

May 16/90

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Johnson: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the west gallery we have 51 students from East School in Esterhazy visiting with us today. They're grade 4 and 5, and I think I said there's 51 in number. Their teachers today with them are Darrell Paprosky and Mrs. Alisa Leidl; chaperons Mrs. Angie Tochor, Mrs. Carol Anchelenko, Mrs. Jackie Koskie, Mrs. Judy Fig. With them I see their bus driver up there, if there's only one of them, is B. Stevens from Esterhazy.

And while they're all kind of special, Mr. Speaker, there's one little lady I'd like to point out to you. She's my granddaughter, Jennifer Johnson. She's in the crowd. I just hope they have a safe trip back home, and I'll meet with you at 3 o'clock this afternoon. And just help me wish them a safe trip home this afternoon.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Mitchell: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to introduce to you and to members of the legislature, 43 grade 6 students from St. Mark's School in Saskatoon. They are sitting in your gallery, Mr. Speaker.

They're accompanied by their teachers, Arley Olson and Ralph Dauk. Chaperons accompanying them today are Mrs. Marlene Brotzel, Mrs Liz Fay, Mr. John Epp, Mrs. Karen Gusikoski, Mrs. Paula Healey, and Mrs. Del Frari, and their driver Mr. Bartel.

I'll be seeing them at 3 o'clock for pictures and refreshments, and I'd like members of the House to join me in welcoming these students to the legislature.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Tusa: -- I also would like to make an introduction this afternoon. I would like to introduce to the members of the House several members from Newfoundland and they're from their House of Assembly. They are members of the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections and are here visiting today to study Saskatchewan's television system.

Included in the party are the following: Mr. Danny Dumaresque, the chairman of the committee and member for the district of Eagle River; Mr. James Hodder, vice-chairman of the committee and member for the district of Port au Port; Mr. Charles Power, member for the district of Ferryland; Mr. Aubrey Gover, member for the district of Bonavista South; Mr. Walter Noel, member for the district of Pleasantville. Accompanying the committee is the Clerk to the committee, Ms. Elizabeth Murphy.

I'd like to ask my colleagues to welcome here to the Legislative Assembly this afternoon our guests from Newfoundland.

Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Federal Financial Aid for Farmers

Mr. Romanow: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today in the absence of the Minister of Agriculture is to the Associate Minister of Agriculture, and it pertains to newspaper reports in the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix and the Regina Leader-Post about this never-ending saga -- unfortunately they describe it that way -- about the \$500 million cash promised by the government opposite on March 19, 1990 in the Speech from the Throne, but yet not delivered.

My question to the Associate Minister of Agriculture is this: when the ministers of Agriculture for western Canada, according to this newspaper report, met yesterday the only advice they could give to the farmers was that they should not yet spend the money which they don't have -- if I might say, some very obvious advice -- Mr. Minister, is this the end result of all the work that you and the ministers of Agriculture can come up with after waiting for two months plus from the commitment in the Speech from the Throne? Is that the best that the western ministers of Agriculture and your government can come up with for hard-pressed, cash-starved farmers -- namely, don't spend the money because you haven't got it yet?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Martens: -- Mr. Speaker, I think I want to point out two items in the remarks that I want to make in addressing this question. One is that the groups of producers that we have met with have said that we should, in this negotiation, not blink with the federal government, and that's what we're doing; we're following their direction. And the second thing is that we are probably getting closer today than we were two months ago.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: -- Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the Associate Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Speaker, the associate minister said in his answer that what the producers are saying is that the government opposite should not blink, were his words used, in the negotiations with his pals in Ottawa, Mr. Mulroney. But I wonder whether or not the Minister of Agriculture indicates that while he is not prepared to blink but he might be prepared to wink, because the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix and the Regina Leader-Post report, and I quote the following from today's Leader-Post:

The Prairie provinces have agreed in principle to share the cost of a \$1-billion farm aid program with the federal government, federal Agriculture Minister Don Mazankowski said Tuesday.

Provincial agriculture ministers "have gone back to their cabinets to see to what extent they can support cost sharing," Mazankowski said . . .

Now, Mr. Speaker, that's today's statement by the federal Minister of Agriculture, the deputy minister . . . Prime Minister of Canada, your colleague politically. It looks like you're not prepared to blink, but it looks like you might be prepared to wink. Is it true that cost-sharing is now on the table, and if so how much of the program is the Government of Saskatchewan prepared to cost share?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Martens: -- Mr. Speaker, in outlining the format for these negotiations with the federal government we discussed with the various groups in the province of Saskatchewan how we should handle this. And they told us that clearly a historic pattern that has developed over the past five or six years are what we should follow in looking for a better than 1:1 ratio, which the federal government now wants to have. And that's what we're looking for and that's what they're encouraging us to negotiate.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: -- Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the Associate Minister of Agriculture, and I might say, Mr. Speaker, to the members of the House, this is a radical departure from the position taken heretofore by the Premier and the Minister of Agriculture, by the government opposite, who have taken the position heretofore, Mr. Speaker, that the provincial government would not blink, to use his words, one penny on a cost-sharing proposal; that they don't like it in principle. And the Associate Minister of Agriculture now says that it's a question of how much is the cost-sharing?

My question therefore to the associate minister is this: is it correct that you're telling the House today that the Government of Saskatchewan is prepared to pony up a portion of that \$500 million so badly needed by the farmers of Saskatchewan? If so, how much are we being asked to pony up? And for goodness' sake, can you tell the farmers when the agreement can be arrived at so that they can get this money which you people promised over two months ago but have not yet delivered?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Martens: -- Mr. Speaker, I think that one of the things that we want to point out to the people here and to those that are watching is that we have discussed this on an ongoing basis with the various organizations -- Sask Wheat Pool, UGGs (United Grain Growers Limited), pork producers, livestock producers, the Canadian . . . western Canadian wheat growers. All of them have been in room 218, Mr. Speaker, and we have dealt with them formally three times in the last two months, and we will continue to do that.

And addressing their concern to the federal government, they said to us that what we do when we set up a precedent of dealing with a ratio of more

than 8:1, or a reduced ratio of 8:1 -- let's say 4:1 or 3:1 -- we jeopardize all of the other programs that we have in relation to the federal government. And that, Mr. Speaker, is clearly what they want to know about and we will tell them about as we go through our negotiations and our discussions with them.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: -- Mr. Speaker, I have a new question for the Associate Minister of Agriculture, which I think you can answer very simply.

Mr. Minister, for months now your Premier and your government has been taking the position publicly that Regina would not be contributing, that it was a wrong principle, that Regina has contributed enough, you say, to agriculture. I would dispute with that, but none the less that's the position that you're taking.

Now you're saying that Regina is in effect agreeing to a cost-sharing principle. The only issue now is the extent to which the cost-sharing is being debated about. Is that correct or not? And if it is correct, I want to know exactly how much the province of Saskatchewan is prepared to put on the table.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Martens: -- Well I want to point out two things, Mr. Speaker, that we have always said. We do not agree with a 1:1 ratio as outlined by the federal government. That's point number one. We have always said that.

The second point I want to make is that historically we have dealt with this concern and subsidy to the grain production in the province on an 8:1 ratio, and we will continue to discuss that with the federal government. And that's where the tough part in the negotiation comes in.

And we have asked these organizations to lend us their support. And we have even had the city of Regina give us a resolution from their city council, indicating that they were behind the Premier in developing that kind of a policy. And I think that's right.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: -- Mr. Speaker, I have a new question for the Associate Minister of Agriculture. And I say to the minister that you are misleading the House -- with the greatest of respect -- and the farmers of the province of Saskatchewan, by that statement. Because the resolution before this House and the statements made by your Premier and by you, sir, up to now have been that we're not to blink. We're not even to wink.

And if there's not going to be any money coming from Regina for this federal program, which you say is an Ottawa responsibility of \$500 million, you're telling us something entirely differently today -- entirely differently. And I want to know the dollar sums that are involved. Give us the answer to that.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Martens: -- Mr. Speaker, when the Premier and Mr. Mazankowski reach an agreement on this and we finalize that, we will notify the House. I just want to remind the House and the farmers of Saskatchewan that I have farmed in a Liberal administration and I have farmed in an NDP and a Tory; and I'll tell you, Tory is better.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: -- Mr. Speaker, I wish the Associate Minister of Agriculture would answer the question for a change. But if he says that Tory is better, than I would say to the hon. minister, the Associate Minister of Agriculture, he hasn't been out in his farm riding enough lately because he'd know that's not true.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Spring Seeding Loan Program

Mr. Romanow: -- You should go back home and listen to farmers for awhile.

Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the Associate Minister of Agriculture. We're told that just a little over 3,000 applicants have been approved for the provincial government's spring seeding loan program -- the guaranteed loan program announced at budget time. And that's a relatively low number, given the number of farmers which are hurting and hurting so badly out there.

Mr. Speaker, how many farmers are being denied the right to fill out the application for spring seeding at the commercial institutions when they arrive there, or by the ACS (Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan), or by both?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Martens: -- Mr. Speaker, I just want to inform this Assembly that I live in my constituency and I go back there every weekend, and I do that on a regular basis because I live there . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's right, I live there. They phone me on the weekends and everything like that.

I want to point out to the second observation that the Leader of the Opposition made. We have had 4,700 people qualify immediately on the spring seeding program. We have had 1,325 that were referred back to the process that we outlined earlier, and 849 of them have been accepted, bringing that total to 5,550. And 13 cancelled it on their own and 223 out of the 6,000 have been denied. And that, Mr. Speaker, is for a total of \$77 million in 16 days.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: -- Mr. Speaker, I have one last new question to the Associate Minister of Agriculture. I must confess at the outset that I might not have caught his figures, and if I do the minister will obviously correct me. But is he telling the House that of approximately 5,550 farmers who have qualified for spring seeding loan guarantee, that only 849 have been accepted? Is that the figure?

An Hon. Member: -- No.

Mr. Romanow: -- All right. Mr. Speaker, I've obviously got the numbers wrong. I wait to be clarified by the Associate Minister of Agriculture. I'd like to know exactly what . . . Mr. Speaker, I cannot hear myself ask the question, and I want to ask it specifically of the Associate Minister of Agriculture. I want you to give us the . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order. The hon. members are not giving the Leader of the Opposition the opportunity to put the question. I am now asking them, on his behalf, to allow him to put the question.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's obviously clear that when the cat's away the mice will play back there and all those radicals on the Conservative benches have got to be controlled a little bit.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Romanow: -- I want the Associate Minister of Agriculture to give us the . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order. Member from Meadow Lake and the Minister of Finance . . . or Justice -- I'm sorry to the Minister of Finance -- the Minister of Justice, would you allow the Leader of the Opposition once more to put his question?

Mr. Romanow: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I shall try once again and ask the Conservative caucus to contain their -- how shall I describe it? -- enthusiasm.

I want the Minister of Agriculture to give us the exact numbers, if he will again, for the House. And in specifically when doing so would he answer this aspect of the question, another aspect: is it correct that there is a lengthy credit report to be filled out by each potential applicant farmer? We're advised something in the order of 36 pages which takes into account all of the financial positions of the farmers involved before processing; and if so, on whose instruction is this detailed information being sought?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Martens: -- Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that 6,000 people have applied for the spring seeding loan for \$77 million; 223 have not qualified in 16 days. And that, Mr. Speaker, is done this way: they

are phoning on a two page application form filled out by the banks or the credit unions to the head office, a number is received, and the majority of those -- upwards of 4,500 -- received within five minutes their notice that they had been approved for the application.

Saskatchewan Commission on Directions in Health Care

Ms. Simard: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health, and it has to do with one of the recommendations of the Murray commission to limit medicare coverage for chiropractic services. Now, Mr. Minister, this only hurts the sick and elderly, and we want to know whether you endorse this recommendation?

Hon. Mr. McLeod: -- Mr. Speaker, that recommendation is being treated by the government the same as all of the recommendations of the Murray commission, which are that people will have their say about the commission. The chiropractors, as the member's pointed out, have obviously had their say now. The chiropractors believe that it would not be the right course of action to take; that course which is outlined by the Murray commission.

We have not made the decision on that basis, and we have not made any decisions as it relates to the recommendations of the Murray commission because, as Dr. Murray has said himself, he looks at the entire commission report as all of the pieces of a puzzle. And to pull one page out or one recommendation out, as the member and some of her colleagues have done over the past few days, is not the appropriate way to deal with a very complex report.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Ms. Simard: -- Mr. Minister, the people of Saskatchewan have told you time and time again that they do not want to see chiropractic services limited. In fact there was a petition tabled in this House, with thousands of names on it to that effect. You tried it once before, Mr. Minister, and now your commission is recommending it yet again. Now where do you stand -- with the wishes of the people or with your commission?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: -- Mr. Speaker, it's very difficult for that member to understand, it's very, very difficult . . . it's seemingly difficult for her to understand that it's not an either/or. It's not the commission versus the people or the NDP versus the commission or the commission versus the NDP or versus the government, whatever.

The commission report, Mr. Speaker, is a very large blueprint for the delivery of health care services over a long time into the future. That was the premise upon which it was commissioned in the first place. That's the premise upon which all of the commissioners dealt with it as they went out across the province for a couple of years.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will stand again and pull out one page, as I say, that being the recommendations as it relates to chiropractic services,

and talk about the people who are in chronic need of chiropractic service over a period of time, and attempt -- and I just say an attempt, because she says, when will you begin to listen to the people of Saskatchewan. When will that member quit, when will she stop attempting to scare certain segments of the people of Saskatchewan and especially those most vulnerable? Why will she continue to try to scare people with the old mediscare tactic of the NDP?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Ms. Simard: -- Mr. Minister, there's good reason why we're scared over here. That minister and his government privatized the school-based dental plan in Saskatchewan. They met with Oliver Letwin just weeks after Britain moved to a more privatized health care system. The people said they didn't want chiropractic services deinsured, and now the minister's own commission is recommending what he tried to do months ago. There's good reason for us being scared, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Ms. Simard: -- This is an attack on the fundamental principles of medicare, that health care should be universally accessible. And in view of that fact, Mr. Minister, where do you stand on this matter? Why are you waffling on this, Mr. Minister? Do you stand up for the principles of medicare, or are you going to privatize chiropractic services by transferring the cost to the sick and the elderly.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McLeod: -- Mr. Speaker, the day that the hon. member -- and if I was to say that the chiropractic services would be such, or would be as they are outlined in the Murray commission -- would be the day for the member to get so carried away.

Mr. Speaker, that's not the case. I have never said that, nor has any member of this government. Mr. Speaker, that member ruled the Murray commission . . . she rejected the Murray commission report, a very thick report for the people of Saskatchewan. She rejected it out of hand from the very outset. That's on the record. That member, the hand-picked spokesman of the New Democratic Party said the Murray commission report, very comprehensive report, is rejected out of hand.

And now she comes in to the House and other places across the province and picks this little recommendation and that recommendation out and says, these recommendations decide today which way they will be.

Mr. Speaker, one more point. The member has made the point several times. And they talk about privatizing of the school-based dental program or of the dental delivery services to children. Mr. Speaker, you tell me and can anyone tell me what is the difference between the government paying dentists on behalf of citizens who receive services and paying physicians on behalf of citizens who receive services? And how can they characterize dental services as privatized if they don't characterize medical services

as being privatized? I would like one member over there to be able to answer that question, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Saskatchewan Population Loss

Mr. Hagel: -- Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the minister responsible for employment and the economy. Mr. Speaker, the human tragedy continues, and the minister will know that government figures released today indicate that last month 2,218 more people left Saskatchewan than arrived in our province, bringing the total this year so far, in just four months of this year, Mr. Minister, to a net loss of 7,654 of our people.

Mr. Minister, you will also be acutely aware of the fact that over half of those people who have left the province, well over half are between the ages of 15 and 34 -- the young people of Saskatchewan who have left looking for employment and education. Mr. Minister, I suggest that if your government is not a part of the solution, then clearly it is part of the problem.

And I ask you, sir, I ask you: if you will finally acknowledge today, will you finally acknowledge today that your government's commitment to privatization over the past several years and your confused priorities are a major part of the problem for people of Saskatchewan today?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: -- Mr. Speaker, what does the member opposite know about the price of wheat? Nothing. He doesn't know that the price of wheat is down. He doesn't know that the price of wheat is connected to the future of this province. He doesn't have any policy to solve that problem. Instead of freer trade, he wants no trade at all. And in addition to that, Mr. Speaker, he doesn't acknowledge that this province must be diversified. The investment dealers of Canada state in their report in brief:

In recent years, the province's economic base has diversified significantly. Manufacturing investment as a share of total business investment has risen dramatically, from an average of about 3.5 per cent in the first half of the 1980's to 18 percent in the past three years.

At least we have some policies and are trying, Mr. Speaker. He has no policies and is only criticizing, and criticism will not solve our problems.

Mr. Hagel: -- Mr. Speaker, new question to the same minister. Mr. Minister, you guys give diversification a bad name. Under your government, diversification is rapidly becoming the D-word along with privatization, your P-word over there. Mr. Minister, in your budget this year you have not done a thing to help, and your betrayal of Saskatchewan families, particularly young people, continue to be absolutely devastating to communities all across Saskatchewan.

And I ask you, sir, I ask you, when will the rhetoric end? When will the words quit being the solution, and when will you get on with a new plan to start building a future for the people of the province of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: -- Mr. Speaker, the member opposite should go to Biggar and ask the Univision employees if it's a bad thing for them to buy their company with the help of this government. He should go down in downtown Regina, look up at the Saskoil head office going up, and ask the workers working up there if it's a bad idea for them to be employed building the head office for a new expanded company that was privatized.

He should go and open his eyes and talk to the people of Saskatchewan and tell them that he is opposed to the jobs they are working on.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: -- Mr. Speaker, a new question to the same minister. Mr. Minister, you will be well aware that in 1989 there was only one province in all of Canada that suffered a shrinking labour force. It was not Newfoundland. That province was Saskatchewan, Mr. Minister, and your government is to be condemned for that performance in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Hagel: -- That's the bottom line. You got all kinds of money for wining and dining in your fancy offices, ranging from SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) to PCS (Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, Inc.), while the young people of Saskatchewan are leaving this province to look for jobs and education. The member for Yorkton made that very point in this House yesterday.

And I ask you, sir, I ask you when you will assume some responsibility for bringing an end to this human tragedy in Saskatchewan today. When will the new plan begin so that there is some hope for the people of the province of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Schmidt: -- Mr. Speaker, the members opposite are slow learners. I realized that in the '70s when I quit that party. They still don't know the price of wheat. They still haven't, even after we told them just five minutes ago what the price of wheat is, they still don't know what the problem is.

They still don't know that the Biggar malt plant is owned 50 per cent by an American company, 50 per cent by the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, is expanding production. They are opposed, I suppose, to the American company owning half of the plant. I suppose they are opposed to the new jobs. They're opposed to the sale of our barley to the world as malt. They're opposed to value added.

What do they stand for? I've heard all that rhetoric. I heard it when I was a little boy when they indoctrinated me in their schools. I heard it when I went to university, Mr. Speaker. I heard that kind of language. There is nothing new from those people in the last 15 years. The world is changing and they are only getting older but not wiser.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 19 -- An Act respecting the Promotion, Development, Control and Regulation of the Production and Marketing of Agricultural Products and Certain D

Amendments to Certain Acts resulting from the enactment of this Act

Hon. Mr. Martens: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am please to rise today to move second reading of The Agri-Food Act. Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me to speak to this Bill which enables and encourages greater producer involvement in the development and diversification of the agriculture and food industries of Saskatchewan.

The agri-food Bill contains a number of important advances which will encourage the development and diversification of agriculture and food industries in Saskatchewan.

This legislation provides for a wider variety of development agencies to meet needs that producers themselves have identified based on the successful experience of some producer groups. It consolidates, Mr. Speaker, The Natural Products Marketing Act and The Cattle Marketing Deductions Act into one piece of legislation and clearly separates the legislative requirements for development agencies from the requirements for compulsory marketing boards.

The powers of marketing boards will continue undiminished under this new enabling legislation. Mr. Speaker, over the past several years we have all seen the very effective advertising and information campaigns carried out by groups such as beef and egg producers and milk producers. Financed by producer check-offs, these groups have been able to conduct research which responds to changing consumer tastes prompted by diet and life-style concerns.

Because these producers have been involved in the marketing decisions affecting their products and because they have financial resources to promote their products in a way that appeals to changing consumer tastes, they have been successful in the market-place.

It is this government's intention through this legislation to build on that success by providing new opportunities for the establishment of development

boards and development commissions with the power to operate producer check-off funds for purposes such as research, industry promotion, and market development.

In both cases the regulations concerning the establishment of development boards and development commissions will be enhanced so that the wishes of the producers will be more accurately reflected when new boards or commissions are established.

For example, commissions under this new legislation will continue to be voluntary in nature but may also be administered as producer-elected commissions under the new legislation. Development boards will be similar to those established agencies in that a producer vote is required prior to their establishment.

Also The Natural Products Marketing Act requires that the government establish a board if 60 per cent of voting producers vote in favour to establish one. Under the new agri-food Bill the government will have the discretion to set minimum voter return required for a vote to be considered representative of the entire group.

There are some significant improvements contained in the legislation which I want to bring to the attention of the House. The name of the council will be changed from the Natural Products Marketing Council to the agriculture products marketing and development council. This reflects, Mr. Speaker, the wider scope of the agri-food Bill, the importance of the development of new markets for Saskatchewan agriculture production, and the economic benefit of more diversified value-added food processing in our province.

In order to avoid any conflict of interest for the council, the government may appoint separate committees to hear appeals from people with complaints about any agency established under this legislation.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, this agri-food Bill provides Saskatchewan agriculture producers with new opportunities for involvement in the development of markets for their products through: number one, decision making, a decision-making process; and through possible financial support for research, market development, and promotion of their industry.

The agri-food Bill leaves the way open for producers to establish a wide variety of development agencies according to what they have perceived the market-place to demand. The agri-food Bill also facilitates greater involvement by producers and others in the diversification and development of agriculture and food industries.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring forward this Bill and ask all members to support it. And therefore I move second reading of The Agri-Food Act.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: -- Thank you. I'm sure members opposite, when an agricultural Bill is called, look for a stirring speech from this side. I'm

sure it is me that they would expect to hear it from.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Shillington: -- Actually, Mr. Speaker . . . I see I have an audience of farm members over there who recognize an expert when they see one. Actually our critic on agricultural matters, who is indeed an expert, is absent from the Assembly today on government business, and I am going to beg leave to adjourn the debate until he's back and able to deal with it.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 24 -- An Act to amend The Municipal Revenue Sharing Act

Hon. Mr. Klein: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of Bill No. 24, The Municipal Revenue Sharing Amendment Act, 1990.

As all members will know The Municipal Revenue Sharing Act establishes the level of provincial operating assistance to be allocated to both urban and rural municipalities. Accordingly this amendment gives legal effect to . . . (inaudible) . . . in the government's 1990-91 budget.

As we enter this new decade all residents of Saskatchewan know that we are facing severe economic challenges that have been brought on by continued difficulties in the farm and the resource sectors. In spite of the economic difficulties, the government remains committed to retaining the concept of revenue-sharing with the province's municipalities. Revenue-sharing allocations to urban and rural municipalities, Mr. Speaker, will total over \$115 million in 1990-91, evidence of the provincial government's continued support for municipalities across Saskatchewan. I urge all members to support this Bill so that payments to municipalities can be undertaken in a prompt manner.

Accordingly I move second reading of Bill No. 24, The Municipal Revenue Sharing Amendment Act, 1990.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose the Bill before us. And I rise to oppose the Bill because it continues what I consider to be and what most people involved in local government consider to be a shoddy treatment of urban and rural municipalities by this PC government.

This Bill proposes to freeze the amount of revenue-sharing available for both urban and rural municipalities -- freeze, Mr. Speaker, no increase; to keep it at the same level as last year.

Now the minister talked about the government facing severe economic difficulties, and that is the rationale for why the government is proposing to freeze the amount of money to both urban and rural municipalities. I'd like for a moment to examine that particular claim, Mr. Speaker. And I'd like to point out that the real reason that we are freezing revenue-sharing

to both urban and rural municipalities is because of the government's own fiscal mismanagement over the years.

The government seems to be taking the position that since 1982 when they were elected, we have had nothing but severe economic difficulties; that since 1982 we have had acute, protracted economic difficulties. And that is the reason why the government, each and every year that they have been in office, each and every year have run a deficit, a budgetary deficit -- a budgetary deficit that now approaches \$5 billion.

(1445)

One doesn't need to figure very far that this government is very close to bankrupt and doesn't have the money that it once had to turn over to other levels of government or to fund services and programs as are necessary in Saskatchewan. This government is near to bankrupt.

But to say in the context of this Bill that the reason that we are freezing because of economic difficulties, to me suggesting that their excuse since 1982 is that every year they have had economic difficulties. And that just simply is not the truth, simply not the truth, Mr. Speaker. It's fiscal mismanagement. Nothing but, nothing less, nothing more -- fiscal mismanagement. These people wouldn't know how to run a popcorn stand even if you gave them a bunch of cash to start with.

I'd like to just look at one particular indices, one relevant indices of fiscal management in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, to underline the point that I'm making. And I'd like to look at some resource industry statistics. And I want to refer members to the April, 1990 issue of Sask Trends Monitor which, as you know, is a publication that publishes statistics about Saskatchewan.

In this particular article of Sask Trends Monitor, Mr. Speaker, the editor says, and I quote him -- and I want to quote and pay careful attention to this because it's very relevant to the topic under discussion. And I quote:

Partly because of the way production taxes and royalties are structured and partly because of the government's policy, the revenue to the provincial government has been falling throughout this period. In 1981 and 1982, one out of every three dollars of sales was flowing to the provincial treasury. By 1989, the proportion had dropped to about 12 %. The reduction is almost exclusively in oil royalties and taxes which fell from 65 % of sales in 1981 to 15 per cent in 1989.

The combination of a smaller government share of a declining revenue base has had a dramatic impact on the provincial treasury. Even with the declining prices, had the royalty and taxation level remained at their earlier levels, the current provincial debt of \$4 billion would simply not exist.

The editor is saying that had this government had a different fiscal policy towards resource revenues in Saskatchewan, we would not have the accumulated deficit that we have now. We would be able to find the adequate money for

health care, we would find the money for education, and surely we would find the money for local government, Mr. Speaker.

So when the minister talks about severe economic difficulties, he is misleading the people of Saskatchewan. He is saying that that's the whole reason that they don't have the money. The reason they don't have the money is because they decided a long time ago to give breaks to the oil companies and to find revenues elsewhere, in this case local government, Mr. Speaker. That's the answer, that's the reason.

The other reason, Mr. Speaker, that I'd just quickly like to point to is that the government has been impacted, has been impacted by a reduction in revenues from the federal government. The federal government, in its budget this year, decided to cut, cut its transfers to provinces. What has this province's answer been? This province's answer has been to shift that burden now to local government, to shift that burden to urban and rural municipalities.

The Minister of Finance in his budget address said, and I quote him: "We could have followed the Government of Canada's example and shifted our fiscal problem onto others". He goes on to say later: "We recognize that shifting costs from one government to another does nothing to relieve the burden on taxpayers." And how right he was, Mr. Speaker, how right he was.

But that's exactly what he's doing. He and the Premier castigated the federal government for transferring the burden onto provinces, and they said we will never do such a thing. That's what they said, but that's what the province is doing.

I think that if you look, Mr. Speaker, at the fact that inflation this year is projected to be at about 4.7 per cent, that is to say, the cost of municipalities everywhere will be increasing by about that level of magnitude. But to then freeze revenue-sharing represents an actual decrease, represents a cut, a cut in help for municipalities. That's what it means. It means that they have to do more with less from the provincial government.

And it means that the provincial government, contrary to what the Premier, contrary to what the Minister of Finance has said, are in fact shifting the burden. Off-loading is the buzz-word they like to use; off-loading the burden onto municipalities, Mr. Speaker. They're dumping, they're dumping their problems and dumping their fiscal mismanagement onto the backs of urban municipalities.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't necessarily be saying these things, I wouldn't necessarily be so critical, and I might even be inclined to support the Bill before us if this were a measure, an isolated measure in the context of many years. If over the years the government opposite had been generous to urban and rural municipalities, if they had, say for example, kept pace with the rate of inflation, had they recognized the real cost of running municipalities and had attempted to meet that over the years, then in the context of all that history, Mr. Speaker, had they done that, a one-year freeze I don't think is something that one would want to promote

necessarily, but it's not necessarily something that one would want to oppose either. You know, it might be a recognition of some momentary fiscal difficulties.

But that is not the history in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. That is not the recent history and that is not the record of this PC government. This PC government has an abysmal record, an abysmal record when it comes to making sure that municipalities are provided with their fair share of resource revenues with which to meet their services and programs, to pay for their services and programs.

I want to just review that history, Mr. Speaker, just review that. In 1984 and '85, and the Minister of Finance can laugh about this. He can laugh about this, Mr. Speaker, but I tell you that the people of Saskatchewan have the last laugh on this. But in 1984 and '85 urban revenue-sharing, the amount that was set aside was \$65,171,700. That was the amount.

In '85-86 this same amount was budgeted. There was no increase. The amount was frozen at the level of the previous year, notwithstanding the fact that inflation in Saskatchewan that year increased by 3.6 per cent. So we have a case of municipal costs going up, but the government deciding in 1984 and '85, deciding to freeze the amount of urban revenue-sharing.

The next year, '86-87, there was a 3 per cent increase in the amount of urban revenue-sharing -- a 3 per cent increase. Inflation that year, Mr. Speaker, ran at 3.1 per cent.

Now the members opposite are saying, well isn't that wonderful; didn't we do good that year. I just want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that significant about that year, about '86-87, was that it was an election year, Mr. Speaker. It was an election year and they wanted to open up the coffers so that they could get re-elected. So they gave a 3 per cent increase.

Was that something, that increase, that generosity, was that something that was followed in ensuing years, Mr. Speaker? No so. Not so. We looked at the following year of '87-88, we had for the first time in Saskatchewan history an absolute cut, an absolute cut in the amount of urban revenue-sharing. It went from 67 million to to 66 million -- a cut at a time that inflation was running at 4.9 per cent. And again the Minister of Finance laughs -- laughs, Mr. Speaker.

The following year, '88-89, there is a less than 1 per cent increase in revenue-sharing for urban municipalities, even though the inflation rate was running at 5.7 per cent. Again municipalities were being short-changed, short-changed by a provincial government that was mismanaging their own fiscal situation.

Last year, Mr. Speaker, '89-90, again the amount of revenue-sharing was frozen, held at the level of the previous year, the level of '88-89. Also this year of course the Bill before us proposes to freeze it again at the level of two years ago. And this time the minister says it's a case of severe economic difficulties, to use the words that he uses in his remarks.

Our opposition, Mr. Speaker, is just not based on the history of this government, based on the record of the PC government -- a record of freezes and cuts and, in one case, a negligible increase. It's also based on the fact that there have been other cuts this year to urban municipalities. You will know, Mr. Speaker, that this government cut out transit assistance grants which affect cities in this province; that this is an amount of money that is no longer available to those municipalities to help them pay for urban transit. And that reflects a real cut.

So again, contrary to what the Minister of Finance had to say in his budget speech, contrary to the harsh words that the Premier had at the time for Ottawa about . . . that Ottawa was choosing to off-load its fiscal difficulties onto the backs of the provinces, this provincial government, this PC government, has off-loaded its fiscal problems onto the backs of local government; in this case, urban and rural municipalities.

I might point out, Mr. Speaker, even as the minister did not point out in his remarks, that the government also significantly has decided to reduce the amount of money available for capital construction to urban municipalities from \$12.5 million to \$8.5 million. It was only last year with a great deal of hullabaloo that the government announced that it was reinstating the capital grants program for urban municipalities and that it would be \$12.5 million each year for a period of six years, for a total of \$75 million.

Last year the amount that was spent was closer to seven and a half million dollars. This year they're projecting to spend \$8.5 million. So, Mr. Speaker, promises one day and a real sorry track record the next day. And that's the other reason that we oppose, Mr. Speaker, this particular Bill because it's done in the context of other cuts to urban municipalities.

Mr. Speaker, urban municipalities, the group that I'm most familiar with simply cannot carry on, carry on to provide services at the level that taxpayers are demanding in Saskatchewan and to carry on these services while holding the line on taxes. For a number of years they were able to withstand the shock treatment, the radical treatment of the PC government when it came to revenue-sharing. But I think the accrued effect over the years is such that municipalities are now having to increase their taxes so as to be able to continue to provide a very minimal level of service.

Municipalities are not talking, Mr. Speaker, about improving services, providing more for their property taxpayers. The whole mind-set is to be able to continue to provide minimal services for their taxpayers, to provide minimal programs for their citizens, and to be able to do that without increasing property taxes because they recognize that the property tax is not the fairest tax in the land.

But I fear, Mr. Speaker, that the net effect of the government's policies over the years is now such that municipalities, urban municipalities are having to increase taxes to continue to provide a minimal level of services.

I point out as a case in point, Mr. Speaker, that Regina, which last year was able to hold the line on taxes, this year is projecting a 2.87 per cent

increase in the municipal portion of the local tax. Saskatoon is proposing a 6 per cent increase in taxation this year. And I'm sure that the story will be the same in other municipalities across Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I am especially troubled, especially troubled by the net impact of this Bill on the poorer communities in Saskatchewan. And lest anyone forget, Mr. Speaker, we do have a situation where we have wealthier communities and we have poorer communities. Some communities have a very healthy assessment base. They have a rich assessment base by virtue of all the businesses that they have, where others have a very small assessment base.

And the higher the assessment base, the lower you are able to keep the mill rate. The lower the rate will be for the property taxpayers in that particular municipality, the less they have to charge themselves to provide services and programs.

And we have municipalities that are in the midst of trading areas, especially in some of our rural districts, that have the healthy assessment base and therefore are able to withstand far more than some other municipalities the impact of the provincial government's actions of reducing revenue-sharing.

There are other municipalities that do not serve as much of a trading area and therefore will not have as much of a business sector, therefore will not have as much of an assessment base from which to draw. Those municipalities over the years have been especially affected, not only this year, but over the years by the government's actions.

Part of the revenue-sharing, Mr. Speaker, is intended to equalize the load, to equalize the property tax load between poorer and richer municipalities. It's intended to ensure that property taxpayers, no matter where they live in Saskatchewan, will have access to roughly the same level of services and programs at about the same cost, recognizing that if they want to go beyond a certain level, that they'll have to pay. But it's intended to ensure that basic services and programs will be available to all property taxpayers in Saskatchewan at roughly the same cost.

And that's why part of the revenue-sharing pool that we have is set aside for something called a foundation grant which is intended to equalize that. And it works basically, Mr. Speaker, by providing to those municipalities that have a low assessment base, a higher proportion or higher portion of revenue-sharing than it might for a similar municipality with a high assessment base; saying to the one municipality, you have far more of a local assessment base, far more business to tax, therefore the amount of revenue-sharing provided through this foundation grant will not be as much as it might be to another municipality that doesn't have the assessment base.

(1500)

I think a good example of that might be the town of Warman, for one, Mr. Speaker. The town of Warman, if you look in the municipal directory, Mr.

Speaker -- a copy of which was sent to you by the Minister of Urban Affairs and a copy of which was sent to all members of the Legislative Assembly -- if you look in that municipal directory at the town of Warman, you will see that the amount of the assessment base or the amount of assessment is significantly less than it is for I think the town of Unity or Wilkie, which is on the same page, has the same population, I think roughly around 2,500, roughly the same population. But in the one case a community -- Unity or Wilkie, I forget which -- has a much greater business sector, a much higher assessment base as compared to Warman which has a very limited assessment base because of its proximity to Saskatoon -- the people go to Saskatoon to do their shopping. Therefore it doesn't have the assessment base. Therefore in order to provide the same level of services, the mill rate has to be much higher in Warman than it might be in other municipalities, Mr. Speaker.

The foundation grant was intended to equalize that. In 1986 the Local Government Finance Commission in their final report to the Legislative Assembly to the government said that the amount of the foundation grant needed to be increased by \$17 million at that time so that the objective of full equalization among communities in Saskatchewan might be realized. That was their recommendation.

Since that time, as I've explained, Mr. Speaker, we've had a history of freezes, of cuts, of negligible increases, certainly not addressing the objective that was stated by the Local Government Finance Commission. Certainly not addressing an objective that we share on this side of the House and I think that all fair-minded people of Saskatchewan would share, Mr. Speaker -- obviously not by the PC government. But then again it's been said that this is not a fair-minded government.

Mr. Speaker, the PC government record of cuts, freezes, negligible increases means that equalization is not being achieved. And I would just point out as an aside, Mr. Speaker, that this is particularly, particularly a problem for bedroom communities in Saskatchewan. Bedroom communities because of definition have a much lower assessment base than might be the case for other municipalities with a similar population, therefore having to exact much higher, much higher property taxes or a much higher mill rate in order to raise the same amount of money to provide services and programs.

And I say shame, shame, Mr. Speaker, on the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden, shame on the member from Rosthern for not having once stood in their place in this House to address this anomaly, to once say that the situation as we have developing as result of the government's initiatives is disadvantaging a number of communities in their constituencies. Not once have they stood in this House to say enough is enough. Not once have they stood in this House to say . . . for example has the Minister of Justice, the member for Qu'Appelle-Lumsden, stood up and said that the town of Pilot Butte and other towns in my constituency are being extremely disadvantaged by a government that is continuing to ignore the fact that we do not have full equalization among municipalities in Saskatchewan, and therefore the government's action is beginning to impact heavily on towns such as Pilot Butte.

We're having, Mr. Speaker, or we are exacerbating, we are exacerbating the

disparity between rich and poor municipalities when we continue to freeze, when we continue to cut, or we continue to ignore the recommendations of the Local Government Finance Commission.

That is the situation in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and I say shame on the government. And I say shame on the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden and shame on the member for Rosthern for not having once stood in their place in this Assembly to address this very grave problem for towns and villages in the areas that they represent, which are the hardest hit of all, the hardest hit of all municipalities in Saskatchewan, by this government's record of freezing funds for municipalities.

Mr. Speaker, this whole issue of revenue-sharing is not a mere dispute between levels of government. This is not a mere dispute between local government and the provincial government as to who gets a greater share of the pie. This matter of revenue-sharing can be translated very directly into the impact it has on taxpayers in Saskatchewan, and in this case on property taxpayers.

It stands to reason, Mr. Speaker, that if as a provincial jurisdiction you choose to get less from resource companies and you choose to exact or to put a greater burden on municipalities, that ultimately property taxpayers will have to end up paying more to provide or to realize the services that they need, than need be the case.

The relationship between property taxes on the one hand, and ability to pay on the other hand, is a very tenuous relationship at best, Mr. Speaker. In fact many would say that it's a spurious relationship. That there is no relationship. And if there is a relationship, it's because it's a happenstance or a chance, as opposed to being a strong, positive relationship between the taxes that you pay and your ability to pay.

We illustrated that a couple of years ago and we've continued to illustrate that over the years, Mr. Speaker, by pointing to the Minister of Urban Affairs at the time, and pointing out that based on what we knew about his income, based on his income from the Legislative Assembly, a known source, a matter of public record, and looking at the property taxes that he was being asked to pay on his very considerable residence in the city of Regina, we discovered that he was paying 3.4 per cent of his known income -- 3.4 per cent of his known income for property taxes.

And we contrasted this with an elderly widow in my constituency living on probably what is one of the smaller urban lots in Regina and in all of Saskatchewan, living in a very poor area of the city, living in a very modest house, a very modest house, and probably paying as little as you can when it comes to property taxes in Regina. We discovered that based on her known income she was paying 5.9 per cent of her known income for property taxes. And this is a remarkable contrast, a remarkable contrast, Mr. Speaker, that we have those who are well able to pay, pay much less -- pay much less -- of their income for property taxes, and I would submit, I would submit, Mr. Speaker, is the ideological reason behind or the ideological reason why the PC government continues to off-load the tax burden from the provincial tax resources on to the property tax base in Saskatchewan because

they have shown over the years, they have shown over the years, that they want to tax the poor and give benefits to the rich.

This is a kind of a reverse Robin Hood psychology that they have. If we tax the poor and provide incentives to the rich that somehow life is going to be better for all of us, Mr. Speaker.

Now this is not a philosophy that I have shared over the years, but it certainly is a philosophy that the members opposite, the PC government, demonstrated over the years. And I think that taxpayers know, know with some certainty now, that they have no friend in the PC government because PC governments mean a greater reliance on the property tax; it means a lesser reliance on resource revenues.

This is the government, Mr. Speaker, that has chosen -- it's a matter of choice -- has chosen to take less from oil companies over the years and to put a greater burden on property taxpayers over the years, a matter of choice.

Conservative government is always very fond of talking about freedom of choice, and they've certainly had a freedom of choice when it came to fiscal policy in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and their choice has been to take less from the wealthy oil companies and to put more on the poor property taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

And I think the figures in the Local Government Finance Commission final report of 1986 bear me out, Mr. Speaker. In that report they point out that in 1985 net property taxes in Saskatchewan had risen to where they were the third highest in Canada. And net property taxes, I mean the average property tax load, the average property tax load, less any property improvement grants such as we had, or tax abatements such as is the case in many other provinces, to arrive at a net figure, and that figure has put us in 1985 in third place in all of Canada.

And that is the reason that we oppose this Bill. The Bill before us purports to continue that trend, purports to continue a trend of putting a greater burden on property taxpayers while letting all companies go scot-free. We say that's wrong, Mr. Speaker. We say it's wrong to freeze the amount of money to municipalities, and that is why we oppose this Bill. We oppose this continuation of a shoddy treatment for local government and in particular, urban and rural municipalities in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the government opposite is a lame duck government that really doesn't know where it's going any more. It's a government that feels that it's so buffeted by the economic extremes and by the economic realities of the world that they have no more answers about where to go in Saskatchewan. And it's one of the reasons that they've come up with this Consensus Saskatchewan where they're going to ask 100 people to . . . 99 now, Mr. Speaker. They're going to ask these 99 people to give us advice as to where we should go.

In fact the Minister of Finance says that, I'm going to take this whole cumulative deficit, just nearly \$5 billion. I don't have any answers any

more. I don't know what to do. It's been given to me by the previous Finance ministers. Then I've run up my own this year, but I don't know what to do any more. I'm going to give it to this Consensus Saskatchewan and they can tell me how to get out of this mess. That's what the Minister of Finance is saying.

The Health minister is saying, well, we've got a number of very clear-cut recommendations here from the Murray commission on health, but I don't know what to do, Mr. Speaker, I don't know what to do. I'm going to give it to this Consensus Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, if the Minister of Finance and if the government wants to know what to do, I suggest to them, I suggest to them a very simple thing: that they sit down, that they sit down with the thousands of men and women in Saskatchewan who run our urban and rural municipalities, to sit down with them and learn from them how it is that they can continue to provide services while holding the line that they have on taxation without incurring any deficit.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: -- Perhaps then, Mr. Speaker, perhaps then they might get the wisdom that they need to know, where it is that we need to go as a province. Perhaps then they might get some idea of leadership that is required in Saskatchewan to get us out of the mess that we're in.

Mr. Speaker, the problems we have in society will not be resolved by turning to this group or that group. Leadership needs to be defined so that the people of Saskatchewan know where we're going and know that the problems that we have can be resolved.

Mr. Speaker, by simply transferring the problems we have onto others, we are not solving the problem; we are simply transferring it. That's all, and that's what's been done by this Bill before us, and I guess it's almost a case of out of sight, out of mind.

Mr. Speaker, that is no solution at all. And I can tell you, in the next election the people of Saskatchewan will also have a different solution in mind. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Motion agreed to on division, the Bill read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole at the next sitting.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 9

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Klein that Bill No. 9 -- An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Housing

Corporation Act be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole at the next sitting.

(1515)

Bill No. 10

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hodgins that Bill No. 10 -- An Act respecting the Manufacture, Sale, Use, Consumption, Collection, Storage, Recycling and Disposal of Ozone-depleting Substances and Products be now read a second time.

Mr. Koenker: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to first of all say that there are two sides to this

Dparticular piece of legislation concerning ozone here in Saskatchewan. The one side of the coin is to commend the government for its actions in introducing this legislation. This is important legislation that needs to be taken care of.

But the other side of the coin is to point out that this legislation was promised one full year ago in the Speech from the Throne in 1989. So in other words we have a situation here of very important legislation being introduced, but being introduced after a really inordinate delay and long after the government's own proclamation indicated that it would be introduced. And I think this is not by accident; I think that it shows very clearly the ineptitude and the lack of substantive commitment on the part of the government when it comes to environmental matters such as ozone protection.

The facts show that this government really does not take environmental protection seriously. The federal-provincial ministers of Energy met last month to discuss reductions of carbon dioxide here in Canada and announced that the reduction targets or levels were premature and that they would not really be taking substantive action to act on CO D22 and our provincial Minister of the Environment is part of this conspiracy to slow down action on environmental protection measures.

I also want to point out for the Saskatchewan public that when it comes to reducing oil usage which contributes to global warming and the greenhouse effect, this most recent provincial budget eliminated \$1.8 million for urban transportation. There is now from the Government of Saskatchewan no money for urban transportation in Saskatchewan -- hardly a measure that assists in the amelioration of the greenhouse effect.

This same budget that was introduced two months ago, cuts money for energy research and particularly for alternate energy research and conservation projects here in Saskatchewan, and follows on the heels of provincial budgets that have continued to do the same.

One more example, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This budget cuts back money from the department of science and technology. And the Minister of Finance can say what he likes, but this department of science and technology that was

hailed four or five short years ago as being one of the most important departments in the whole of the provincial government, introducing a whole new age of government and responsiveness for the future, this department in fact has been eliminated.

And little does this do when it comes to scientific matters like depletion of the ozone layer and other environmental matters. And in fact the Saskatchewan Research Council's budget has also been cut in this most recent budget.

Now it wouldn't be just so bad if there were cut-backs in fiscal allocations in the budget for science and technology and environmental matters. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to point out that in this most recent budget we have still been waiting for action from the provincial government.

I mentioned a few minutes ago that this very piece of legislation to protect the ozone layer was talked about a year ago and only introduced this session, this year. I also want to point out that there are other pieces of legislation and other government initiatives that have been talked about but have not been materialized over the last year.

And I think particularly of a study of the greenhouse effect that was announced in the Challenges and Opportunities (Saskatchewan) document that accompanied the government budget a year ago, announcing that this government "will undertake a research study on the impact of the greenhouse effect on Saskatchewan to develop a plan of action to mitigate any negative effects."

And that was announced back in the spring of '89, and have we seen any action undertaken on that greenhouse study?

Well I've done some investigations, and I have to report that basically nothing has been done. I have correspondence from the office of the Minister of the Environment, relative to the climate change study. This correspondence is dated March 5, and it goes on to say that "I expect that the study will be undertaken in the very near future" -- this, after the government announced a full year ago that the study would be undertaken.

Right now, the government claims that it has undertaken consultation with various government departments, extensive consultation with the Saskatchewan Research Council to put together terms of reference and a proposal for this research. But after a year of having been introduced or announced, still has nothing to show for it. Such is the record when it comes to environmental protection.

The Toxicology Research Centre in Saskatoon is subject to the same kind of delay. A year ago it was promised that there would be increased funding for the Toxicology Research Centre at the University of Saskatchewan. And it was within days -- literally days -- of the most recent provincial budget being announced that the toxicology centre finally saw the \$200,000 that had been promised a year earlier. And they didn't know until those very days before this most recent budget was introduced whether they would

see that money or not, even though it had been promised by the provincial government.

And I can also talk, Mr. Deputy Speaker, about an environmental trace organics lab that was talked about, talked about a year ago in the Challenges and Opportunities document that I referred to earlier that accompanied last year's provincial budget, and nothing has happened there either. They're still doing a study and nothing has materialized.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as important as this legislation is for the province of Saskatchewan and for future generations for the world community to protect the ozone layer, what we see is a real problem right here in Saskatchewan in terms of the duplicity of the government when it comes to acting on its own self-professed initiatives.

And I say then in conclusion, what is needed is a concerted, integrated approach to the problems of air quality and pollution so that over the next 10 to 20 years we can have strategies in place that will actually be reducing the use of chlorofluorocarbons which are ozone depleting; that can reduce sulphur and nitrogen emissions from our power plants and our transportation systems; that we can have initiatives from the University of Saskatchewan for energy conservation and energy efficiency so that we can break some of our reliance on fossil fuels and move to renewable energy sources, environmentally friendly energy sources; that we adopt a four-part strategy here in Saskatchewan for dealing with air quality and air pollution control that would: one, control stationary source emissions from power plants and the like; two, that would reduce vehicular emissions from automobiles and buses.

This means that we have to look at supporting public transportation. Transportation remains one of the largest sources of nitrogen oxide, volatile organic carbon emissions, and carbon monoxide emissions. We certainly have to do something there.

Three, we have to look at long-term planning, not only for transportation but for power production and conservation. We certainly need to look at new technologies and renewable energy technologies. And four, we basically need to do a lot of research.

And maybe I should add one more thing. When the government talks about introducing environmental measures, it should act on them and not delay as it has in the case of this ozone depletion legislation -- having talked about it a year ago, promised it a year ago, and acted on it only now. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to simply add a few brief remarks to this Bill because of some long-standing interest I've had in the area of the environment, and particularly in the matter of depletion of our ozone layer.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say at the outset that it has been a commitment of

mine -- I guess a commitment made to myself more than anyone -- that if and when the government opposite moved in a direction that I thought was appropriate or right that I would not be afraid to say that publicly. I haven't had many opportunities, Mr. Speaker, to do that, but this is one. This is one, Mr. Speaker, where I feel in fact that this legislation now before the House, legislation to protect the ozone layer of our earth, is in fact a move in the right direction, Mr. Speaker.

We have some specific concerns with this piece of legislation. I share the concern of my colleague who just spoke about the long delay in bringing this legislation forth -- commitments made a year ago and only now do we see the legislation. I have a very specific concern about the way the regulatory process is outlined in this piece of legislation and I'll want to say just a word about that.

But the fact does remain, Mr. Speaker, that this piece of legislation, in my view, is a move in the right direction, and I want to say that up front.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation does indicate somewhat of a major shift of position on the part of the government opposite. It was about two years ago now, Mr. Speaker, that I spent about an hour in this House with the then minister of the Environment, discussing this subject. And I asked at that time if he had any specific proposals that he might want to advance in regard to protecting the ozone layer. I asked at that time about the possibility of legislation.

And at that time, the minister of the Environment, much to my surprise, was not willing even to admit that a significant problem existed or that the evidence existed to indicate that protection could be achieved through legislation. And you can review the Hansard on that, Mr. Speaker. That was just two years ago that we had the minister of the Environment of the government opposite indicating that he was not sure that there was a problem, indicating that he was not willing to move legislatively to reach even the Montreal Convention of a 50 per cent depletion in the ozone layer.

And now these two years later, we do have legislation from the same government. And so I point that out, Mr. Speaker. I point out that we have seen somewhat of a conversion of this government on this specific issue of depletion of the ozone layer. And again I say, Mr. Minister, I am happy to see that change and happy to see this piece of legislation before us.

Mr. Speaker, you will know that in this session, in this sitting of the legislature, that the first Bill to be presented in this sitting was presented by my colleague, the member from Regina North East, presenting a Bill to protect the ozone layer. It was Bill No. 1 in this session. And then somewhat later in the session the government introduced their Bill, and of course were then willing to let Bill No. 1 simply stand as we debate the government's Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say just a word about why I believe this is important legislation to the people of Saskatchewan. As you will know, sir, the ozone layer serves as a protective blanket around our globe. It

serves primarily, from the point of view of human health and animal and plant health, as a screen for the ultraviolet rays, the harmful ultraviolet rays that will come from the sun.

You will also be aware, Mr. Speaker, that it has I think now been conclusively shown that certain chemical substances -- CFCs (chlorofluorocarbon) primarily -- which we use to our benefit, Mr. Speaker, as they are released into the atmosphere have caused the deterioration of the ozone layer. And with that deterioration has come an increase in the number of ultraviolet rays reaching the surface of the earth, and with the consequences on human and animal and plant health.

(1530)

The very specific concern that I'm sure we all share, Mr. Speaker, is the effect of the depletion of the ozone layer and therefore the presence of higher concentration of ultraviolet rays as it affects human health. And that is shown primarily, Mr. Speaker -- and again I think the evidence is now conclusive -- that has shown in a dramatic increase in incidence of skin cancer.

I have available with me today, Mr. Speaker, the statistics regarding skin cancers in our own province of Saskatchewan. My figures unfortunately most recently only come to 1987, and they are listed from 1970 to 1987. And, Mr. Speaker, these figures show a shocking, a shocking increase in the incidence of skin cancer in our province.

If I may, Mr. Speaker, in . . . and these were statistics provided to me by the Canadian Saskatchewan Cancer Foundation. Mr. Speaker, in 1970-72, the incidence of skin cancer in that two-year period among the female residents of our province was 1,082; among male citizens of our province, 1,565.

Mr. Speaker, by 1985, 1987, those figures had risen dramatically. Among the female population of our province the incidence of skin cancer had risen to 1,972. That's from 1,082 to 1,972 in the time between 1970 and 1985-87. Among the male population of our province the incidence had risen from 1,565 in the '70-72 period to 2,755 in the years '85 to '87.

Obviously, Mr. Speaker, we are a people who spend a great deal of our time under the sun, many of our people involved in agriculture, and we live, Mr. Speaker, in a sunny province.

The growing incidence of skin cancer in our province needs to give all members of this House concern. And I believe it to be conclusively shown now that the depletion of the ozone layer and the introduction of the more harmful ultraviolet rays into our environment in fact can be shown to have been at least partially responsible for this increase in skin cancer. So, Mr. Speaker, that's primarily why I am pleased to support the direction that this particular Bill takes us in.

I want to identify a concern, Mr. Speaker, before I sit down, a concern about the Bill in its current form. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, the chemicals that are involved in this Bill are chemicals that we use in all of our

daily lives and we use them to our benefit, primarily in our province, in refrigeration and air conditioning. And if we are to achieve the goals set out in the legislation, that before the turn of the century that we will have reduced the use of these chemicals in our province by some 85 per cent, that will mean elimination, in some cases, of those chemicals. It will obviously mean disposal in some cases, and it will mean we will need to be actively pursuing a replacement for those chemicals.

Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge there are no appropriate disposal facilities currently existing in our province, and to my knowledge there is very little being done in our province, at least, in the area of research and development.

Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation needs corresponding work to be going along in a parallel basis, to be looking towards the time when we want to be disposing of these ozone-depleting chemicals and disposing of them in a safe and environmentally friendly way. We need also to be parallel with this legislation, seriously moving in the area of research and development, which my colleague, only moments ago, pointed out.

There is also, sir, obviously a concern being felt in our province by small-business people, who are in the small-business area of refrigeration and air-conditioning, and they see this legislation and they have concerns on how they are going to involve themselves in the change-over.

And this is where my very specific concern comes about this Bill, Mr. Speaker. And I know we can't be too specific at this point in the debate and I'm sure these questions will be raised in Committee of the Whole, but I do want to point out, Mr. Speaker, a significant difference between the Bill presented by the member for Regina North East and the Bill, which is now before the House, presented by the government.

The member for Regina North East proposed in his proposed legislation that when the regulations are being written -- and of course, you and I both know that it's through the regulations that the Bill will have its effect -- the member from Regina North East proposed in his Bill that when those regulations are being written that there should be as wide as possible a consultation with those who will be affected by the changes in this legislation. And sir, if I could just quote you that passage from Bill No. 1. In that Bill, the provision was that:

Except in circumstances that are considered by the Lieutenant Governor in Council to be an emergency, the Lieutenant Governor in Council shall seek advice and recommendations from the public on any proposed regulation or on any proposed amendment to a regulation made under this Act.

Bill No. 1 would have insisted that the cabinet of the province must, shall consult, seek advice and recommendations from the people of Saskatchewan prior to making the recommendations for the elimination or the reduction of ozone-depleting chemicals.

Now in the Bill currently before us, Mr. Speaker, no such provision exists and such provision which would require the cabinet of the day to seek that

kind of consultation, advice and recommendation from the public of Saskatchewan exists in the current Bill. It simply reads, and again I quote:

For the purpose of carrying out this Act according to its intent, the Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations.

So, sir, I see this as a major and significant drawback about the current piece of legislation before us, that it does not require, very specifically require, the government of the day to seek the advice and the consultation and the recommendations of Saskatchewan people as we go about, as we go about, this important task of reducing the level of ozone-depleting chemicals in use in our society, sir. And I am confident that those questions will be raised and will be asked in Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to conclude again by saying simply that I support entirely the direction being undertaken by the government in this regard. We will hope that this legislation can be strengthened and improved before it has finally passed this House.

And I would want to say also that whether it be we as individuals when we act as individuals to protect and enhance the environment of which we are a part, whether it be on our farms or in our businesses or in our factories, when we take steps to protect and enhance our environment, or when we as legislators, when we as a society through legislation or through common goal, act to protect and enhance our environment, we are doing something, sir, not simply for ourselves, but for our children and for generations who are yet unborn, Mr. Speaker.

And of all of the many things that we do in this Assembly, surely this must be one of the most important. When we can act in our day and age to protect and enhance the environment, not just for ourselves but for our children and for generations yet unborn, then, Mr. Speaker, I submit that we can take some satisfaction in what we do and that we can, when our short time in this process is over, we can know that somebody, some day, some time down the road will look back upon us and upon what we're attempting to do, even if it is very small, and look back with some gratitude on what we've done.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do look forward to the opportunity when this Bill comes to committee stage to put some . . . to join with my colleagues to putting some questions perhaps to the minister and seeking to strengthen the Bill, which I am sure all members in this House will consider important and worthwhile.

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me to enter into this debate and close this debate in fact after a . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order. The hon. member has indicated that he is

about to close debate. It is my responsibility now to inform all hon. members that if they wish to enter the debate they must do so now. Otherwise, I recognize the Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Mr. Hodgins: -- Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, it's a pleasure to close this debate on a subject that I feel is of great importance to the people of Saskatchewan and indeed, Mr. Speaker, to the people of the world.

The subject that we are dealing with here, as has been mentioned, Mr. Speaker, is the protection of our environment. It is the protection of the health and well-being and safety of Saskatchewan residents. And what it deals with, Mr. Speaker, is Saskatchewan's contribution to a global planet.

Mr. Speaker, we are but trustees of this earth, and it is incumbent upon all of us, and especially incumbent upon legislatures and this province, to play our part in protecting our environment.

Mr. Speaker, the ozone layer is up there about 25 or 50 kilometres into the earth's atmosphere. Mr. Speaker, when that ozone layer is not protected, the chances and the probabilities of ultraviolet rays coming through the ozone layer increase. Mr. Speaker, research to date has shown that there is cause to be concerned, that there are weak spots or holes or frailties, if you like, in this ozone layer.

Mr. Speaker, what is this caused by? It's caused by man. It's caused by man-made chemicals. And, Mr. Speaker, we're dealing here with a solution to a problem that we have all, as people on this planet, contributed to.

Mr. Speaker, the specific chemicals of ozone depletion are items such as CFCs and halons. In everyday language what we're talking about, Mr. Speaker, are things like the freon in your air conditioners, freon in refrigeration units. We're talking about propellants in fire extinguishers -- halons, they call them, Mr. Speaker. And what this legislation does is manage those ozone-depleting substances. In fact what it does is phase out, and the eventual elimination of these ozone-depleting substances will be a reality in short order.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that hon. members from the NDP have agreed in principle with this piece of legislation. Mr. Speaker, I believe this goes far beyond any political rhetoric or any partisanship, and I commend the members opposite for their fundamental agreement with this Bill.

They have chastised the government for being somewhat tardy in introducing this legislation. And, Mr. Speaker, the only argument that I can make is that, as always is the case, we want to make sure that when we introduce legislation in this House that it is done correctly, that it is right, Mr. Speaker, it's been done carefully and cautiously and that common sense is the rule that will apply. I say, Mr. Speaker, in this particular piece of legislation, it will stand those tests of common sense and practicality and reality.

And, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the people of Saskatchewan will say yes to this Bill. They will say yes to protecting the environment and they will

say yes to Saskatchewan people playing a part in a world-wide commitment to help manage our ozone layer. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people, at the conclusion of this piece of legislation, will be able to walk tall and stand proud that they in fact are playing a part in the protection of a very important resource and protecting human lives and protecting our environment. And, Mr. Speaker, I say the people of Saskatchewan will be very, very happy to see this piece of legislation passed.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and with that I close debate.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole at the next sitting.

(1545)

Bill No. 2

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Martin that Bill No. 2 -- An Act respecting Family and Community Services be now read a second time.

Mr. Pringle: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to rise again today to make a few comments on this Bill. I'll be fairly brief, Mr. Speaker, in that there are some other members who want to speak to the Bill. But I would like to make just a few comments if I could.

This Bill of course gives the minister the power, the Minister of the Family, to do what he can do to strengthen families, to do what he can do to foster the healthy development in children, to provide local services and supports to families and communities. And, Mr. Speaker, it allows the minister to evaluate the impact of the government's social and economic policies on families and communities.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there's certainly nothing wrong with that mandate. I think the mandate is fine. In fact I would suggest that all the ministers of the Crown should be approaching their responsibilities from that perspective as to whether or not the policies and programs of their department impact positively or negatively on families. And certainly the Minister of Education, the Minister of Health, and the Minister of Social Services should give particular attention to those areas.

So I'm certainly not concerned about the mandate, although there are some parts of the mandate regarding research and consultative services and what not that I will want to question the minister on later, Mr. Speaker, because I want to have a clear picture as to just what he has in mind with regard to some of those provisions.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say first of all that the idea and the notion of supporting families and community building is something that everyone in this House I'm sure would support. It's something that we on this side of

the House endorse whole-heartedly, and I would say that in the many years in which we were the government, working with Saskatchewan people, we did a pretty good job of supporting families and community building.

And the concern I have, Mr. Speaker, with the policies over the last eight years has been a departure from what we would call the Saskatchewan way, which has been a way of governments working with the people around the province, working with various groups to support families and provide a certain level of security and to provide opportunities and to provide some hope, Mr. Speaker.

We've seen a departure where we've seen a province, we've seen a government basically tear down rather than build -- tear down the health care system, tear down the assets that have been built up over many years by the men and women of Saskatchewan. And you tear down the social safety network and to privatize many of the important economic enterprises that had worked very well in this province over many years, Mr. Speaker.

So we've seen the record of this government has been one of tearing down communities. It's been one of eroding supports to families rather than ensuring and providing supports to families, Mr. Speaker. And that's a concern I have -- not about the legislation of the Bill, but about the record of the government. Mr. Speaker, we've seen an incredible erosion of family support agencies at a very time when in fact what is needed is a strengthening of those agencies to be supportive to families who are experiencing new levels of stress.

Mr. Speaker, now we're distinguished across Canada today as having now the highest rate of family poverty in all of Canada. When this Minister of the Family was set up in his portfolio we had the second highest rate of family poverty in Canada. He's been in his place now for seven months and we have the highest rate of family poverty in all of Canada. So that's been his impact, Mr. Speaker. As the Minister of the Family, we've gone from second highest rate of family poverty to now the highest rate.

And clearly, that's a sign to the people of Saskatchewan that this minister who is responsible to make sure that children grow and develop and flourish, to make sure that families are supported and get the services they need, the fact that we have the highest rate of family poverty to me is a sign that this minister isn't doing his job in monitoring the impact of government programs on families.

Mr. Speaker, the fact that the numbers of children using food banks, having to rely on food banks, continues to go up around the province today during the tenure of this Minister of the Family is an indication to me that the Minister of the Family is not taking his colleagues to task to make sure that children have enough to eat.

We saw \$740,000 identified in the budget for hungry children to fight hunger in the province of Saskatchewan. With 64,000 children living in families below the poverty line, with some 22,000 children having to rely on the resources of the food banks in the province last year, the government identifies \$740,000 -- half of it, by the way, which is

refundable from the federal government. So it's really only half of that that they're willing to put up. They're only willing to put up half the amount of money from the province that Chuck Childers gets per year for running the potash corporation, to feed hungry children.

Now that's the impact of this Minister of the Family on this government; that's his input into the budget -- half of \$740,000. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's very hard for one to be optimistic that this minister is going to have any impact on the economic and social policies of this government.

Mr. Speaker, there are many other things that are trends that have not changed since this Minister of the Family was put in place seven months ago. We have set new record levels of family bankruptcy, small-business bankruptcy, personal bankruptcies over the last three years. And 1990, to this point in 1990 we're up 27 per cent over last year, Mr. Speaker, which was a record. So no doubt we are going to have a record again, a record high level of small-business and personal bankruptcies in 1990 as we kick into this new decade, at a time when we have a Minister of the Family who's asking for a mandate to in fact ensure that this kind of thing doesn't happen.

We saw today from my colleague from Moose Jaw North has identified through the government's own statistics that this year alone we've had a net out-migration of 7,654 people leaving the province. Basically we're on the same trend as we were last year, which was the second highest outflow of people in the history of this province, or since records have been kept.

But, Mr. Speaker, 2,218 people, as my colleague from Moose Jaw North said, over half of those under the age of 34, have left the province in the month after the budget came down. And little wonder. We lost a million dollars in job-creation programs for young people. We've got quotas on universities. We've got now another tuition fee increase at both universities that's been announced.

This government is leaving people of the province no choice but to leave, Mr. Speaker. And the proof of course is in whether or not the people are leaving or whether they're staying. Well they're leaving in numbers that are at a pace equivalent to last year, which was the second highest level since records have been kept.

Unemployment, Mr. Speaker, has not changed since the Minister of the Family has been established some seven months ago. We've still got 9 per cent, 17 per cent for young people.

Farm stress. We've had more government initiated farm foreclosures and legal actions since this minister came about. Mr. Speaker, we've had eight years. This government's had eight years to bring some income stabilization to the family farm to deal with the issue of farm debt, a land transfer program. They've had five years where they've overlapped with the federal government which is also Tory. You would think that would be the ideal circumstance of a provincial party and a federal party of the same political stripe to move ahead. And, Mr. Speaker, we've seen the farm crisis worsen, not get better.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of the youth unemployment, we've had \$7.5 million cut since 1986-87 in opportunities for young students. Mr. Speaker, that happened to be the year of the election -- \$7.5 million cut in the last three years at a time when our young people simply can't find summer jobs. This government's made municipalities ineligible to participate in that program. They can't find summer jobs, and then they can't get back into university because the tuition fees have gone up and they've cut back on student loans, Mr. Speaker. They are forcing families and young people to leave the province.

Mr. Speaker, there are many other things I could say, but we've still seen new taxes in the last budget despite the government saying that there were no new taxes. We've seen a continued shifting to the local level of taxation, the highest level of taxation per capita in the entire country. We've got the highest debt load per capita in the entire country. It was the lowest when this government took over, Mr. Speaker.

All of these indicators, all of the financial indicators, the economic and the social indicators are going the wrong way. Mr. Speaker, they're going in a negative direction and this Minister of the Family has made no impact on that whatsoever.

So he doesn't just need a mandate, Mr. Speaker. He needs to understand the problems that are facing Saskatchewan families, and then he needs to get his colleagues to help him deal with those problems, and he has not been successful. All of these things, all of these indicators have meant more pressure on families. They've meant lost security of families and lost opportunities. Mr. Speaker, we continue to basically export our future in our young people.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech contained no plan to deal with the economic problems facing our province. The budget speech did not. I might mention a couple more things about the budget. We saw with native employment, native youth employment being some 85 per cent in northern Saskatchewan, what did they do? They cut native training programs by 7.1 per cent.

The crisis in rural Saskatchewan and the kind of farm support that families need, they cut \$2 million from Rural Development, Mr. Speaker.

The child-care freeze, basically they have not in the eight years they've been in power, they've not increased the day-care subsidies one bit. They have not helped to develop the child-care policies in rural Saskatchewan that are badly needed at seeding times and at harvesting times. Many women's groups and others from across Saskatchewan, farm . . . rural groups have told us that this is a great need. This government has not addressed that problem.

Mr. Speaker, they continue, despite having \$740,000 a year for Chuck Childers, they continue . . . they still haven't divvied out that \$740,000 to feed hungry kids, that 3 cents a day that they've allocated in the budget to feed hungry kids. The Minister of the Family has not even found a way to give that out yet. And I suspect that he's embarrassed about that

amount and that's why he's dragging his feet. Or maybe he can't get through his cabinet spending that \$740,000 on hungry kids.

An Hon. Member: -- More likely the latter, Bob.

Mr. Pringle: -- As my colleague from Saskatoon says, more likely the latter, and it likely is. But 3 cents a day, Mr. Speaker.

The minister has indicated that he's been travelling around the province meeting with groups. Well he's been travelling around the province meeting with groups, but the feedback I get, Mr. Speaker, from his visits -- like North Battleford last week where he met with a group of seniors -- the feedback I get is that this minister is basically a cheer-leader for the government.

This Minister of the Family, he's a nice fellow -- people say that -- but he doesn't understand the problems that people are experiencing. They find him patronizing; they find that he offends them; they find that he's got a rich man's view of poverty.

Mr. Speaker, rather than listening, which is what people want him to do -- and I say this with respect -- rather than listening, which is what people want him to do, he tells them the way it is. He tells them that we know best and we're doing this and that for you. They want him to listen.

Now this is what women's groups tell me. This is what the seniors report from his meeting last week with them in North Battleford, is that this minister doesn't listen to them when they meet. Sure, he's meeting with lots of groups, but he doesn't listen. And this is . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . well this is what he says. Basically what these groups are saying is that they find that offensive.

But they also find it characteristic of most cabinet ministers in this government. They find it characteristic of the way the Premier operates when a group of farmers come and he won't meet with them, or when a group of senior citizens come who lost a lot of their money. Only through embarrassment will cabinet ministers of this government meet with the seniors around Principal Trust. Only when they were embarrassed would they would meet with people on Monday, small-business people from Saskatoon. And this is some support to families; this is some support to families.

(1600)

So there's an attitude problem here with this government. This legislation, while certainly I don't oppose it -- there's nothing wrong with their mandate -- but this mandate is not going to make families in Saskatchewan feel supported. It's not going to make communities in Saskatchewan feel supported.

This is a government that has supported deregulation. They've supported free trade. They've supported privatization -- big megaprojects that take money away from small-business people and family support programs. This mandate is going to do nothing to make those changes, Mr. Speaker.

What is needed by this government is a change in attitude. The solution that this Minister of the Family proposed when he spoke on this Bill -- and he doesn't realize it, but it was offensive to people who are hungry and starving and who don't have any employment, who have to leave the province -- he said, well all you have to do is go for a walk with your kids. All you have to do is spend a bit of time with your children. All you have to do is know a little bit more about nutrition, take some parenting classes.

Well there's nothing wrong with those things. All of us want more time to walk with our children, Mr. Speaker, but the situation in Saskatchewan today is that many families are more concerned about feeding their kids. They're more concerned about paying the bills, which they can't do because this government has squandered money to the point where we spend \$500 million a year just to service the debt, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this Minister of the Family does not understand the relationship between poverty, cuts to employment programs, cuts to recreation programs, and then social problems. He does not understand the relationships between those things.

Now that was clearer when he was speaking. And that's what people tell me, Mr. Speaker, across the province. They don't feel understood by this government. The Minister of the Family brings no new enlightenment to this analysis by the government.

Fifty years ago we had a Tory government; we had high numbers of hungry people and hungry families. Fifty years later, today, we've got the highest rate of family poverty in all of Canada. We've got bulging food banks and we've got hungry kids, Mr. Speaker. And that's the legacy of the Tory government, whether it's in Saskatchewan or Britain or in United States. There's a few winners -- lots of money for your friends. But the masses of people, families, growing poorer, and two-tier education and two-tier health care, not support to families.

Mr. Speaker, families in Saskatchewan, young people in Saskatchewan have little reason to feel hopeful just by this legislation. They've had in seven months, in seven months I cannot think of a specific constructive program that this minister has introduced. He certainly has not taken any serious analysis to the direction that the government's going in, in terms of their programs. Otherwise the indicators wouldn't be getting worse; they would start to be turning around if the government was serious.

One can only conclude that with this Bill, setting up this expensive ministry which now they're 20 cabinet ministers, one can only conclude that this is a public relations initiative, Mr. Speaker -- that it's a public relations initiative. I hope that I'm wrong. The biggest test of course is whether or not the poverty rate is going to go down, whether or not the young people are going to stay back in Saskatchewan. And there's little reason to suggest that anything has changed, but in fact has gotten worse under the overseeing of this Minister of the Family.

So, Mr. Speaker, I've got some colleagues who want to make some important

comments on this Bill. I've got many questions that -- I will tell the minister right now -- I'm going to be asking him about. And, as I say, I support the mandate. I support supporting families and building communities, but the record of this government has been one of tearing down and taking away supports from families and driving people out of the province. And for that, Mr. Speaker, they are going to be held accountable.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Thompson: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise today to take part in the debate on Bill No. 2. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to indicate to the minister that this is a very powerful Bill that we have before us today -- Bill No. 2, An Act respecting Family and Community Services.

And I just want to quote some of the items that are contained in this Bill, just to indicate just how powerful a Bill that we have before us:

The minister may do any thing that the minister considers advisable to promote the growth and development of services and resources designed to:

- (a) strengthen families;
- (b) foster the healthy development of children; or
- (c) provide local services and support to families.

Mr. Deputy Speaker and Mr. Minister, when you take a look at that, that indicates that this Bill is very powerful -- the development of new services that promote and support family life.

And then it goes over here, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

recommend policy directions for the integration and co-ordination of methods to improve and strengthen (the) family . . .

So when you look at that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that he has the powers to "recommend policy directions for the integration and co-ordination of methods to improve and strengthen (the) family," and I say to you, Mr. Minister, that gives you some very large powers.

And then you also have within that Bill, the ability to "evaluate the impact of government economic and social policies on all Saskatchewan families." Now the minister, he can go down to his office and he can take a look at the policies of this government and the way that the government is going, and he can evaluate the impact of the government on economic and social policies of this province, and he can also recommend, to cabinet, changes in direction that would solve the problems that we're facing in this province.

And what does that partnership really mean, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Well, it means that you want to strengthen the families in our province. We want to strengthen the families. We want to strengthen our towns. And of course when you strengthen families and you strengthen your towns and you have them all working in the same direction, and that takes us to the most important resource that we have, and that is our children. And that most certainly creates a partnership that we should all be working towards -- for the children.

And I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we as New Democrats, we support a healthy partnership between government, and we support a healthy partnership between families and towns and villages and cities in Saskatchewan. And that's the only way that it can be successful, if you have governments and communities all working together and then that creates a solid family background so that the province can prosper.

And we had that, we had that partnership when we were the government in this province. We created that partnership and that good feeling by providing a good health system and a good economy. We had an unemployment rate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of less than 3 per cent when the New Democrats were in power. And this created a healthy community and it created a healthy partnership between the communities and between the families. And you have to have that.

If you take families in this province that are faced with large burdens -- unemployment, the debt load that the province is carrying right now -- and that all reflects back onto the family. And that does not create a good partnership. Our policy as New Democrats, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was always to create that atmosphere and to make sure that we had a healthy situation between the families and the communities.

What we see taking place in Saskatchewan right now is that safety net has been tore down, and we do not have that healthy partnership that we had prior to 1982 when the Conservatives took over. And what has created that, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

Well I say to you, sir, that that has been created through policies of the government that the minister is in charge of, and as I indicated before, that this minister has the strength and has the ways and means now, with this legislation when it goes through, to change the type of policies that created what I consider is a poor atmosphere out in Saskatchewan right now. And what has created that? Well when you brought in the drug plan, you eliminated the dental plan and you have large taxes and that is what creates problems for our communities. And that's what's tearing down the safety net in the communities that we have and that's what's making it hard for families and their children.

As I indicated before, all these policies are policies that I say will not strengthen the family units, will not create a healthy partnership between families and communities -- and it is policies like taxes, when families are hit with those taxes. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you came to power in 1982, one of the policies of your government was, and a promise was, to eliminate the 5 per cent sales tax that we had in this province. And now

rather than eliminating that tax, you have put that tax up to 7 per cent and that's hard on families and it's hard on children.

And I want to say that the same applies to the new GST (goods and services tax) tax that's coming. That is not building up our communities and that is most certainly hard on families and the children of those families. And that GST tax, the provincial government here has to take responsibility for that because they negotiated the GST with the federal Conservatives and it is a tax that was put in by the provinces and the federal government. This government was a party to that and so they have to take responsibility and that is what's tearing down the families.

I want to now turn, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the North and in particular to my constituency, and I want to say that we had built up a very healthy family partnership in northern Saskatchewan under the New Democrats. And we did that, we created that partnership by going in and indicating to the citizens of northern Saskatchewan that there was a problem, talking to the communities and letting them know that we were there to listen and to solve those problems.

And what we did when we went in there and as the government, we built hospitals and we built new schools and we provided jobs and there was training and there was an infrastructure that was put into northern Saskatchewan, sewer and water that most of the families in northern Saskatchewan did not have. And you, sir, in your constituency and in southern Saskatchewan took those services for granted.

And this is what builds up a community, and this is what creates a healthy partnership between governments and families. And this is where children can feel secure. And we did this to reinforce that security. And we realized that in northern Saskatchewan there was a very high cost of living and you needed special programs in order to create a healthy atmosphere between the family and the community and government. And that is the only way that you can be successful.

We take a look now up there in northern Saskatchewan, and that is just not happening. We have a tremendous out-migration, not only in southern Saskatchewan, but we have an out-migration of our young men and women in northern Saskatchewan. And this is tearing down that partnership that we all should be working towards.

(1615)

Welfare jobs, part-time jobs, people on welfare -- and I just want to give you some examples and some examples for the member opposite that they have to take a serious look at, not only in Saskatchewan, but specifically in northern Saskatchewan where the cost of living is so high, and it is very hard to keep that family unit together when the family or the father would be working on a part-time job or welfare job. There are so many of those jobs being created.

And I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in all sincerity, that these part-time welfare jobs that they pay the minimum wage for 20 weeks and at

the end of the 20 weeks then they can apply for UIC (Unemployment Insurance Commission), and after the UIC runs out then they can go back to 4.50 an hour jobs. Or if they are on welfare or on UIC, you get up in the morning and you don't have a job to go to and you just don't have the type of an income that you should have in order to provide the type of an education that they all want and they all richly deserve for their families. And this breaks down the family unit.

So I say to the minister, with this type of a Bill, you have the powers to assess what is happening with these types of programs. You have the powers when this Bill is given Royal Assent to be able to say to your colleagues that look it, it's time that we started to provide full-time jobs and well-paying jobs, not these part-time welfare jobs that pay the minimum wage and for only 20 weeks. It's time to take a serious look at that. And I ask you, Mr. Minister, in all sincerity to bring this to your colleague's attention and start putting some of that money into permanent jobs and permanent construction or development of our province.

When you have part-time jobs or you're on welfare, it creates that atmosphere of poverty. And I say to you, Mr. Minister, that poverty breeds poverty. And that is something that we have to solve in this province, and that is the poverty of our families. Because there's just no two ways about it, it creates a sense of hopelessness in such a rich province that we just . . . we cannot tolerate that.

Another thing that I think that creates poverty and creates that sense of hopelessness is when you see individuals and families who are looking to get their children into a good educational system, to make sure that they can get to university or they can get out to secondary schools or get into the trades, and they just don't have the funds to do that because they are on a fixed income and they're living in an area -- and I'm speaking specifically right now of northern Saskatchewan. But it doesn't just apply to northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It applies to the farming communities and the cities of this province.

I was into a small town in southern Saskatchewan here about three weeks ago and I saw just what the economic situation that we have in this province was doing to that community. I saw that 60 per cent of the farmers in that rural municipality had gone out of business. There was only 40 per cent of those farmers left.

So that affected the community and it affected those families. It affected the school. Talking to the town councillors indicated, and I asked them how many building permits they had issued this year and there was none. They're not building any houses. As a matter of fact, there're so many houses vacant that it creates that situation. And all those families suffer when these situations take place.

I just happened to be there the day that one of the largest businesses in the community was going out of business, and they were selling everything. And you talk to people, and they have that feeling of hopelessness.

And when I talk about the North and then I talk about the South, I think

that in the North we have a major problem up there and we have to tackle it. And in the South we have a major problem, and I think that is the farming issue. Somehow we have to bring back that farm economy because if we don't bring back the farm economy, then the towns surrounding those farming communities are going to also collapse.

So we have to find a solution, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I know you will understand that, being a farmer yourself, that we have to make sure and work out some sort of a program that will bring the farming community back to life in this province so that the rest of the province will also spring back to life and that spin-off will go back into northern Saskatchewan.

But I was saying what tears down that family unit is to see individuals especially in northern Saskatchewan, who want to get ahead, they want their children to get ahead, and they should have that opportunity. But there's just not the money there and not the development.

And to enforce that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one has to take a look at the unemployment in northern Saskatchewan which is very high, and then you take a look at the part-time jobs are being created and that is taking place. We had the case of 45 individuals who had been working for two years, and three weeks before they were supposed to go back to work -- a month ago -- were told that their jobs had disappeared.

That is what breaks down the family unit, when you have policies such as that and then again you have policies that will throw hundreds of millions and billions of dollars into large corporations like Cargill, Peter Pocklington, Weyerhaeuser. And I say that the people of Saskatchewan and the families who are suffering, they see that policy, they see that you have money for these large corporations, and they know what is taking place.

And I say to you, Mr. Minister, you have a Bill before this House, Bill No. 2 -- An Act respecting Family and Community Services, and it is a Bill that gives you a lot of power. And I would ask you to take a serious look at the policies of your government and try and solve some of the problems that we have in our communities and cities in Saskatchewan so that we can create a healthy partnership between all the families and the rest of Saskatchewan. I think this Bill gives you that power, and I urge you, Mr. Minister, to take a look at and take serious the remarks that I made here today and use the powers within this Bill to make this a better province for our families.

And I know you're sincere in your job, Mr. Minister. And I sincerely wish you well because we have a very serious situation in the province. There's family breakdowns, family violence, abuse of drugs. It is just a human disaster that we have out there. Suicides that are taking place, and up in my area it's happening on a regular basis. And somehow we have to put a stop to this.

And I say that, Mr. Minister, you have to redirect the moneys that are going into the large corporations so that we can bring back a healthy partnership in this province. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Koenker: -- Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I too want to add a few words to the commentary on this Bill No. 2, An Act respecting Family and Community Services, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There's scarcely a family or community in Saskatchewan that hasn't been touched by many of the negative effects of this government's actions over the years, whether it has to do with taxation policy, whether it has to do with privatization, whether it has to do with the rise of food banks, and so forth, the privatization of health care with the elimination of the school-based dental plan and the prescription drug program.

More recently though, in the last couple of years, as a result of all of these actions, there's scarcely been a family in Saskatchewan that hasn't been touched by out-migration, where we have a virtual hemorrhaging of Saskatchewan families leaving the province, being broken up where some members of the family leave the province and some members stay.

I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for example, of a family that I talked to a couple of months ago as I was going door to door in my constituency in Saskatoon, who talked of the struggle they're going through to determine whether they should leave Saskatchewan after the wife has just lost her job or whether they should tough it out, stick with high mortgage payments, and hope for something better to come about here in the province. So what it really boiled down to was the decision with a new child in the family whether they would have to leave Saskatchewan and . . .

The Deputy Speaker: -- Order, order. I'd ask members on both sides of the House to allow the member for Saskatoon Sutherland to make his comments. Order. Is the member for Saskatoon University interfering with the Chair?

Mr. Koenker: -- Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The member from Lloyminster talks about me being a minister of the cloth, and I say I know a fair bit more about what's happening to Saskatchewan families than he does.

And I want to say to that minister, that member opposite, that I know personally, farm families, one particular family that is in the area that I serve in my pastoral charge, a particular family where the wife has told me, asked me, do you know what it's like to have your husband go out to the hog barn to do the chores and not know whether he's going to come back alive, whether you'll ever see him again, because they're losing the farm. And you ask me to tell the truth, and I'll tell you the truth. That's exactly what farm families are experiencing these days. Farm wives are dealing with husbands who are under stress and ready to commit suicide.

And I'll tell the truth again. I was at the Bruno graduation a week ago, Mr Deputy Speaker -- and the members opposite are laughing but I'll tell the truth; I'm a man of the cloth. I was at the Bruno graduation a week ago and I had an individual come up to me after the graduation program ceremonies and told me the truth about the increase in the number of farmers in his area who were purchasing guns. At this time of the year,

that isn't to go deer hunting. This man had tears in his eyes, a farmer of about 55 years of age, as he talked about his neighbours buying guns because of the farm stress that they're under.

Therein, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a real mission for this particular Minister of the Family, a real agenda if he's to do something to meet the real needs of Saskatchewan people.

And this particular piece of legislation really gives the Minister of the Family wide-ranging responsibility and authority to deal with a whole range of different programs under his ministry. To provide consultative services, to do research, to establish and maintain effective communication, and to develop policies and programs to meet the needs of Saskatchewan families, including, I note, almost the last item to be mentioned -- to evaluate the impact of government economic and social policies on all Saskatchewan families.

Now if the Minister of the Family here in Saskatchewan were to do that, if he were to evaluate the impact of government economic and social policies on all Saskatchewan families, he would indeed be doing the people of Saskatchewan and in fact the Government of

DSaskatchewan a great service, because it's precisely the failed economic and social policies of the government that are causing Saskatchewan people to flee.

And just today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we learned that there were 2,218 more people leaving the province of Saskatchewan than had moved in this past month, for a four-month total of 7,654 people having left the province since the beginning of the year. This is a human tragedy, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that affects virtually every Saskatchewan family. There's scarcely a person in the province who doesn't know someone who has been forced to leave. And this really is because there is no long-term view, no long-term plan for economic development in the province.

(1630)

The present government has essentially been throwing money at problems and has now gone broke, their resources having been exhausted. And I note that just this past month the Sask Trends Monitor analysed the Saskatchewan resource industries through the '80s to the present time and noted that the resource policy of the PC government has had a very pronounced effect on the provincial deficit. And I quote from this study of Sask Trends Monitor:

Even with the declining prices (in the resource sector), had the royalty and taxation levels remained at their earlier levels, the current provincial debt of \$4 billion would simply not exist.

Now therein is an economic reason for the human tragedy that we've been seeing. No long-term view of things, more of a knee-jerk reaction to problems -- a political reaction to problems, a reliance on the polls that ill serves ordinary Saskatchewan people.

And I had, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a constituent really lay their finger on this problem of the provincial government in a letter that was written to the Premier and shared with me by copy last month. This particular constituent from the Sutherland constituency wrote the Premier about his arbitrary decision, announced on TV Monday, March 5 to cut the home improvement grants for Saskatchewan people.

It goes on to talk about how the arbitrary nature of this decision doesn't allow individual families to plan their lives and actually creates problems for them, this particular constituent, in terms of the sale of their new house.

An Hon. Member: -- Give us a name.

Mr. Koenker: -- The Minister of Consumer Affairs wants the name. I'll do better than that; I'll give him a copy of the letter if he would like that. Not that we can trust this particular minister to listen. He certainly hasn't listened to the concerns of other Saskatchewan people when it's come to the concerns of the depositors in Principal Trust, or when it comes to this particular minister listening to the concerns of Saskatchewan families when it comes to new home warranty protection, as he was questioned about a couple of months ago.

I want to quote just in closing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from this letter from this constituent, because I think it's very important to give voice to what ordinary Saskatchewan people have to say. She writes:

Presently we are now faced with a decision of great importance -- to walk away from our mortgage and leave it in the hands of the bank or to continue to live there as it sits now and pray that we will win a lottery.

Moving out of province is also an option that has been considered, starting over again. This means leaving the province where we were born and raised.

Now isn't that a sad commentary on life in Saskatchewan when people have to hope or pray that they can win a lottery to survive economically?

This particular constituent goes on to say:

Saskatchewan is fast becoming a ghost province. Instead of having 10 provinces, Canada will eventually only have nine if things continue the way they are going. If the population in Saskatchewan continues to decline, there won't be a Saskatchewan to govern. I think this is something that should be thought about!!!!

And that's the end of the letter from my constituent to the Premier. I haven't a copy of the Premier's response yet, but I think it points to the devastating effect that this lack of economic planning, this lack of any long-term vision beyond political polls really leads to.

And I say then, that when it comes to this particular piece of legislation, enabling the Minister of the Family to deal in a very wide-sweeping, broad

manner with family and community life, the mandate of this legislation really means nothing unless the man or the woman who is the minister does something.

And to date we have a Minister of the Family who's been minister for some seven months now and has really done nothing other than to utter pious platitudes about the government's agenda for families or to announce that there is \$750,000 for hungry children of Saskatchewan, failing to point out that only half of that money comes from the provincial government, that even as a whole that \$750,000 would only amount to 3 cents a day for hungry children in Saskatchewan -- the 64,000 hungry children.

That's the kind of Minister of the Family we have. And that's why, as good as this particular legislation is, it's not going to make any difference unless and until we get people into the office of government who are as good as the Saskatchewan families that they're called to serve and to minister to.

So with that I'd like to conclude my remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on this Bill 2. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to make a few remarks about this Bill, and I want to direct them directly to the minister. And I'm pleased that the minister has been here diligently listening to what has been said because the minister has a tremendous job in front of him, placed before him, and a tremendous onus that's been placed on him by this government and his members, the members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the minister flat out that I believe he's being used by this government. I believe he is being used by the Premier of this province and by the front-benchers; that he's being set up as a decoy with this department; that there is no way that he can accomplish everything that he would probably like to accomplish by being given a title and an office, and no money, no budget, nothing else to work with.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that what is happening here is that this minister is being used to divert attention from all of the problems that are affecting families and affecting every citizen in Saskatchewan economically, which then turns into personal and family problems. It's been inflicted as a result of the policies of this government, and it's rather sad to have to say to you, Mr. Minister, that I believe you are being used as a decoy.

It's also sad that you haven't recognized that that's what's happened because in the end, what's going to happen, Mr. Minister, because it's almost impossible for you to succeed in the task that has been placed before you, you are going to be held responsible for the continuing decline of what's happening in this province and as a result you will not only . . . the finger is going to switch and instead of being used as a decoy to decoy and divert attention, you will then become the mark of those in the inner cabinet and you will be tossed out in disgrace.

You will become the victim. You will become the victim, Mr. Minister, against your own better judgement and against everything you might try. Because, Mr. Minister, the task before you is virtually impossible with all the baggage that you have to carry with you, with the rest of these people.

Mr. Speaker, I will back that up by some remarks in a few minutes. But I want to, before I do that, I want to identify and I want to place on the table, on the record, that I strongly believe, as every member on this side certainly believes, the importance of the family and the family structure in our society. We believe in that; we believe in that dearly. We live it day by day.

The family, I believe, is very important from the aspect of a societal point of view and also from the individual point of view of any individual and his or her well-being. Just to expand on that concept somewhat, Mr. Speaker, we know that anybody that lives in a society, and in any society we have family structures, which in our case in Saskatchewan, the basic has been what has been referred to as a nuclear family, where the support of the parents to their children is basic to our society.

In some parts of our province and in some neighbourhoods this support is not always available from the traditional nuclear family but is given by the extended family, by those in the neighbourhood, by cousins, by uncles. And, Mr. Speaker, when that support is unavailable, then we have the role of government.

We have established throughout the years that the gaps that are left for the need of individuals by, say, the extended family or the nuclear family should be filled by somebody, should be filled. And we have agreed and have over the years put together a government organization to do it, or done it through some means of government.

So I bring these things to the record, Mr. Speaker, because in no way do I want the criticism that I am extending on the government to be misconstrued as non-support from the family. Quite the contrary is true. We believe that anything that can be put into place should be put into place to be able to support the family.

I mentioned that the aspect of family from the societal point of view, and support of the family from the societal point of view is very important. It's also very important from an individual well-being point of view. A member of a family gets first of all his physiological needs met -- just the standard things like safety and food and shelter, Mr. Speaker -- but also psychological needs which then give him the confidence to go ahead and pursue those things that he or she wants to pursue in life.

Well, Mr. Speaker, having said that, I now go back to my original thesis on what is really happening in Saskatchewan and how this Bill fits into the scene. In Saskatchewan we've seen, and everybody has seen ad nauseam, to what has happened under this government. We've seen reduced services, increasing deficits, increasing debts, and higher taxes. Everybody knows that; that's been well established. It has been established to the point

where it is tiresome to even talk of it longer.

The sad result of that is now being tried . . . this government is trying to use several methods to try to cover up for that result and trying to recover. And many of the members opposite are quite sincere about trying to recover. Unfortunately the baggage that they are carrying, the philosophical approach of privatization they are carrying, will only contribute to added deterioration in this province as noted by the out-migration figures of today. It will just carry on.

They've had seven years which they've seen this trend developing, which they've seen this trend developing, and there have been times when they've wavered. There have been times when they say, well maybe we should cut back on privatization; maybe we've gone too far too fast. And then we hear a couple of ministers saying, well maybe it's time to cut down, but at the same time we get three or four that are pushing the concept of privatization -- dogmatic privatization. There's room for privatization, Mr. Speaker, but not room for dogmatic privatization. You've got to be looking at them one at a time and not taking that whole thing as a doctrine, as if it was a religion and going forward with it.

(1645)

Now I'm telling the minister that he's shackled by that baggage. I'm also telling the minister that he's shackled, that he's been set up by what has not happened to his department in the budget. If this ministry and this Bill had any chance of succeeding, they would have given him some money to work with. They would have given him some power and some influence to work with.

But when I look at this year's budget, the first time that anything for families has appeared under a separate budget item, I look at it and I examine it. They look at this as a new thrust. They look at it as a new thrust. And when I look at it, and it's right here on page 43, Mr. Speaker, of the budget document for 1990-91, they give this minister \$1.288 million to work with. And if that is all the information you have, it sounds not too bad --- a minister with \$1.288 million.

But if you take a look at the fine print on the same page, it tells you, Mr. Minister, that this money which this minister's given has been transferred to his control from other departments in previous years. It has been transferred from Education, from Health, from Human Resources, some from Labour and Employment, some from Justice, and some from Social Services.

So what's happened is there's no new money whatsoever. There's no nothing new happening. It's a bit of a shift. They give it to a minister. They give him no new staff, and the minister identifies that himself. And what do they do? They in addition to that . . . and they do a complete transfer, no power whatsoever. They shackle him; they use him as a decoy. There is no way that this minister can do anything that hasn't been done previously by other ministers. All he can do is exacerbate the situation because there's one additional ministerial salary to pay.

Now as a matter of fact, if you take a look at the budget allotment that's been given here and compare it with what that same vote expenditure had in previous years and compare it to last year 1989-1990, you find that the budget allotment is down. Last year this same . . . these same people, these same nine people who were working in these various departments, had \$1.300 million to work with. This year it's been decreased, as I said earlier, to \$1.288 million, which makes it into a completely impossible situation.

That's why, Mr. Minister, I'm telling you that you are being used as a decoy. You are being put into an impossible situation. Sadly, I'm afraid of it; I feel badly about it for you. And I feel badly for Saskatchewan families, but I think it's time the truth be told as what you're really being expected to do.

Now, Mr. Minister, I then looked at the Bill and I examined the Bill. And what is it that the minister is given power to do, or responsibility to do? And you will find that nowhere in that Bill is the minister given any specific responsibility of something that he has to carry out. Not a thing.

There is nothing in that Bill that he has to carry out. In the Bill there are a series of "may" clauses: the minister may do this, and he may do this, and he may do this. I suggest to you, Mr. Minister, that unless you're able to take that "may" material and put it into some kind of a . . . put it into some type of responsible mode that you will be absolutely, absolutely ineffective. You're been shackled; you're being used as a decoy.

What the Bill does do, is it gives you a series of moral . . . it gives you the power to do moral suasion. And that is what my colleague was referring to. It gives you the power to consult, to research, to communicate, to evaluate, to recommend. It gives you all of that power.

And I suggest to you, if you didn't have that power as a sitting member before this, before you came to this . . . before you were appointed as minister, then there was no point in sitting in that caucus. That's all that that Bill does. That is exactly all it does.

Mr. Minister, you are being used by this government. You are being used by the front benches and the Premier as a decoy to divert attention. The only thing you're going to be able to do is travel to a few communities, talk to them, say, well I'll speak on your behalf to the Minister of Social Services, or I'll speak on your behalf to the Minister of Education, or I'll speak on your behalf to the minister of human resources and development or to the Minister of Justice or whatever situation you arise in. But you will not be able to do anything yourself, and in the end you will be used as the mark. That's unfortunate, Mr. Minister, but that is exactly what's going to happen.

Now I must say, Mr. Minister, that there is a tremendous need in Saskatchewan for a very proactive position to help families in

Saskatchewan. It is really needed, and that goes from making definite action and taking definite action on poverty, on race relations, in the area of culture, sports, recreation, in the area of early childhood development, in the area of things like dental plans for schools, in the areas of social services where there is a tremendous need for specific attention to those who are in difficulty.

Mr. Minister, just pause there for a moment. I wonder if you would be aware that in the city that I come from, the city of Prince Albert, that when you combine the numbers of the people that are in social services, the provincial people and the federal people, that the number has increased some fourfold in the last three years -- the number of people receiving social services. When you combine the federal and the provincial statistics, that that's what's happened.

Now that is a reflection of what's happening to families in Saskatchewan. That's a tremendous, tremendous responsibility, and the minister says that's why he's here and I think he believes it. But I'm pointing out to him, Mr. Minister, that you're being used as a decoy, because there's no way you're going to be able to affect that; there is no way you're going to be able to affect that with the transfer of budget from other places and no power. It's unfortunate; it's unfortunate.

Now, Mr. Minister, let me describe to you some of the problems that you will be faced with with respect to poverty. And I will turn, because of the time that's limited here, Mr. Speaker, I will refer only to some statistics in my own city. In my own city of Prince Albert, Mr. Minister, there are four community schools in which in total give snacks or breakfast to 900 students, 900 students. That's only in one city. In addition, there are 85 children who receive lunches in St. Mark's parish, plus another -- pardon me, I gave you the wrong figure there; it's 50 to 80 that receive lunches in St. Mark's parish -- plus there are another 85 that receive lunches in the schools.

Last March, there were 200 more people who received food from the food bank in Prince Albert than the year before that. And the total was 1,632 people who received food in March, in Prince Albert.

I know that your government advertised the total of \$740,000 they were going to put into poverty or . . . for children. But when you take a look at 64,000 children in the province who are growing up in poverty, that only amounts to 3 cents a day. Compare that with the seven hundred and some thousand that Chuck Childers gets, and that comes out to about \$2,000 a day.

Just do that little comparison. That sticks very much in people's minds when you're looking about what your government is doing to you, Mr. Minister, using you as a decoy while this is happening, Mr. Minister. That is what is happening and what'll happen to you in the end is you will be used as the mark.

Mr. Minister, there's a tremendous amount of work that has to be done in the province regarding the issue of race relations. It's an issue that

must be addressed; it should not be run away from. It is very, very important. It's important that a government take a proactive stand in it, not a fall-back reactive position. Some leadership is required in this area, Mr. Minister, and I look to you to provide some leadership in this aspect.

That is one thing I think you might be able to do something about; that is, in leading the rhetoric -- I suppose could be the word -- but leading the . . . this government needs somebody who will speak up for positive race relations in Saskatchewan. And that will not cost a pile of money. And if you can do that, Mr. Minister, if you can do that then possibly the other ministers can be convinced to actually put some money into programming which will help. But they need help from some place.

Mr. Minister, I just want to touch briefly on one other item before I sit down. And this is the area which you also are being . . . another area that shows how you're being shackled. In this province we have over the years built up a sport, cultural, and recreational department through the use of lottery money. And every year since that's been put into place, the program has been more successful than the year previous. Every year it has been more successful than the year previous until last year when your government, through its greed, decided it wanted to pull some of the money out of the lottery, away from the lotteries, away from the people who were able to use that money for approximately half of the population in Saskatchewan in small portions. There were 1,200 organizations across the province in the sport, cultural and recreational areas which were using the money very efficiently, always using it efficiently, and using it to the benefit of Saskatchewan families.

But what happened is your government pulled the carpet out from under that; undermined that whole funding scheme with their greed when they decided they were going to put in the lottery tax.

So as a result, Mr. Minister, as a result of that there was a \$15 million loss in revenue, there was an \$18 million loss in sales, in the lottery sales, and all of the sport, culture and recreational organizations have to decrease their funds this year, that they would get from that department, by 20 per cent. You tell me what the long-term effect of that is going to be to families, Mr. Minister. You tell me. And you tell me what you're going to be able to do about it.

Mr. Minister, I repeat my thesis. I repeat my thesis: Mr. Minister, you are being used here as a decoy. You have . . . your chances of success in this department are extremely, extremely slim because you have nothing to work with except moral suasion, the possibility of persuading your fellow ministers. That is all that you have to work with.

I wish you the best, Mr. Minister, because I believe that the cause that you, deep in your heart, that you deep in your heart wish to effect, I think is honourable. I believe it's honourable and I think all members on this side believe it's honourable. And I think it's a very sad thing that you've been put into this position. You're being used as a decoy, and when it fails, you'll be used as a mark.

The Speaker: -- The Minister for the Family is about to close debate. Under rule 28(2), the mover of a substantive motion has the right to reply; however I must inform the Assembly, if anybody wishes to speak to the motion they must do so now.

Hon. Mr. Martin: -- I should be grateful, Mr. Speaker, of the fact that they left me two minutes to talk about this very important exercise that I'm involved in, Mr. Speaker. I must say that I was somewhat dismayed by the personal attacks, particularly from the member from Eastview. The personal attacks, Mr. Speaker, I thought were unnecessary.

Let me respond to what he just talked about being a decoy. Well I feel very good about being, if what he characterizes as a decoy, Mr. Speaker, because what we're doing with Department of the Family, Mr. Speaker, is leading the way in North America. This is the first time in the history of government in North America when a government has had a Minister of the Family -- someone who sits at the cabinet table, listens to all the issues and all the initiatives that the government wishes to bring forward, and see how they relate and how they would affect members of the family.

(1700)

And, Mr. Speaker, I've enjoyed that exercise because it's given me an opportunity to be in many communities in this province and talk to hundreds and hundreds of people, to attend some of the 50 forums, family forums that we've had so far since the middle of February, that have . . . As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, over 15,000 people in this province since the middle of February have come to these family forums.

The family forums, I think, may be the most important initiative that I'm involved in, Mr. Speaker. Because the family forums are gatherings where people in the community talk about areas that are of concern to them. They talk about family stress, Mr. Speaker. They talk about family abuse. They talk about parenting skills and about communication. They design these policies, Mr. Speaker, they invite the speakers, and all we do as a department is fund them to a small percentage. And we've had over 50 of these family forums so far in the province, Mr. Speaker.

I'm always amused when I hear them talk about out-migration. I've lived in this province all my life, Mr. Speaker. In 1932 there were a million people in this province. In 1990 there are a million people, Mr. Speaker. Where did they all go? They all went to Alberta, to Tory Alberta, because we did not have the infrastructure in this province that we should have had during the 1970s.

And, Mr. Speaker, unless we can build that infrastructure, unless we can diversify our economy in this province, we will not keep the young people in this province, Mr. Speaker. But diversification is not my main thrust. My main thrust is to listen to the people of the province, listen to the teenagers, Mr. Speaker, who tell me that their parents don't listen to them enough, and try to encourage the parents, through ways like the family forums, to spend more time with their children and talk to them.

And while the member from Saskatoon Eastview may scoff at that idea of people going for walks with their children, Mr. Speaker, I can assure him that it really does work. It's worked, it works for a lot of good families, Mr. Speaker.

I thought the member, I thought the minister, or rather the member from Athabasca talked about something -- and I'll be very brief, Mr. Speaker, because I know that the clock is running out -- I thought the member from Athabasca spoke knowledgeably about these particular matters. He talked about a partnership, Mr. Speaker.

I see my role as a Minister of the Family to develop partnerships between government and communities, between communities and people within those communities, Mr. Speaker, thereby developing a partnership between the people and the government of the day, Mr. Speaker. I find that being very important.

Now the members opposite may scoff and sneer and try to make fun of the ministry of the Family. But I feel very good about it, Mr. Speaker, because I know, I know in my heart and I see it in the numbers of people who come to our forums, that we're having an impact out there, that people really do want to talk about their problems. And finally, a government has given them an opportunity to do that, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I close, I urge all members in the House, Mr. Speaker, to support this Bill because it is the first of its kind in North America, Mr. Speaker. It has far-reaching impact on families in this province, and we all know how difficult it is, in rural Saskatchewan particularly, for families these days. But I urge all members to support this Bill, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: mHear, hear!

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole at the next sitting.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:03 p.m.