurturing and support, I'm in amazement. And I'm in regret that we don't acknowledge enough of that role.

Rosa Walker was that kind of a person to the fullest extent. And when Bob was out of politics, Rosa came to the law office and worked there full time. She was a working, equal partner in the 1960s and beyond when it was long before it was fashionable and proper about equality. She was an equal partner in that relationship.

All that I can say is that we pay tribute, I pay tribute to Rosa and the family for their contribution. Well, Mr. Speaker, this has been an inadequate tribute. I thought I would try to put something down in writing to make my thoughts more coherent and perhaps a little more deep -- couldn't do it. And so it's a bit of a rambling

recollection.

(1100)

But I hope I'm conveying to you, sir, and to the members of the House, my sense of loss, great loss; my sense of joy and happiness at having known this person; my thanks to him, to Rosa and the family for what I learned. And on behalf of Eleanor, my wife, and the members of this side of the House, I'm sure, I want to express to Rosa, the family, our deepest, deepest, most heartfelt sympathies, and thanks for a job very well done.

Mr. Brockelbank: -- Mr. Speaker, I did want to say a few words on behalf of people that have known R.A. (Bob) Walker. He was a man of stature in all its best aspects, from whatever direction you looked at the person. I suspect that very few of the people in this Chamber had the opportunity to serve with Bob Walker. I think I could count them on one hand if I had three fingers amputated.

I have a slight advantage over my leader in this aspect because I had the opportunity to serve with Bob Walker in this Chamber. And I found in that period of time that I served with Bob Walker, that he had a cutting debating skill, acerbic wit, generous humour when necessary, and I found him to be a teacher of sort, because as I recall, Mr. Speaker, I sat back about there, and Bob Walker sat up there, and when he was speaking I could keep an eye on him and the Speaker and the leader of the government all at the same time. And it was a great learning experience to be here in this legislative Chamber with Bob Walker.

When it was difficult to be in the legislative Chamber having suffered a defeat as a government, which we had, and being here to hold the operation together until we could reorganize ourselves and have another opportunity to become the Government of Saskatchewan, Bob Walker served us well in that period of time.

Bob Walker's career paralleled the latter part of my father's career in the Assembly as well, and in government. Bob Walker served in the government of Tommy Douglas with my father. As a consequence, I knew him outside of this Chamber because of family connections and relationships and friends.

I recall the by-election that my leader referred to. The Hanley by-election was rather an interesting one, and I can add a few aspects to that by-election, although the recounting of it by the member from Riversdale pretty well covered the waterfront.

I recall that by-election. It was mentioned that it occurred in December; it was December 8 was the day of the by-election. And for people who are aware of the constituency boundaries in those days, Hanley constituency, while it was a rural constituency, accepted the overflow from the city of Saskatoon. And actually the greater number of people in Hanley constituency were residents of the city of Saskatoon. People who are familiar with the city of Saskatoon will know where Avenue W is. At that time Avenue W and everything west of there, the west side of Avenue W and west, was in the constituency of Hanley.

And I recall canvassing door to door on Avenue W, the west side, on behalf of Bob Walker in an attempt to have him reclaim his seat in the legislature. And I do not know of any colder election or by-election that I've operated in. It just happened to be very cold in the beginning of December and right around election day.

But the victory was sweet, and let it be known that we needed a victory at that time, having suffered defeat in the general election. I recall the victory party. It occurred at a restaurant on 8th Street in Saskatoon which was also at that time in Hanley constituency.

I recall that at the climax of the evening when Mr. Walker was declared elected, he was in the centre of the room. And it seemed unnecessary, but in order to speak to the crowd which was completely surrounding Bob Walker -- friends, well-wishers, workers, family -- Bob Walker took a chair and stood on the chair. And it must have appealed to the Canadian section of Time magazine, because the by-election was reported in Time magazine

showing Bob Walker, a giant -- 6 ft. 5 in., maybe 6 ft. 6 in. -- standing on a kitchen chair in the middle of a crowd of admirers, making an acceptance speech and thanking them all for working for him. It was a sight to behold, and I still have the picture from Time magazine.

In legislative and parliamentary terms, there's quite often that you have . . . well occasionally you have father and son teams, mother and son, other combinations, family combinations. Bob Walker had in his family a combination of that nature. His brother Ed Walker was the member, I believe, for Gravelbourg in the period 1951 to '56, and served with Bob Walker in the legislature.

I think of . . . they served on the same side of the Chamber, and it sometimes brings to mind some of the other brother teams that have served: the Whelans, for example, one in one party in the House of Commons, another in a different party in Saskatchewan; or the Winch brothers, or a number of other brother combinations that served in various parliaments in Canada. But it is rather rare to have two brothers serving in this Legislative Chamber, and Bob Walker and his brother Ed were part of that unusual occurrence.

The contribution that Bob Walker made to the province of Saskatchewan, as I have said earlier, was of great stature, no matter from what angle you look at it. He served the people of Saskatchewan and partook in the activities of Saskatchewan as a farmer, a teacher, in the armed forces, a lawyer, and a parliamentarian.

And I can only echo the words of my leader in saying to his wife Rosa, who I knew well, and to his sons and daughters, that we celebrate the fact that Bob Walker was part of our team, was part of the legislative and parliamentary procedure of this province where he made an outstanding contribution which will be equalled by few in the province of Saskatchewan.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Mitchell: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to just intervene briefly and pay tribute to the hon. Robert Walker. I might say in doing so that it was, I think, entirely appropriate that the member from Saskatoon Westmount entered this discussion today.

His father was a man who was well known to me, the hon. J.H. Brockelbank, also referred to commonly as "Brock," which is a familiar name to people in this House, and who was one of the people who had a great influence on my life as I was young. And is quite appropriate that his son would stand today to pay tribute to a contemporary giant of the political scene in this province during those years, as we pay tribute to Mr. Walker today.

I simply want to contribute to this tribute, my own experience as it relates to Mr. Walker and the effect that he had upon my career and my life. I first met him when I was a young, practising lawyer in Swift Current at the very beginning of my career. And I first met Mr. Walker at the first meeting of the Law Society of Saskatchewan which I attended. I attended many of those in my life, and while Mr. Walker was the Attorney General, he religiously attended every minute of every meeting of the law society.

And I recall he would be sitting up in the front row with his deputy by his side, Roy Meldrum, and they would be listening intently to all of the discussion and making extensive notes on what was said in order to more properly do their jobs. Incidentally, that same Mr. Meldrum was one of the most distinguished and selfless civil servants of his day or of any day. Yes, he faithfully served Mr. Walker during all of his years as the Attorney General.

And what impressed me, Mr. Speaker, was the fact that Mr. Walker, who was a relatively austere man, went out of his way to pay attention to the younger members of the bar, and particularly to the younger members of the bar from outside of the large cities of Regina and Saskatoon. And you'll recall I said I was from Swift Current. It made a deep impression on me that this man whom my leader has described as a giant, physically, and a giant in terms of his political reputation at the time, would pay attention to us young lawyers. And I will never forget that,

and I just can't possibly express in adequate terms the impression that it made upon me and the influence that it's had in my life.

The other image that I have of Mr. Walker which has persisted, which has lasted over all the intervening years, is the high level of integrity and principle that he brought to a very difficult job within the government of this province or any province.

He was the Attorney General. He was the man responsible for the administration of justice in this province, and it is a job which requires the highest level of integrity. We all know that. I would remind the Assembly that, perhaps more than any other man up to the time that he took the office, he set the tone. He is the man who provided the model of integrity and high-mindedness and dedication to principle which lived on after his terms to cover people like Mr. Heald and my leader and subsequent holders of the position.

And Mr. Walker's contribution in that respect, while not known broadly around Saskatchewan, is of the highest importance so far as the administration of justice in this province is concerned. He made an enormous contribution to his province in that way, as well as in many other ways. He also brought to this House, as my leader has observed, a level of civility and honour in debate and in discussions which we in this House today would do well to reflect upon, to research, and to emulate.

I knew Mr. Walker also in recent years in the practice of law in Saskatoon, where he brought to his law practice the same qualities that he brought to his public service, and he will be long remembered by many people in Saskatoon, including his fellow practitioners. He was the head of a very strong, very close family, very supportive of each other. I knew his son Ken, who practised law with him and who has since moved to British Columbia, but very much a lawyer in the model of his father and guided by the same high principles that governed his father's life.

So I want to extend to him, and to all members of the Walker family, my deepest sympathy and my eternal admiration of their father, the late Robert Walker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(1115)

Mr. Hage! -- I thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I simply wish to very briefly pay tribute to Bob Walker and recognize his contribution to the political process of this beautiful province of Saskatchewan.

After having learned of Mr. Walker's passing, and bringing that information to the Legislative Assembly last week, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that I have had the opportunity to learn something of the spirit of Bob Walker. It was never my privilege to have known him personally, but in talking with several of my colleagues in the Legislative Assembly today and reflecting upon the words of those who have spoken before me here today, I would have to say with sincerity, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Bob Walker truly is a man who provides inspiration, political inspiration for those of us who prefer to serve the people of our province within this Chamber.

It is reassuring to know that there have been men and women, in this case, with Bob Walker, a person who is recognized as a man of honour, honest, a man of compassion and integrity, a man who was totally committed to serving the people of Saskatchewan, and serving them well and with distinction. And that he did, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I rise today simply to express condolences to the family and to recognize that Bob Walker's brother Ed, and sister Marion, live today in the city of Moose Jaw, and to recognize the grieving of both Ed and Marion and their families, and to say simply that I share more in a spiritual, political sense, because I did not know Bob personally, but to simply recognize his contributions, his contributions to the history in our province and his contributions to fairness and to justice, and to say simply, that for someone like myself who is a relative novice in this service to the people of Saskatchewan through the Legislative Assembly, that he serves as an inspiration for me and, I

know, for many others within the Assembly as well.

Let me conclude, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by extending my personal sympathies to the family, and in particular to Ed Walker and Marion Pokiak and their families at this sad time, having lost the family member, while at the same time Saskatchewan has lost the man who has served us with distinction and with honour, a man whose record for the people of Saskatchewan is certainly one to be emulated.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd also like to move a motion, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Riversdale, that with leave of the Assembly:

That the resolution just passed, together with a transcript of oral tribute to the memory of the deceased, be communicated to the bereaved family on behalf of this Assembly by Mr. Speaker.

So I'd ask for leave first, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: -- . . . (inaudible) . . . Minister of Highways. Maybe have a seconder from someone in the House, if possible, please.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I will change the seconder to the member for Saskatoon Westmount.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Taylor that Bill No. 1 -- An Act to establish the Public Participation Program be now read a second time.

Mr. Kopelchuk: -- Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I adjourned debate I was explaining something of the historical development of this province and how that development leads us to this legislation.

The Deputy Speaker: -- Some attentiveness in the House, please, and allow the member from Canora to proceed.

Mr. Kopelchuk: -- I appreciate that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm having a problem with my voice, and I appreciate that.

I indicated to the House that it was the Progressive Conservatives who invented Crown corporations, who worked to establish the co-operative movement, who have forwarded the interests of this province in the areas of trade, diversification, and economic development. I indicated also that the public participation program is another historic step forward for the province, and I encourage members opposite to join with the people of this province in this great and important work.

I then went on, Mr. Speaker, to quote the advice of members opposite. And I quoted from two distinguished gentlemen, Professor Morton, and Gerald Kaplan. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's another New Democrat that I

think should have his views reflected in the record, and I know that the members opposite are also familiar with him. He's a former MLA under Allan Blakeney, and is now a professor of public administration. Professor John Richards of Simon Fraser has this advice to offer our Assembly and which are germane to our discussions here, and I quote:

The NDP has not really begun to respond to the many valid criticisms coming from the right, that the interests of organized labour are often opposed to the general public's, that government intervention has often led to monopoly pricing which hurts the consumer, and that bloated government bureaucracies are inefficient.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these are three pretty powerful assessments by some reasonably and respected advocates of the New Democratic Party, and each of them has pointed out that the time has come to abandon government ownership as a vehicle of economic development and even as a vehicle of consumer protection.

These are New Democrats who have fought for that party, who believe in the history and tradition of that party, and they are telling that the party, that it is important for them to support public participation initiatives such as are presented by the legislation we are dealing with here today. Mr. Speaker, after the previous days of acrimony in this House, it is important for us all to try and come together and work for the good of this province. And that is what this place is about. It is not only about obtaining power or retaining power, it is quite simply about doing good.

And I feel that this Bill does good, and I invite members opposite to reflect on the Blakeney plan of January 1982 to initiate his own public participation program, and to accept that this is a non-partisan issue. They can and they should join with the government on this one for the good of the province.

Why, Mr. Speaker, is it good for the province? Because public participation means diversification; it means diversification. For almost a century, Mr. Speaker, the good people of this province have struggled to diversify their economy. They have employed every method that has been available. It is a desirable and necessary goal and public participation will help immensely in achieving that goal.

We already have examples of how that is happening. I look to the community of Meadow Lake, Mr. Speaker, and as a citizen of Saskatchewan I am proud of that community. They took a small saw mill -- and "they" are the employees and the local Indian bands -- they took a small saw mill and they invested in the future of their community and their families. And the result of that investment, of that public participation initiative, Mr. Speaker, has already been the attraction of a quarter of a billion dollars of investment to that community, a quarter billion dollars, Mr. Speaker, to a community the size of Meadow Lake.

That is a result that simply cannot be argued with. It means jobs; it means security for the future of that community; it means protection for the small businesses in that community against the ravages of such things as drought; it means opportunities for their young people; it means revenues for the government to pay for health care and social programs and schools and highways. It means success, Mr. Speaker, success through public participation -- a pulp mill and a chopsticks factory.

And just as this province began with trade, so too it continues with trade. And for Meadow Lake to have won a chopsticks factory, as small a thing as that may seem to some members across the way, it means trade for Meadow Lake and trade for Saskatchewan. It also means Saskatchewan will not have to import chopsticks for its restaurants and its retail stores. And a small thing or no, Mr. Speaker, that is how we are diversifying.

One business at a time; one success at a time. And it won't work and has never worked with a grandiose scheme of government ownership. Public participation means diversification.

I look, Mr. Speaker, to the sale of SaskPower bonds to our people. I see that instead of paying interest to New York banks, that that money will stay in Saskatchewan. I hear economists tell me that the result of those interest

payments remaining in the Saskatchewan economy is directly going to be more jobs, more growth, and more business here.

And I watched the minister responsible for SaskPower take the dollars raised through those public participation bonds and build the biggest project for rural Saskatchewan since electrification. And I am talking about rural natural gas distribution, Mr. Speaker. And that program is an example of what public participation is doing.

Mr. Speaker, that public participation is inviting all Saskatchewan people to invest in the development of the infrastructure of this province. And the result is real savings and significant savings to our farm families.

And I do want to take a moment in this discussion, Mr. Speaker, to chastise the member for Riversdale and show how public participation should change his mind. I know he has just been upset with the criticism, and I'm not trying to be overly partisan in my remarks, but I think in this case the record shows that the Leader of the Opposition stands opposed to the rural natural gas distribution program. He said in this House that it was a ridiculous idea that would cost hundreds of millions of dollars.

Imagine, Mr. Speaker, if the member for Riversdale had told Tommy Douglas that when he decided to bring in the electric power to rural Saskatchewan. Well the point here, Mr. Speaker, is that our Premier's desire to bring natural gas to rural Saskatchewan can be done, is being done, because the minister responsible for SaskPower is able and willing to use public participation to issue bonds to Saskatchewan people and use the proceeds to continue building this province. And I ask the Leader of the Opposition to reconsider his position and join with us in this building and in this project.

Mr. Speaker, clearly public participation means direct benefits for consumers in our province. Clearly it means better services. We could not build the natural gas system without it. And the rural natural gas system means lower energy costs for farm families and better, more reliable service.

We can also examine the way the Minister of Telephones has used public participation, Mr. Speaker, to enhance the services and create economic activity in this province. The Premier has a strong commitment to increasing the quality of services available in rural Saskatchewan, and the Premier has made a fundamental objective of this government, the enrichment of rural life.

And the Minister of Telephones posed this question himself: how will I, as minister, serve this purpose? Rural telephone customers have always been relegated to third-class telephone service. They have had to deal with party lines, and they've had to accept the fact that they would not have access to computer communications because of the quality of their telephone service.

(1130)

An Hon. Member: -- Not any more.

Mr. Kopelchuk: -- Not any more, is true.

And the government said it is necessary, it is fair, and it is a good thing to bring rural Saskatchewan into the era of modern technology. It is fair that they should have the same confidentiality in their personal phone communications as urban customers. And this means it is necessary to have individual line service in rural Saskatchewan. Well that costs a great deal of money, Mr. Speaker, an awful lot of money. And the minister said he was willing to be part of the public participation initiative. He wanted to help in building the province, and here was the opportunity. So he issued the SaskTel bonds, Mr. Speaker, and the result of that offering is that the money is available to continue the program of individual line service for our farm families.

Public participation means better service for Saskatchewan, more service for Saskatchewan, and more jobs for

Saskatchewan. And you know, Mr. Speaker, the laying of cable represents diversification for Saskatchewan, because that cable is being made in Saskatchewan. And that is more jobs and more revenues for government and for small business, and on and on it goes. Public participation means Saskatchewan will be able to compete internationally and win more trade and more technology and more jobs.

Look, Mr. Speaker, at the uranium company. When Eldorado and SMDC (Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation) were merged, they formed the largest uranium company in the world, the largest in the world, Mr. Speaker, bigger than anything the Americans have, anything the Soviets have, anything the French or Germans or anyone else has for that matter. It is the largest uranium company in the globe.

And it has its head office in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and it is a competitor. With that kind of international strength it can attract the largest . . . or the brightest and the best young people in the world. And they'll bring with them and invent right here the newest technologies and the most successful marketing and mining and production practices in the world, and that is here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Public participation is employee participation, employee ownership.

I now look at the Saskatchewan Government Printing Company, Mr. Speaker. And first I ask, why is the government trying to take business away from my local printer? Because if we are to believe the opposition, any government-owned business should compete like any business owned by the people, and I know that the different private printing companies are sure trying to take business away from one another. And it is just a little strange that it is my local printer that has to pay taxes to the same people who are trying to take customers away from him.

But perhaps more important than that, the employees of government printers have a lot of skills and talents that they would like to apply to their business. They have an interest in their business, Mr. Speaker, and when the Minister of Public Participation receives a proposal that the employees be given the opportunity to own and operate their own company, I have to ask, why on earth would anyone oppose that? Why not let these workers build this company up? Let them get out there and compete against everyone else.

And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that before a few years are past, that these employees will be selling their service into the U.S. market and bringing in trade dollars to this province and succeeding like there is no tomorrow. And do you know why? Because they want to build this province, and they want to diversify the economy, and they want to create more jobs. And that is public participation.

Mr. Speaker, approximately a year ago I remember the member for Rosthern standing in this House and relating a conversation that he had had with three employees of SaskCOMP, the government computer company. He told us that those employees had really impressed him because they were so excited and optimistic about the future if they were given a shot at ownership in this company. And the government went ahead with their advice and the advice of many like them, and the government-owned computer company became an employee-owned computer company.

Mr. Speaker, those employees have been true to their words. That new company, WESTBRIDGE, is now not only working for the government but is out in the world aggressively seeking new business. Already, Mr. Speaker, they have won millions in out-of-province contracts, and they have barely begun. New contracts, new jobs, new wealth and technology for the province of Saskatchewan.

And on jobs, Mr. Speaker, that company has already increased the number of workers on its staff by 25 per cent. That is a significant number, Mr. Speaker, because it represents real opportunities for real Saskatchewan families -- 25 per cent more jobs than before. So public participation is new jobs, and it is new opportunities, and it is new wealth.

Mr. Speaker, second reading on this Bill represents a historic occasion and a historic opportunity, and I have

reviewed very briefly why it is a historic occasion. But the historic opportunity is there for members opposite. They have an opportunity to show the people of this province that politics does not always have to be a matter of quarrelling and bickering and filibuster. Politics does not have to be a case of my way or no way.

The opposition has a chance in this debate to claim their own heritage as a force in Saskatchewan, and promote the ideas they were putting forward in 1982; rise above politics and see that the fact that this government has developed those ideas, and is willing to put them into effect, is a chance for us both to work in this House and to work for the good of all the people.

It is the tradition of this province to work together, to participate together, and this is a chance for the parties and the House to show that tradition can live in this place. The members opposite can stand up and support this Bill, Mr. Speaker; they can support it.

Mr. Speaker, as I reflect on the thrust and parry of the debates in this place, I've seen one common theme, and it is a theme that deserves reinforcing in the second reading debate. And I make these remarks in the context of my invitation to members opposite to join with the members on this side in building the province through public participation, because I do not believe that the members opposite can bring themselves to that.

It is a sad commentary on the decline of the New Democratic Party, but it is apparent that it has lost the commitment of a famous man like Allan Blakeney, lost the vigour and fire of Douglas, and has lost its will to communicate with the people of this province. I say to members opposite, if you cannot find it in yourselves to support this Bill and the bipartisan spirit that it deserves, then that can be accepted, but then you must . . . you have an obligation to tell this Assembly and the people of this province what you propose as an alternative.

Mr. Speaker, the day is long past since Saskatchewan will accept from a would-be leader simple opposition to everything. The people of this province expect and deserve to hear, from those who oppose, some explanation of the policy and program that they would offer in place of that of which they oppose.

And I say to the members opposite, it is your right to oppose this Bill if you cannot find the strength to exercise bipartnership -- bipartisanship. But if you oppose, then tell us clearly what your alternative plan of action is. Do not simply invoke the memories of past leaders and try to draw their character to yourselves through mystical osmosis. Do not simply make emotional pleas about how terrible the plan proposed is in your eyes. Do those things if you must, as we have come to expect of you, but also tell the people what you would do. Enough about what you would not do; tell us what you would do. Enough about the fact that you do not like this legislation. Now is the time for the people to be told what options you offer and how you would accomplish the goals you set out.

Mr. Speaker, this Public Participation Act is an employment Act; it is an economic diversification Act; it is an Act respecting the increase of technology in this province; it is an Act of the enhancement of social policy; it is an employee ownership Act; it is an Act respecting the increased quality of services; it is an accessibility to service Act; it is a rural development Act. This Public Participation Act is all of these and more, and I've explained in some brief detail how it accomplishes these goals.

So, Mr. Speaker, I feel the opposition has two options. They can simply oppose the Act, and by that opposition state that they are opposed to increased technology, more jobs, better service, economic diversification, rural development, and all the other prime objectives of this Act, or they can tell us how they would do it differently, tell us and tell the people how.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak more to this Bill because it is truly an historic Bill in the history of this province, and I would like to try further to bring members opposite through this historical progression of this province from the Ice Age to the year 2000, but they will not leave the Stone Age, Mr. Speaker, and for that I am sad.

And, Mr. Speaker, I get the clear signal from members opposite, from their reactions and comments, that it is clear that any further pleas on them are a waste of time.

And I therefore will end by saying only this, that I am proud, prouder perhaps than in any Act of this government ever before, and I am proud to have had the honour to speak on this legislation. And I want to tell you that I will be supporting this legislation on behalf of the people of my constituency and the people of Saskatchewan with complete determination and clarity of purpose, and I invite all members of this House to also take their privileged place in the history of this place by supporting this Bill. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Martens: -- Mr. Speaker, I'd like leave to introduce a guest.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Martens: -- Mr. Speaker, it's with a great deal of pleasure that I want to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly, my member of parliament and the member for Maple Creek, the member for Shaunavon, the member for Swift Current and the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg, and his name is Mr. Geoff Wilson. And I appreciate him being here and we want to welcome you, sir, and I hope you appreciate the proceedings as they go along here.

You will also notice that we have seconded a member of the Clerk from Ottawa, and so far he's been doing a good job too.

We want to have the members of the Assembly welcome you here.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 1 (continued)

Mr. Hagel: -- Mr. Speaker, it is with a sense of gravity or grave concern, and at the same time a love for this beautiful province of Saskatchewan, that I enter into this debate on this privatization Bill No. 1.

As I listened carefully to the remarks of the member from Canora, I find that in many ways I would agree he focused his attention on a number of concerns, issues of concern to many, many Saskatchewan people. And it is, I guess, in a sense, Mr. Speaker, characteristic of this Assembly and the fact that we come with different views as to how solutions are found, that I find myself disagreeing with his reference to this Bill as being the source to the problems that ails us.

You see, Mr. Speaker, the reason I say that is because it is my view, very simply and very clearly, that in many ways it is the process of privatization that has been the cause of many of the ills that ail us. And so it is with grave concern for the future of the province of Saskatchewan and love for this province and concern for the future of the people of Saskatchewan, that I rise to enter into the debate on what I will agree with the member from Canora, is an historic debate.

This Bill puts into place a social structure, an approach to the responsibility of governing and providing leadership to the solution of problems that affect the real people, the most important people in this province. And that's those who sent us here.

And so I think we will find ourselves in many ways looking as we enter into this debate, at the core of what it is that brings us here. What is the political driving force; what motivates us to want to enter into the arena of political service, to come to this Legislative Assembly, and all of us, I believe, in the best interests of those who sent us to bring the messages and the quality of debate to decision making that we believe they are entitled to receive.

When we look at this privatization Bill we must recall that it is not in fact setting a new trend; it is merely putting into legislation the authorization for the Minister of Public Participation to continue a trend that has begun some time ago, some time ago.

(1145)

And so if we want to measure the predicted success of this Bill for the people of Saskatchewan, then it is extremely valid, Mr. Speaker, to look at the track record of the implications of privatization that the people of Saskatchewan have seen so far.

Let me make just a brief reference, Mr. Speaker, to the term privatization, because I don't use that term to be facetious. I use that term, Mr. Speaker, because I believe it aptly describes one of the differences, the political differences between the members who sit on that side of the Assembly and the members who serve on this side of the Assembly.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, when we look at government decisions that are being made that affect not only, not only the day-to-day functioning of Saskatchewan people, but the very futures and the opportunities that our children and our children's children will experience in this beautiful province of ours, it seems to me that when we look at those sorts of things, that it is not accurate to describe the process as -- clearly not public participation. That's not where the majority of the debate lies.

It's a nice sounding term that the government likes to use, and many of the members will kind of choke and snort and cough a little bit when they use it. And in fact it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that it's not even totally accurate to call it privatization, because when the PC Party is plundering the very future of Saskatchewan people, that's privatization -- privatization, pure and simple.

And I say, and I will continue it in my remarks today, Mr. Speaker, to use that term privatization because I think it is an apt and descriptive term of the consequences of this agenda, this political agenda that has been before us for some years and will continue with this omnibus Bill, Bill No. 1, that is before us in this Assembly today.

This is an omnibus Bill that allows the process of privatization to continue, that places in the hands of the minister the authorization to privatize anything, anywhere, any time, anyhow, he wants. That's what this Bill authorizes the Minister of Public Participation, the minister of privatization, to do.

And that's the kinds of legislation, it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that is dangerous in the hands of any government. It is dangerous to have in the hands of any government legislation which allows a single minister of the Executive Council, of cabinet, to make sweeping decisions which can impact on hundreds or thousands, or in fact sometimes hundreds of thousands of our citizens without setting foot in the Legislative Assembly, in the people's Chamber in the province of Saskatchewan.

And if this Bill is carried, what we are doing in effect is authorizing a single man in the province of Saskatchewan to make any decision about privatization affecting anything, anywhere, any time, anyhow he

chooses, without having to come before this Assembly to defend his actions and to give people of Saskatchewan what they deserve, an explanation as to what is happening and why, and to spell out for the people of our province the consequences that he sees in hand.

And so I say, Mr. Speaker, it's with a sense of gravity, of concern not only for the future of Saskatchewan, but for the respect for the democratic process, that I rise to oppose this Bill before us here. A dangerous Bill in the hands of any government, particularly dangerous in the hands of a desperate government, of a government that feels that its political fortunes are shallow and are fragile, and is willing to do darn near anything to get itself re-elected, to maintain the strings of power.

And I would add as well, Mr. Speaker, that it is my view that it is particularly dangerous in the hands of a dishonest government that has proven, for which the track record has already proven that privatization is a failure for the people of Saskatchewan.

I don't make those statements rashly, Mr. Speaker. I intend to defend them in debate on this Bill before us here today.

Let me give some examples of the dishonesty that has been a part of the character of the Government of Saskatchewan that we have in the province today. And let me begin, first of all, specifically with the dishonesty about privatization, about the very process, the philosophical, ideological agenda of the government that's before us.

And let's go back, let's go back, Mr. Speaker, to the fall of 1986. Every one of us in this room will have very clear memories about the fall of 1986, because it was in the fall of 1986 of course that all of us stood before the people of our own constituency and offered our services to come to this Assembly, and all of us who are here today were those who were successful in earning the right to do that.

And we will all have very clear memories of what went on in those days. And one of the things that I remember very clearly taking place in October of 1986 was an accusation made by those who were contesting for the New Democratic Party for the right to serve as the Government of Saskatchewan, an accusation made that this government, if elected, would privatize SaskTel. It was an accusation that was made and it was supported with evidence about how government officials had trotted off to Great Britain to sit down with Maggie Thatcher and some of her advisers to see how the telephone system could be privatized Great Britain style.

And I recall very clearly in the course of that campaign, the PC Party in that campaign saying in response, there is no way; SaskTel will never be privatized. In fact we've heard members in this Assembly say that they didn't even know that officials from the province of Saskatchewan were going to Great Britain to look at the privatization of SaskTel.

And not only did they say that, Mr. Speaker, they said, we will not privatize utilities; you can count on us for that. That's what they said -- no privatization of utilities. And then when the minister of privatization stood in this Assembly about two weeks ago now, to enter his comments on the record in support of Bill No. 1, what did he tell us?

Well he told us that there would be a plan coming from this government, possibly in the form of a Bill, to privatize the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, one of the Crown corporations of this province that contributes to the economic well-being of our province.

But what else did he say? He said there will be a privatization Bill on Saskatchewan Government Insurance. Now some will say, is that a utility or is it not? And I suppose we could debate that, but he clearly said that's coming.

And then he said as well that there will be a Bill coming to privatize, to privatize the natural gas side of

SaskPower. Now, Mr. Speaker, I would contend and I would put forth for the consideration of all the people of Saskatchewan that there would be no one in this province, no one who would contend that SaskPower, the natural gas side of SaskPower, is not a utility. Clearly it is.

And then what did the Premier of our province have to say in my fair city of Moose Jaw, as reported in the Moose Jaw Times-Herald on March 4 -- a report from a speech that he had given to a party gathering in Moose Jaw. He said some very telling statements. Perhaps the Premier is clearer when speaking to his own partisans about the plans for the government than he is when he speaks in public to reporters or in the Legislative Assembly. But he said, and I quote from the Times-Herald of March 4:

Asian entrepreneurs hoping to cash in on the Canada-U.S. free trade pact could be lured to Saskatchewan with promises of cheap land and cheap labour, Premier Grant Devine said Friday.

Well that's an interesting statement to make in summarizing the essence of the economic strategy of the Government of Saskatchewan.

Then he went on in the article, Mr. Speaker, and I come back to the . . . again I remind the Assembly of the promise made, the commitment made by the PC Party in the election of 1986 -- we will not privatize SaskTel. And what does it say?

And it says in quotation marks, and I quote, and this is quoting the Premier:

"We're creating a new partnership between the people and the government" by offering shares in Crown corporations, the Premier said.

And then it goes on to say, in quotes again:

And what could be safer than investing in a monopoly like SaskTel? Shares in Crown corporations are as good as gold and we're not going to back off one inch from privatization, (the Premier said.)

Well it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that that is a blatant contradiction of a statement made in the campaign to earn the right to govern, which indicates either this government doesn't know what it's doing or didn't know then, or it knew then and was being dishonest. Either of those alternatives, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest, are not acceptable to the people of Saskatchewan.

This is a government, Mr. Speaker, that has demonstrated its desperation in a number of ways and is willing to do anything to get elected. The Minister of Finance has proven that -- the billion dollar man. We recalled in the presentation of the 1986 provincial budget, the Minister of Finance said that the deficit is coming under control, the economy's not in bad shape, but that in this election year of 1986 he told the people of Saskatchewan, when standing in his seat in the Assembly, there would be a \$389 million deficit.

Well about seven or eight months later, after the election was over, and it was repeated over and over again during the course of that campaign that the deficit would be only \$389 million because this government was getting control of the economy, so it claimed, the Minister of Finance revealed that in fact, in the election year of 1986, the deficit would not be \$389 million, but in fact \$1.235 billion. And he said, whoops, we just made an \$846 million error; sorry about that folks, but trust me. Same man!

The same man who also then went on to explain, when asked by reporters how you could possibly make an \$846 million error, he said, "What do you expect? We're politicians." And even then he wasn't being honest, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, because if he had been truly honest, he would have said, what do you expect; we're Tory politicians.

So when you're desperate to form government, when you're desperate and lunging and lurching for the right to govern the province of Saskatchewan, you will promise people anything, and you do not feel obliged to honour the historic tradition in this province of keeping commitments and being honest with the people of Saskatchewan when asking for their confidence at election time.

Well, Mr. Speaker, does privatization or piratization have anything to do with benefit to the people of Saskatchewan? I suggest not. I suggest not. It doesn't have to do with the benefit to the people of the province; it has a whole lot to do with an expression of political ideology. It has a whole lot to do with that, but not a whole lot to do with practical solutions to real problems being faced by the people of Saskatchewan.

The history of this province, Mr. Speaker, defies, defies the piratization agenda of the Government of Saskatchewan today. The people in this province knew piratization, they knew privatization, they knew the right-wing, free-market ideology that's being put forth by the Government of Saskatchewan today, and they've experienced it. And when did they experience it, Mr. Speaker? They experienced it through the 1920s and through the 1930s. It was in the 1920s and 1930s, the system, the economic system that the people of Saskatchewan had available to them was exactly the system that this government wants to take us back to again.

This government wants to, I suggest, Mr. Speaker, to drag the people of Saskatchewan back 60 years, to drag the people of this province back kicking and screaming into the Dirty Thirties again. That's the history, that's the history.

But what did the people of Saskatchewan say in the 1930s, and eventually expressed through the election of the Tommy Douglas CCF government in 1944, to provide government, good government for the people of Saskatchewan for 20 years? The people of Saskatchewan said: we're not happy with this system that has failed the people of our province; we need a new approach; we need a government which is willing to allow us to deal with adversity and to solve our own problems in our own ways.

(1200)

And how did the people of Saskatchewan decide is the best way to solve their problems? Did they decide that it's this wild-eyed, unfettered free enterprise, dog-eat-dog, high competition, every man for himself kind of philosophy that brings us the best province and the best society with the best opportunity for the people of Saskatchewan? No, no, they didn't say that; they didn't say that.

What the people of this province said was that we recognize we live in times of adversity; that the economic structures of the time are against us; that the geographical conditions of our province and the climatic conditions of the province are against us, and so how do we solve that problem? We solve that problem by working together, by working together. And so a co-operative movement was founded.

You know, it's kind of interesting that the minister from Maple Creek sits in her place and yaps. There was a time -- maybe if you'll just stay and listen, Madam Minister, maybe if you'll just stay and listen -- there was a time in this province, including under your government, when you, as a matter of fact, were the minister of a department that was responsible for co-operatives, and we knew that because it had it in the title.

You know, Mr. Speaker, it's a telling tale indeed that when you look through the list of government departments in Saskatchewan today, and you try and find the department of co-operation, you can't find it because it's not listed. We have come so far under this government in contradiction to that spirit of co-operation, in building our own structures and our own solutions for the people of Saskatchewan, you can't even find the word "co-ops" or "co-operation" in the name of a single department in the Government of Saskatchewan today.

And so the minister, who used to be the minister of co-operations or co-operatives, yaps in her seat. And I find it kind of interesting, and I look forward to her entering into this debate and saying to her constituents and the

people of Saskatchewan just why it is such a good thing for us to move away from that historic tradition of people pulling together and building their own structures to work in harmony and unity in their common interest to solve our problems and to build our futures. I will look forward to the minister's interventions and explanations in that regard.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we have before us a plan that has got very little to do with solving problems for people of Saskatchewan; it's got a lot to do with lust for power, inspired by that great lady, in the minds of some, Maggie Thatcher from Great Britain.

An Hon. Member: -- Who?

Mr. Hagel: -- Maggie Thatcher, who will be one of the star speakers at Roger Phillips privatization institute next spring. You see, Maggie Thatcher, Mr. Speaker -- I think it's clearly known, and it's been stated by her advisers -- devised the original privatization strategy in Great Britain. Was it devised -- and when you ask her advisers why it was devised, why this strategy; is it because the people of Great Britain were not able to enjoy the opportunities or the freedoms to the extent that they could? No, it had very little to do with that, and I suggest maybe even nothing, Mr. Speaker.

It was a strategy that was devised at the direction of Maggie Thatcher of Great Britain in order to get re-elected, pure and simple. The objective was lust for power, power at any price, and people be damned. That power, the power to govern, is the ultimate right of the party. And that was what motivated Maggie Thatcher to call in Madsen Pirie and all those related cronies and . . .

An Hon. Member: -- Ollie Letwin.

Mr. Hagel: -- Ollie Letwin, who comes to Saskatchewan at the invitation of the members opposite and gives great oratory to the party members of the PC Party and tells them just what a wonderful job they're doing in Great Britain. Never mind the fact that their unemployment has risen in Great Britain, similar to what we've seen in Saskatchewan. Never mind that the health care system is in crisis in Great Britain, similar to what we've seen here in the province of Saskatchewan, because it's been successful for the Conservative Party and Maggie Thatcher in Great Britain. Why? Because it got her elected; the ultimate objective -- it got her elected. That is what we're up against in the province of Saskatchewan today, an agenda that is being put forth by a government that is desperate to get re-elected and inspired by the success of Maggie Thatcher in Great Britain.

And I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that in the province of Saskatchewan it will fail. The difference is this: it will fail.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: -- Great Britain did not have, and does not have, the proud and strong tradition of co-operative problem-solving that we have in our province, and there is a difference in the people. And I think, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite have misread the public of Saskatchewan, and I believe that when given the opportunity to exercise judgement on the performance of this government and to choose the future plan for the province of Saskatchewan, that the people of this province will say no to privatization and will say yes to a government that will offer co-operative solutions to build the future and the promise for the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: -- Well, Mr. Speaker, has the minister been honest about what would be privatized? He said a number of things. Has he even been honest about what would be privatized? I recall, Mr. Speaker, I recall the minister of privatization having said on a number of occasions, there are three things that will never be privatized, he said. And what are those three things? He said there will never be privatization of health, there will never be privatization

of social services, and there will never be privatization of education. That's what he said. And has he kept his word, Mr. Speaker, on that? The answer is no.

Let's turn, first of all, to health. Mr. Speaker, it was a day to commemorate that turned into a disaster. On July 1 of 1987 the people of Saskatchewan had an opportunity to celebrate. On July 1 of 1987 the people of Saskatchewan were experiencing, to the day, the 25th anniversary of the introduction of medicare in the province of Saskatchewan -- one of the most beautiful gifts that the people of Saskatchewan have been able to pass on to all the people across our nation. July 1, 1987, 25th anniversary of introduction of medicare.

How did we celebrate July 1, 1987? Mr. Speaker, on July 1, 1987 the province of Saskatchewan celebrated the 25th anniversary of the introduction of medicare by privatizing the children's school-based dental care program. That's how we celebrated. What a shame!

You know, Mr. Speaker, Tommy Douglas inspired many people in this province with his vision for the future and his dreams that we would be able to work co-operatively and together to build security for ourselves and for our futures. And the dream for which he's most recognized is his dream about health care.

Tommy had a vision, and his vision came in three stages, Mr. Speaker. The first step was hospitalization, hospital care; the second step was an introduction of a no-fee-charge medical care system for the people of this province; and the third step was a preventive health care system. That was Tommy's vision.

We had in the province of Saskatchewan, bar none, one of the best, if not the best in the entire world, preventive health care system -- the school-based children's dental care program. You see, Mr. Speaker, up until this government came to power, the children of Saskatchewan were growing up with good teeth because dental care in Saskatchewan was a preventive health care system. That's what we had.

And in spite of inflation, on a per-child basis it was getting cheaper every year because, you see, Mr. Speaker, preventive health care works. When you have a system that allows children to receive good dental care where they are, in the schools, on a regular basis; to be attended to by professionals who are trained not only in dental care but in working with children, you have children learning to take care of their teeth. And the cheapest way of providing dental care, not only the most humane, but the cheapest way of providing dental care is preventive dental care, because if you prevent the cavities, then you don't have to treat them.

Now that's not particularly profound; I would think that's obvious to most. But it certainly was not obvious to the government opposite. July 1, 1987 we celebrated the 25th anniversary of medicare by transferring the school-based children's dental care program to the private sector -- pure and simple. And what's been the consequence since?

The member from Canora referred to services in rural Saskatchewan. There is no part of this province that has experienced the negative consequences of that more than rural Saskatchewan -- none. Children are not getting access to dental care that they once had. The participation rate is down and the costs are up. It doesn't make sense financially; it doesn't make sense in terms of a quality preventive health care system.

How else did we celebrate the 25th anniversary of medicare, to the day? On July 1, 1987 we saw the annihilation of the prescription medicine plan that had been introduced by Allan Blakeney and the NDP government. And I submit as well, Mr. Speaker, that that too was an initiative towards privatization of health care; towards the private insurance system -- and we're beginning to see that more and more.

Never mind the fact the members opposite will say that we've now imposed \$125 deductible fee for all Saskatchewan families; never mind that. Never mind the fact that prescription medicine is more expensive than it used to be. It's privatized, and somehow that's supposed to make it better.

DWell, Mr. Speaker, it hasn't made it better. And I don't think there's any one of us here in this Assembly who has not heard over and over again, and seen for ourselves the sad circumstance of seeing a senior or a young mother going into a pharmacy and going up to the prescription counter and giving a prescription and being told what it would cost, and turn and walk away without that prescription filled. What a condemnation of the consequences of piratization of health care by the government opposite.

So they said no, we won't piratize the health care. But they did. The minister also has said, well, we're not going to piratize social services either. But they did. We saw about a year ago the privatization, transferring to the private sector, one of the most sensitive and important services provided by the Department of Social Services, the processes of transferring a child given up for adoption to a new family.

It can be described in no other way, Mr. Speaker, as privatization of adoption services, one of the very basic mandates of the Department of Social Services. Adoptions transferred to the private sector. Minister said, no we're not going to privatize Social Services. But he did.

The minister also said, we're not going to privatize education. But he did that too. We saw with the cut-backs in technical education, transfer of office education out of the technical school system into the private sector, we saw that very clearly.

Secretarial training now, Mr. Speaker, is very difficult to acquire through SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) in the province of Saskatchewan. But I would contend as well, Mr. Speaker, and I would submit as well, the very formation of the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology, the very formation of that was an initiative towards the piratization of technical education in the province of Saskatchewan.

I was talking to someone just the other day, Mr. Speaker, who's involved in technical education in Saskatchewan and was told again for, I don't know, the n-th time, number of times, that the key word in Saskatchewan today when determining whether a new program should be offered in our technical education system is profit. Will it pay for itself? So we no longer find ourselves being dictated and determining our educational priorities based on social need, economic opportunity. It's immediate profit -- will it pay for itself today -- without any sense of importance for planning for tomorrow.

(1215)

So there we have them, Mr. Speaker. We've got the minister of privatization, of piratization saying, no piratization of health care, but he did; no piratization of social services, but they did; no piratization of education, but they did. And is it any wonder, Mr. Speaker, that piratization, or privatization, is the p-word -- the p-word -- for the members of the government?

You know, I find it kind of amusing sometimes when they stand in this Assembly and try and snap out that double "p", public participation. And they have a lot of difficulty getting command of that word. It doesn't flow, and it doesn't flow because not only is it difficult to say but it doesn't make sense. It doesn't flow mentally either. It doesn't flow mentally either, Mr. Speaker. And so we see this government making reference to public participation is their buzz word because they are afraid, afraid to use the same word that the people of Saskatchewan use -- privatization or piratization, when they get down to the essence.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: -- You see what this government sees it as, is a war of words. It's ideology and a war of words.

You know, something struck me just last week, Mr. Speaker, when I was watching the news and I saw that Mikhail Gorbachev had been to visit Fidel Castro. And you know, I found that there was something that

Mikhail Gorbachev, Fidel Castro and the Premier of Saskatchewan have in common. The Premier of Saskatchewan once said Gorbachev was way out ahead of him, but I think they have something in common -- Gorbachev, Castro and the Premier of Saskatchewan have in common -- that they get themselves involved in public advertising of political ideology.

You know I've never seen before in the democracy of Canada and in Saskatchewan, I have never before seen a government that has felt so compelled to send its political, ideological message that it defied all the history and the requirements to keep government advertising to information and services, although that gets abused, but is now on the air waves of Saskatchewan in the province today spending money including taxpayers' money to advertise a political philosophy. Not a mention of a government department, not a mention of a service, not a mention of information, but pure and simple in the words and the voice clips of the Premier of Saskatchewan, advertising a political philosophy and a political ideology.

An Hon. Member: -- And who pays them?

Mr. Hagel: -- Who pays? In immediate terms, the people of Saskatchewan pay for it, and in the long run, Mr. Speaker, I submit that all the people of the province of Saskatchewan pay for it with their futures.

So I find it kind of interesting that in Saskatchewan today, we have a government which feels it necessary to advertise a political philosophy.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I started before by saying that this government has given us proven failure of their privatization agenda. Let's take a look at their track record. If privatization is such a wonderful thing, and it's been around for about four years already, then it should be compellingly obvious to the people of Saskatchewan that we ought to jump onto that bandwagon, put our heads down and into the wind and go four-score ahead. That should be obvious, because this government has had years -- it's had four years already -- to prove that privatization works.

Well, Mr. Speaker, have they proven that privatization works? I suggest not. I've already made reference to the dental plan, the school-based children's dental plan, the prescription drug plan. I found it kind of curious -- as they say in Alice-in-Wonderland, curiuser and curiuser -- when I reflect on what the minister of privatization had to say when he stood in this Assembly to defend his Bill.

What did he say was one of the Crown jewels as an example of privatization that's working? He stood in his place in this Assembly and he says, we got the farmers, we got the farmers cutting the grass in the ditches as a result of privatization. Well isn't that wonderful that the minister of privatization, in defence of this Bill, will use that as one of the examples of the Crown jewels of privatization, that the farmers of this province are now out cutting the grass in the ditches.

My colleague from Saskatoon Westmount points out very accurately, Mr. Speaker, that they have to, because they're going broke. What does this government put forth as a plan for the most basic of concerns to people on the farm, the hanging on to the land? Another share offering alternative, they say. We will let foreign owners buy up your land. You can rent back from them, for good.

And so we've got the minister of privatization saying this program is working because we've got the farmers of Saskatchewan out cutting the ditches, the grass in the ditches. This from the government that had the Minister of Highways, who stood in his place in this Assembly and spoke very boldly about transferring people to the private sector. Transferred 400 dental technicians to the private sector when they cancelled the school-based children's dental care program. Transferred 400 highways workers to the private sector, in the words of Jim Garner, the former minister of Highways, when that process began some years ago.

And so what has highways maintenance come down to? What has highways maintenance come down to, Mr. Speaker? Well highways maintenance has come down to getting farmers out cutting the grass in the ditches, and

it's come down to getting some guys in the back of a pick-up truck going up and down the roads sticking red flags and orange flags in the soft spots and the pot-holes and the humps and the hollows.

And is it any doubt . . .

An Hon. Member: -- Blue flags.

Mr. Hagel: -- Oh, he says blue flags. No. Every now and then when they come up with a half a kilometre of road improvement, then they put up the big blue signs.

You know, is it any wonder, is it any wonder, Mr. Speaker, that around the province of Saskatchewan people are saying if this government believed in honesty in advertising, it would take down its signs that say Lights On For Life and put up new ones that say, hang on for life if you're going to ride on the roads of Saskatchewan. And that's the consequence. That's the consequence of the privatization in the Department of Highways.

Well we've got another expression of privatization and how well it's working, because we have a Government of Saskatchewan that spends \$34,000 a day on empty office space. Now maybe when you've got empty ideas all you need is empty office space. I'm not certain. But I don't think that the people of Saskatchewan consider \$34,000 a day spent on empty office space because of a commitment to deserting space that had been previously established by the government and moving to rental of spaces from their friends in the private sector, and all the costs to make that little move in the interest of privatization is \$34,000 a day. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan do not approve of that little example of privatization.

Well we have another example of privatization with SaskPower, Mr. Speaker, that took place in my home city of Moose Jaw. Well let's take a look at this because this is a regular dilly, Mr. Speaker, and this one really clearly spells out, this one very clearly spells out one of the jewels of privatization of the Government of Saskatchewan.

Now SaskPower on Main Street -- SaskPower on Main Street in Moose Jaw, Mr. Speaker, had a building that they owned. They put about \$100,000 of renovations to improve the building. And after putting that \$100,000 of renovations into the building, they decided it was time to sell because it was now more attractive to sell it. And how much did they want to sell it for? Well they thought if they could get \$280,000 for this building, that cost of \$100,000 to renovate, that would be not a bad deal.

So being married to the principles of free enterprise, of course, did they set out to have that property listed for sale with all the realtors in Moose Jaw? No, no, they didn't; no, they didn't, Mr. Speaker. No, because they couldn't quite control that and make happen the benefits of privatization they'd like to happen.

Who got the opportunity to sell that building and make the commission of \$13,000? Was it any realtor in Moose Jaw? No, it wasn't; it wasn't multiple listing. There was just one that got to list it -- the wife of the man who had nominated the candidate, the PC candidate for Moose Jaw North, in 1986. Well she got the \$13,000 commission to sell the building.

So who did she sell it to? Well many are asking, who did she sell it to? Well the answer, very clearly, Mr. Speaker, she sold it to her husband, sold it to her husband. Yes, and he just happened to be the man who nominated the PC candidate for Moose Jaw North in 1986. Keith Parker, who now works in the Liquor Board as the assistant to the director, will be familiar with these people.

So we have . . . let's just take a review here, Mr. Speaker. We have a building owned by SaskPower, \$100,000 of renovations put into it; put on sale for \$280,000, no opportunity for multiple listing; sold by the wife to the husband, to the man who nominated the PC candidate in Moose Jaw North in 1986.

And what was the deal then that followed after that? Was this just a straight deal? Were they unloading this

building because they no longer needed a building and they were going out? No. They said, well, we know we sold this building, but we still need some space because we're not disappearing entirely off the face of the earth. They said, you know, it used to cost us \$32,000 a year to operate this building. We owned it; it cost us \$32,000 a year to operate. But we still need some space -- had the whole building.

So then they arrived at an agreement with the new owner, Mr. Speaker, and what was the agreement? They arrived at a new agreement with the owner to take out a 10-year lease, to take out a 10-year lease, Mr. Speaker. And what were the conditions of that 10-year lease? Now keeping in mind that this building cost \$32,000 a year to operate, the conditions were this. We'll take out a lease to rent the whole building back? No, just half the building. That's all we need now, they said. How much are we going to pay for 10 years? Well, we'll pay you 37, we'll pay you \$37,000; we'll pay you \$37,000 plus half the operating costs, for a grand total of \$53,000 for half a building.

So there we have it, privatization PC style. The Deputy Premier says it's not exactly half, it's 48 per cent of the building was all they got.

So the SaskPower building in Moose Jaw once cost the power users of this province \$32,000 a year to operate, period; now a minimum of \$53,000 a year for 10 years for half a building. Now, Mr. Speaker, if that makes mathematical sense to you, then you will be the next Finance minister because that's the kind of person to whom that does make mathematical sense -- the billion dollar man.

Well, Mr. Speaker, is that the end of the sad tales of privatization disasters? The list goes on. We had the give-away to Weyerhaeuser. The people of Saskatchewan were not good enough to operate their own pulp mill so we had to give it away to an American owned firm that would come in and run it in their own way. Did we get a good price for it? No, we didn't get anything for it, the member for Regina Elphinstone says. But even what we pretended we got for it wasn't fair market value.

Were there shares to the people of Saskatchewan? No, weren't any of those. How about shares to the employees? Well, there weren't any of those either. A pure and simple give-away, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: -- Who benefitted then?

Mr. Hagel: -- Who benefitted, they ask. Well, the list is quite short, Mr. Speaker. The shareholders in Weyerhaeuser of Tacoma, Washington -- they benefitted.

See, Mr. Speaker, it wasn't really a sale. We took a pulp mill that was worth over \$300 million, put a \$248 million price tag on it, but then what did the Government of Saskatchewan say on top of that is: well yes, we know it's worth more than 300 million; we'll give it to you for 248 but you don't have to pay. That's what they said. You only have to pay . . . and we'll lend you some money, we'll lend you some money to buy this from us because you're kind of strapped, and we'll charge you horrendous interest. How much interest did they charge? Eight and a half per cent. Eight and a half per cent they charged.

They said okay, there's the money, we kind of guarantee you the loan to take it off our hands for less than it's worth, but you don't have to pay it back because times are tough, unless of course you make more than thirteen and a half per cent profit. Any year in which you make thirteen and a half per cent profit, you can pay us back. Well I say to you, Mr. Speaker, you show me an accountant who can't prove that the company is making less than thirteen and a half per cent, and I'll show you an accountant who's looking for a job.

(1230)

And so what do the people of Saskatchewan get for the give-away of Weyerhaeuser of Tacoma, Washington, along with 12 million acres of forestry, forest land, prime timber land? Nothing. PC privatization.

Well we got Sask Minerals; we talked about Sask Minerals in this Assembly yesterday. Sask Minerals, just a dandy little corporation, over 40 years provided an average income to the province of Saskatchewan of \$1.2 million, employed people on a steady basis, only one loss, one deficit year in all of its years of operation, steady little employer, good corporate citizen in the communities in which its located.

An Hon. Member: -- Any shares in that one?

Mr. Hagel: -- Well again the question is asked: were there any shares in that one?

An Hon. Member: -- Did they offer it to the employees?

Mr. Hagel: -- Well did they offer it to the employees? Again the question is asked. The answer to most of those questions, Mr. Speaker, is no. The answer is no.

So who benefitted from that one? Well there was a firm from Ontario and a firm from Quebec who got that little jewel that was sold, and I think it's agreed by everyone in this Assembly that it was sold for less than what it was worth, quite clearly, in which the province of Saskatchewan -- get this, Mr. Speaker, get this, just pay attention to this one because this will really grab you -- we got this corporation that produces an annual rate of return of \$1.2 million and that every year, year after year for 40 years -- \$1.9 million net return on the sale.

An Hon. Member: -- Once.

Mr. Hagel: -- Once, and now it's done. Six employees lost, and now the control -- is it in the hands of Saskatchewan people; is it in the hands of Saskatchewan employees? Not a single share, because there aren't any. It's in the hands of a firm in Ontario and a firm in Quebec.

An Hon. Member: -- How many days interest payments is that?

Mr. Hagel: -- Well, member asked me how many days interest payment is that? Mr. Speaker, clearly this is not the breakthrough we've been looking for because that \$1.9 million gets us about 38 or 39 hours of interest payment on the debt in the province of Saskatchewan. That's what it gets us.

Well, they piratize Saskoil. Was that the breakthrough the people of Saskatchewan were looking for? Well, not unless you consider 75 per cent ownership out of province to be public participation in the ownership that the member from Canora talked about.

And we piratized our parks. As a result of piratizing parks in the province of Saskatchewan, have the fees gone down? No, they haven't gone down. Has the service gone up? Service hasn't gone up. It just gets a little more difficult to get into the parks, particularly for those who live on more limited means because now parks are run for a profit. If the people of Saskatchewan want to share in the natural beauty of this province, then they have to participate in the public participation plan, the piratization plan of the parks of Saskatchewan.

So who wins? Who wins in this whole process of piratization in Saskatchewan today, Mr. Speaker? Well, I can mention some who win. Paul Schoenhals wins. He was a great defender of free enterprise when he stood in his place in this Assembly as an MLA from Saskatoon. He wins at piratization because he's now captain of the ship at the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and getting ready to participate in piratization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. Paul Schoenhals is a winner.

John Gormley is a winner. John Gormley didn't win an election, but he won himself a job. John Gormley, the former member of parliament for The Battlefords, a great believer in the free enterprise system, and when the people of his constituency rejected him and the PC Party in the last federal election here in Saskatchewan, did he

go to the private sector, looking to make his fortune? No, he went to the minister of privatization and said, can you give me one of them public civil service jobs that the people of Saskatchewan pay for? And so he's a winner from privatization because he's working in the department of privatization.

Ralph Katzman is a winner. Ralph Katzman was the member for Rosthern. And after he had served as a legislative secretary to Jim Garner, the minister of Highways who transferred 400 people to the private sector, the PC Government of Saskatchewan today has transferred Ralph Katzman to the public sector. They've put him on the dole at the taxpayer cost, and he works now in the Department of Highways. Four hundred maintenance workers in this province of Saskatchewan are gone, but Ralph Katzman's in, and he's a winner in privatization of highways.

How about Louis Domotor, the former PC member from Humboldt? Has privatization hurt Louis? Well Louis got rejected out in the constituency of Humboldt in 1986. But where do we find Louis these days? Louis is in the property management corporation where privatization is running rampant in the delivery of space and maintenance services in facilities owned and used by the Government of Saskatchewan. So privatization hasn't hurt poor Louis any either, Mr. Speaker. He's doing not badly.

Has it hurt John Remai? Has it hurt John Remai? We know John Remai. He got \$22,000 from the Government of Saskatchewan to conduct a little study to see if Saskatchewan, Regina, needed a convention centre with some office space. He decided, after taking the \$22,000, that not only was it a good idea, he was going to do it himself. And he did.

And who's going to rent his space? Well he was going to take the free enterprise risk, because the Government of Saskatchewan is going to be the number one tenant in John Remai's space. And so we pay \$34,000 a day for empty office space so that we can occupy more expensive space in John Remai's space. Because after he had conducted the study and determined that we had a need for this space and built it, it had to be used. And it had to be used by the people of Saskatchewan as the ones who pay the shot, who pay the shot for renting of this space.

So that's who wins and who loses. Well, Mr. Speaker, that's a longer list than the ones who win. When you consider that the number one agenda of the PC government in Saskatchewan today is privatization as number one game plan, we have to ask ourselves, well what about the people?

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, when I take a look at the list of losers, the losers are the people. Let's take a look at some of those people -- taxpayers. The taxpayers of Saskatchewan were promised by this party, prior to their election in 1982, that they'd get a 10 per cent cut in income tax. Has privatization helped deliver a 10 per cent cut in income tax? No, it hasn't. Now we've got a 2 per cent flat tax that's gone up a half per cent for 1985 and '86 and '87 and '88.

What about the consumers? The consumers of this province were promised that the PCs would eliminate the sales tax. Has privatization helped this government to deliver on that promise? Did they eliminate the sales tax? Well if they did, then there's a whole lot of folks who are making voluntary payments of 7 per cent along with every purchase that they make in the province of Saskatchewan today.

How about drivers? The PCs promised to eliminate gas tax. The Premier said, as long as there's a PC government, you'll never see a gas tax again. Did privatization help to eliminate the gas tax? Well that's a little hard to measure up, Mr. Speaker, when we recognize that in the budget just delivered, by the billion dollar man, that the people of Saskatchewan are now either paying 10 or 12 cents a litre -- at least 45 cents a gallon on their gasoline, a third of them not getting it back -- completely absorbed by school boards and municipalities and businesses and passed on to customers and to property owners. So privatization really hasn't helped the drivers either.

Has it helped the seniors? We all remember the seniors being promised that they'd get free phones, free

telephones. Has privatization helped to deliver free telephones? Well that one hasn't come through either, because seniors are still paying for their phones, and they're paying more than they ever paid before.

Well what about the sick? We had a government that said they were going to eliminate the prescription drug charges. They promised to eliminate the dispensing fee. Has privatization helped to deliver on that one for the sick of our province? No, that didn't get eliminated. Now they pay the first \$125, and 20 per cent after that.

Well how about the working poor, those who are making minimum wage? Has privatization opened up the Pandora's box of opportunity for those folks, Mr. Speaker? Well we've seen a 25 cent increase, 6 per cent, in the last seven years when inflation has risen in this province by 45 per cent. And the working poor, Mr. Speaker, the working poor have not been the benefactors of privatization.

But what about family business? Goodness gracious! We heard this government saying that they are open for business and surely, surely family business across the province of Saskatchewan must have profited from a government that's been open for business for seven years now. Well has privatization helped them?

In 1981, Mr. Speaker, 456 bankruptcies, unfortunately, in the province of Saskatchewan. In 1988, after six years of privatization, in 1988 alone 1,236 businesses declared bankruptcy in the province of Saskatchewan, thanks to privatization and the PC government, three times as many as when they took office, in one year alone.

What about the young people looking for work. Are these . . . obviously . . . I mean, privatization produces jobs; we hear them saying it all the time. Obviously our young people must just be dashing out there and going to work every morning, flooding into this province to take up the employment opportunities that are being created by privatization of the government of Saskatchewan. Is that happening, Mr. Speaker?

Well in 1981, Mr. Speaker, sad to say, and I was shocked at that time, 21,000 people were unemployed in the province of Saskatchewan, a rate of 4.7 per cent in 1981. In February, in February of this year, Mr. Speaker, 43,000 people unemployed in the province of Saskatchewan and looking for work, a rate of 9.1 per cent, or one in 11. And clearly privatization has failed young people looking for work in the province of Saskatchewan.

Well what about home owners? We've got to find somebody that privatization has helped -- how about home owners? Has it helped them? Well property taxes are up because of cut-backs to municipalities. Gas and electricity costs are up and rising. And I say as well, Mr. Speaker, if the minister's privatization of SaskPower Bill goes through, and they think their electricity costs are high now, hang on to your hats because they'll be going through the ceiling.

What about the home builders? This has got to be good for home builders -- we've got to find somebody that this is good for. Home builders, they must be getting help by privatization, Mr. Speaker. Well, have they been helped? Met with some home builders not so long ago, just a couple of weeks ago, and what did they say? They say that the tragedy is that many of them are going under. You know, Mr. Speaker, prior to the days of privatization, in the last four years of the NDP government of Allan Blakeney there were an average of 8,400 housing starts a year. Under privatization in the last four years of this government, Mr. Speaker, an average of 4,900 housing starts a year -- a drop of 3,500 a year.

Home builders in this province say that we need one thing to help them, and that's more people. And so have we got more people as a result of privatization, Mr. Speaker? Well in the last 14 months, Mr. Speaker, we have 21,000 fewer people in the province of Saskatchewan. In February alone, Mr. Speaker, the outflow, our net loss of people in February alone was 6,261 people -- shattered dreams -- that left the province of Saskatchewan. In February alone, Mr. Speaker, more than 250 people a day left the province of Saskatchewan -- in February alone -- I'm sad to say. In our beautiful Saskatchewan, every six minutes somebody left Saskatchewan.

Well, surely privatization, if it's not helping people, it must be helping the deficit. It's got to be helping the deficit

because these are . . . the best business minds of the PC Party are sitting in this room. Surely privatization has been helping the deficit because the theory is, you sell off the assets and you bring the money in and you get rid of the deficit. That's what they say. Has privatization helped that, Mr. Speaker?

Well, all I can say is this government inherited \$139 million surplus; surplus. Surplus -- maybe I should just explain that word because people haven't heard that for a long time, Mr. Speaker. Surplus means that you have more coming in than going out. Allan Blakeney left \$139 million surplus to the PCs when they took office in 1982.

And what did the Minister of Finance tell us when he stood in his place and gave the budget this year? He told us the cumulative deficit, entirely accumulated under the PC government, is now \$3.9 billion. That's \$3,900 million. That's the debt. It's almost the size of the budget itself for an entire year, and it costs us more than a million dollars a day just to pay the interest -- just to pay the interest. We spend more on interest on the debt today than we do in the Department of Social Services.

(1245)

And so, Mr. Speaker, has privatization helped some? Sure it has. It's helped Paul Schoenhals and John Gormley, Ralph Katzman and Louis Domotor and John Remai. But I say that privatization PC style has failed Saskatchewan. It's failed kids with teeth; it's failed taxpayers; it's failed consumers; it's failed drivers; it's failed seniors; it's failed the sick; it's failed the working poor; it's failed family business; it's failed young people looking for work; it's failed home owners; it's failed home builders; it's failed families, and it's failed to reduce the deficit. Other than that, it's been pretty good.

Well there ain't a whole lot left, Mr. Speaker, and is it any wonder that around the province of Saskatchewan people of this province are saying that when this Premier and this party leave this province, there won't be anything left. When this band of pirates leaves, there won't be anything left. All of this from a Premier who, within a few

months of being elected, told the financiers in New York that Saskatchewan has so much going for it that you can afford to mismanage it and still break even.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I started out by saying that I love this province and its people, and it tears at my guts to see people up and leaving and deserting our province with shattered dreams. Like so many others, I want my children to grow up and to make their futures here in Saskatchewan.

All of us have had many a conversation, day after day, with our own constituents who are feeling saddened by the fact that they, or their children, or their neighbours or friends, are leaving Saskatchewan to build their futures elsewhere. Is there any experience that is more difficult than for a parent to accept that to see your son or daughter making a decision to leave this province that we love, because there isn't a future to be made for him or her here.

We have the natural resources and we have the people who love this province, Mr. Speaker, who believe in the principle of caring and sharing and co-operative problem solving, who want to see young people stay in this beautiful province of ours to build a brighter tomorrow.

And I want to be a part of that process, that political process, to offer freedom of future to the people of Saskatchewan. Freedom of future that provides an opportunity for employment and education with a sense of justice and compassion, Mr. Speaker, that's fuelled by the three engines of the economy that the Leader of the Opposition has talked about is the principle for economic stimulation that's part of our party: the private sector, the co-operative sector, and a public sector, in a large province with a harsh climate but a determined people working together to build futures and opportunities for our people.

And the formula isn't hard because a lot of the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, I believe are a lot like Uncle Louis. Uncle Louis was a fellow who came from the old country, determined to work hard and build a future for himself and his family. He decided to do the thing he knew best, the only thing he knew, to open up a drug store. He worked hard and he worked long and he cared about the health of his customers, especially the elderly and the disadvantaged. And his motto was always this: good products at reasonable prices, and always service with a smile, because Uncle Louis put people first.

And as a result, Uncle Louis' reputation grew because people came to know him as an honest man. His business did well and soon Uncle Louis was able to expand his drugstore because he was making enough to expand without borrowing. He opened up another drugstore in a town that needed one and didn't have one, and the motto continued -- good products at reasonable prices; service with a smile; and people first.

Eventually Uncle Louis had a whole chain of drugstores all across Saskatchewan and they all did well because he always put people first. Uncle Louis felt satisfied with what he'd done, and confident in the future that he could provide for his family. And after many years, he decided that he'd like to take a well deserved break and go back to the old country for a year or two, and turn the business over to someone else.

At first he didn't know who, Mr. Speaker, but he had a son-in-law with a bit of a shaky track record but a lot of enthusiasm. And he knew that this son-in-law had a lot of enthusiasm because he'd say things like, "Give 'er snoose, Bruce," "Don't say whoa in a mud hole," and "There's so much more we can be." And the son-in-law's name was Grant.

Uncle Louis turned his keys to the store over to Grant and told him that he had faith in him, and left for the old country. Two years later, Mr. Speaker, Uncle Louis came home and he was devastated with what he found. His drugstores were in a mess. He found his son-in-law had had a lot of enthusiasm for piratization -- pirates first and people second -- and the motto is no longer, good products at reasonable prices, service with a smile, and people first.

The first thing the son-in-law had done was bring in second-rate products and jacked up the prices. To be popular with his friends, he hired a bunch of them at big wages, even though they didn't know the business or care about customers. They spent most of their time talking about pay-day and rarely gave service with a smile.

At first the stores found that they weren't getting new customers and then their old customers started to desert them and go elsewhere. The stores began to lose money, Mr. Speaker, so the son-in-law decided to sell some off, and he did. He sold the most profitable stores first and kept the losers, but because he kept running them in the same old way the business kept losing money.

Uncle Louis looked at all of this, Mr. Speaker, and he said there is one grant this business can do without and he fired him. By the way, he gave him three weeks pay in lieu of notice.

And although the task seemed large, Uncle Louis was determined, determined to build his business back to what it once was, using that proven motto -- good products at reasonable prices, service with a smile, and people first.

Mr. Speaker, I say to the people of Saskatchewan that Uncle Louis is Saskatchewan, and Saskatchewan is you and me. Saskatchewan is you and me and our parents and our grandparents. Saskatchewan is our children and our children's children. More than anything else, that's what Saskatchewan is. And I say, Mr. Speaker, to the people of this province that Saskatchewan is ours; let's keep it that way.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: -- In concluding, Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members give some very serious thought as to how they're going to vote on this Bill. And I ask all members of this Assembly to think about this province that we

love, and the history of our province and its people, and most importantly, even more important than the history of our province, about the future of this province and its people.

Mr. Speaker, I feel confident that if all members of this Assembly vote at the end of the day, motivated by love for the province and love for its people, and committed to building a future for the people of this province, that we will reject the concept that's implicit in this Bill. And I ask all members to do as I intend to do, Mr. Speaker, to say no to this Bill and yes to the future of people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's very interesting when we speak to this Bill to note that this is the first Bill in the session. And I think it's also important to note that the Minister of Health and the PC government and the Minister of Education and the Premier have all talked over the last few days about how important education and health are to the province of Saskatchewan.

But what we see, the first Bill that's tabled in the session, is a Bill on privatization. And I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that that shows the real priorities of this government. The real priorities of this government lies with privatizing the heritage of our Saskatchewan families. PC privatization and cut-backs are harming the province's future prosperity, Mr. Speaker. PC privatization is failing to create jobs in Saskatchewan for our young people, and PC privatization benefits big business and wealthy out-of-province investors.

And what we have experienced from PC privatization in the last few years is a betrayal of Saskatchewan, and it's nothing less, Mr. Speaker, but a betrayal of Saskatchewan. The privatization and cut-backs that we have experienced are harming the province's future prosperity. And let's look at some of the facts in that regard. In 1981, before the PC government started on its privatization campaign, there were only 21,000 unemployed people in Saskatchewan. By 1988, after the PC privatization had been in effect for several years, Saskatchewan had 37,000 unemployed, and over the past 12 months, Saskatchewan has lost 12,000 jobs.

If PC privatization is so great, Mr. Speaker, why are there no jobs for our young people? Why was there an out-migration of more than 6,000 people from Saskatchewan in the month of February? Why, Mr. Speaker, if PC privatization is so great, why are we seeing an exodus of our young people from this province? Why are we seeing such high unemployment rates? And why can't the young students going to university, and finishing their grade 12, and going on to technical education -- why can't they get jobs in this province, Mr. Speaker? I'll tell you why, Mr. Speaker. PC privatization does not benefit the people of this province. It benefits big business, Tory friends, and wealthy, out-of-province investors. PC privatization does not benefit the young men and women of Saskatchewan. It benefits the friends of the Tories.

In the 1981-82 fiscal year, the last one of the Blakeney administration, Mr. Speaker, there was an actual budget surplus of 139 million, according to the Tories' own publications. Eleven straight balanced budgets with the New Democratic administration, but ever since they started their PC privatization after 1982, the Tories have had seven straight budget deficits, seven straight budget deficits. And the cumulative PC privatization deficit is close to 4 billion, Mr. Speaker.

And in every year that they have privatized anything, the PC deficit has increased. When they privatize, the PC deficit increases, Mr. Speaker. Remember those PC election promises about taxes? Oh yes, they promised they'd reduce personal income tax by 10 per cent, but they broke that promise, Mr. Speaker, and they imposed their privatization and they increased income tax. They said they would eliminate the provincial sales tax in the first term of office, but they broke that promise, Mr. Speaker. They imposed their PC privatization and they increased the sales tax by 40 per cent to 7 cents.

In 1985 the PC government privatized Saskoil and eliminated the property improvement grant -- another PC tax increase.

In 1986 they gave away Saskatchewan assets to the U.S. company, Weyerhaeuser, and they increased the PC flat tax.

In 1987 they privatized the children's school-based dental plan and they increased both the PC flat tax and the sales tax.

In 1988 they privatized a large part of SaskPower and gave away Saskatchewan assets to a company from Ontario and one from Quebec, and once again they increased the PC flat tax again.

That's the record, Mr. Speaker, of PC privatization. Tax breaks for big business and unfair tax increases for ordinary families in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: -- Order. It being 1 o'clock, this House now stands adjourned until Monday at 2 p.m.

The Assembly adjourned at 1 p.m.