

EVENING SITTING

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Sonntag, seconded by Ms. Hamilton.

Mr. Goohsen: -- Mr. Speaker, let me welcome you back to this Chamber after such a long and unnecessary absence -- and I don't mean just supper.

I want, Mr. Speaker, to take just a moment of your time, and that of this Assembly, before I get into the main part of my speech with regards to the Speech from the Throne. Today will be recorded, I fear, as being black Thursday in Saskatchewan. Many of you may not realize it, but I'm not going to be political in this statement. The black Thursday is of course due to our uncommon weather conditions that we have blowing through southern Saskatchewan.

I talked to one of my constituents today who is not exactly a teenager and has been around for some years, who told me that it is probably the worst day that she has ever seen in her entire life with regards to weather. And I know this hasn't got anything to do with the throne speech itself, but certainly I know that all of you in this Assembly would want to share a moment with me to reflect on the importance of the losses to the farmers of Saskatchewan when we hit such a day as this, in simply the loss of topsoil alone. That will probably hurt farms in my constituency for the next 30 or 40 years down the road. And it's extremely important to us when we lose that much of our productivity potential. And so I want to extend to the farmers of Saskatchewan the sympathies of myself and any one of you that would like to join in that chorus, for we know that they have taken a tremendous loss and we do recognize that and record it for posterity on their behalf.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: -- I know, Mr. Speaker, that you must have been anxious in the months that the government kept this Hon. Assembly sealed away from the people of the province. It must have been anxious, sir, to see this important and hon. institution convene to speak for the people. For certainly it is an hon. institution and it certainly does provide an opportunity for the people to hear both sides of the story. And usually there are at least two sides to a story, and sometimes there is even the truth. So there may even be a third side.

And now, Mr. Speaker, perhaps more than ever before, the people are in need of a strong voice to confront a government bent on destruction. Bent, I say, on self-aggrandizement; bent, Mr. Speaker, on perpetuation of the greatest hoax of the century; socialists claiming to have, as I heard earlier today, a dream, or was it an idea, or some mythical plan for the future? -- when in fact what they have is a philosophy of socialism that just will not

work.

The proof, as they say, is in the pudding, and I guess the proof of this has to go to our world situation. And I don't think I'm telling anybody anything new when I remind you of what has happened to the socialist states around our world, the Soviet Union, the biggest and most classic example of the total and complete failure of the philosophy of socialism.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: -- Yes I have actually heard a lot of people from the Soviet Union claim that they are not truly communists, just socialists. Well I don't see much difference.

Now how has the province fared since November 1 of last year when the members opposite finally achieved their goal of power, Mr. Speaker? How have those who trusted the member for Riversdale fared? How goes it with the waitress in downtown Saskatoon? With the farmer outside of Kamsack? The miner in Esterhazy? Or the steelworker in Regina, here in the city? How have these people fared?

The steelworker is laid off. The farmer has notice to vacate his land and now his hope has been crashed and dashed by the destruction of the only sure thing he had, which was the 1991 GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) program. The miner is being made ready for the upcoming assault on the potash industry, which I'm sure will happen. And as they say in the song, the waitress is practising politics while the government slowly gets stoned. It comes from "The Piano Man" -- quite a fine tune.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are dramatically worse off today than they were merely a six-month period of time ago. It is astonishing the damage that this government has done so quickly. Or to paraphrase another statesman: never have so few harmed so many so much in so short a time.

Look at the list, Mr. Speaker. First the government savaged the people's representative institution -- this very Legislative Assembly. They started by suspending the constitution of the province, then continued by ignoring it. They started by passing laws to ravage individual rights in the smoke of public anxiety, and they have continued this by disregarding their very own law. They have hid from the Assembly and implemented extraordinary changes to our province without the benefit of questions or criticisms. Those are the most sacred things in our parliamentary process, Mr. Speaker -- the right to be criticized and the right for questions to be asked. It is the only fundamental thing, Mr. Speaker, that can allow people in a free society the opportunity to make sure that a dictatorship does not evolve.

They have, in the past six months, recrafted the entire organization of the health care system in Regina. They have threatened to close every school division that has fewer than 7,000 students, or virtually every rural school in the province, if that plan had been followed through.

Can you believe it? It takes meetings of over 600 people in Swift Current in the Comprehensive School to challenge the system, to get people to see the light -- that rural people are important and that rural students have as many rights as anyone else.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: -- They have increased every fee and charge to the taxpayer they could possibly do without legislation, and they have more in store -- by their very own words, much more in store. They have cancelled the gasification of Saskatchewan, a project that brought natural gas to my farm and many hundreds of others; a cheap source of energy that we have in our province in abundance. And now we have a situation, Mr. Speaker, where many of the farmers who were left at the tail-end of the program will not have the opportunity to share in that great and wonderful way of heating and running their farms.

They will have to pay the piper now because they happen to be on the wrong end of the list and got left to last. And now they're cancelled. And I refer, sir, not just to the people in the sand hills out home in my constituency, but some in a lot of other constituencies as well. Totally unfair, Mr. Speaker, to kill a program before all of the people who are taxpayers have had an opportunity to share in the advantages, because they all pay taxes equally and they should have the right to those programs to be completed.

They have taken the money from the leasehold farmers and ranchers. All across the South there are farmers and ranchers who now find themselves without cash flow that they depended upon, that they had budgeted for. And that was taken away by a sweep of somebody's pen in some dark corner, perhaps of this building or some other; we're not sure where -- no discussion in the legislature, no attempt to make a fair and reasonable settlement, no attempt to negotiate with these farmers and these ranchers.

They meet in Maple Creek; they meet at the SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) convention here in Regina with the ministers in charge, and all on deaf ears, Mr. Speaker. All on deaf ears, because even these ranchers and farmers knew that perhaps they would have to negotiate a situation where they would take less. And even though they knew that they had the right to have the whole amount of money, they offered to take less in order to offer a conciliatory approach. They had to give this government an opportunity to save face and not have to say that they were giving up their total position.

But this government does not listen to reason. This government does not negotiate. It lets the farmers and ranchers sit out there without any money and without any cash flow and without anything to tell to their bankers, in not only this regard but many others in the farming sector.

They have engaged in this government in patronage so sweeping and so secretive that no reporter has been able to keep up with it. They have hired hundreds without cause, up to and including expelling secretaries from

their offices under armed guard. They have hired legions to do their dirty work, rather than have the courage to face a janitor and tell him my husband, or the husband of my campaign worker, is a janitor and he needs your job.

They sent Olive Waller, a firm that for ever more will be known as the firm of hit men hired in Saskatchewan. No sir, Mr. Speaker, the mafia contract companies had nothing over on Olive Walker.

And this government . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Waller, you're right. And this government, Mr. Speaker, this Premier and his group of grim reapers continue their dismal record by throwing away one of the most important opportunities this province has had in its hundred years of existence.

An Hon. Member: -- AECL (Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd.)

Mr. Goohsen: -- You're getting onto it now. They said no to the nuclear research deal with AECL. The members already know because their consciences are bothering them. I didn't think they had one. You just never know.

And they did it without consulting the people, without even discussing the matter with their partners, the federal minister. And I can say this with conviction, Mr. Speaker, because we have had statements from SARM, where votes were taken at assemblies of 2,000 farmers gathered together in this very city on this very question -- almost unanimous support for the AECL deal.

SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) same story. Chambers of commerces, mayors all across this province, pleaded with this government to see the rational sense of taking federal millions and putting them to work in this province for the betterment of our youth. And what better place to put youth to work than in areas of technology, the kind of which AECL was offering to this province?

Where will it be next? As many of you know, there's an old saying that goes that if you want things better, go to Alberta. And I wouldn't be surprised that you will end up following this deal there as well. Why do we have to watch our children and our families end up in Alberta or some place else? Because we have the blindness of a government thinking that a deal means something that isn't in it.

But they did do some consulting, Mr. Speaker. They consulted with the wing-nuts and the radicals and the fearmongers that hold so much sway over those benches opposite. They consulted with Barb Byers and George Rosenau, but they didn't take the time to listen to the business community in the home towns of the Premier himself. They surely didn't listen to SARM and they certainly didn't listen to SUMA.

This government has proven it is so capable of destruction and the creation of pain for our people that this Assembly would do well to sit in continuous session as long as the member for Riversdale occupies the chair he has turned into a despot's throne.

And how has this government consoled itself in the morsel of conscience that it has remaining? It has to keep its back . . . How does it keep its back-benchers in check? It has played a terrible and futile game with the people and with its own members. It has a two-pronged strategy to keep criticism in check and preserve the powers of the new throne -- the gilded altar of the boy-king from Riversdale.

First the NDP (New Democratic Party) has decided that rather than govern it will close the political and moral and financial energies of the government on a sustained and unrelenting effort to blame all its ills on everyone else. Blame the previous administration. If that doesn't work any more, then you start to blame Ottawa. And when that doesn't work any more, then you blame the farmers who suffer what the NDP call moral hazards. I am offended because I am a farmer. And to say that I am a moral hazard I am sure does not only offend me as a farmer, it must offend every farmer in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: -- And then blame rural people who are too greedy to give up their schools for the sake of the government. Blame the nurses who are too cruel to be quiet in the face of the deregulated health care, or degraded health care system, that we're about to see. Blame anyone and everyone, except themselves.

(1915)

Mr. Goohsen: -- And let me, Mr. Speaker, briefly deal with the trust of the NDP in their chorus of blame the previous administration for the NDP's own bad choices.

First, Mr. Speaker, let us deal with the claim that the books were closed and that the member from Riversdale did not know what the financial condition of the province was. Let us quote the CK-TV interview with Mr. Donald Gass, the Premier's hand-picked analyst. The interview was broadcast on February 18, 1992, and here were the findings of Donald Gass, and I quote: the commission said the Tories made no attempt to hide the province's financial standing. In fact the books were open all along to credit agents, agencies or anyone else interested.

That's a direct quote, Mr. Speaker, worth repeating, "the books were open all along".

Mr. Gass, the Premier's hand-picked financial judge and jury, went further in an unexpected condemnation of the member for Riversdale and his party. Again, Mr. Gass' exact words in that interview were, "It shouldn't come as any surprise to them."

The financial situation of the province was no surprise. In fact, Mr. Speaker, you will remember that every time the previous government tried to get the message out that restraint was needed, the member for Riversdale put a thousand union protesters on the steps of the legislature to demand more, more, more government spending.

And just to reinforce the ideas that have come to mind, and the quotes that have come to my attention that I have used in my own notes which I prepared a few days back

on this particular subject, I want to point out a pamphlet. It's called the **Humanity First**, A Brief to the Saskatchewan Cabinet From the Public Sector Bargaining Coalition, April 29, 1992.

And not only I was seeing what had happened with the Gass Commission but these folks write in their brief:

The Gass Commission has misrepresented government spending, understated revenue potential and provided no evidence to substantiate their assertions that we are in "an extremely serious financial situation".

The Gass Commission has distorted the picture, making the numbers look worse than the reality of the situation . . .

Well how about that?

Moreover, the Gass Report ignores the impact of the recession. Tax revenues are down owing to the recession, but an improving economy will alter that fact. There are also the added expenses of the recession. Increased assistance payments are made to the victims of the downturn, while the Bank of Canada's high interest rate policy adds charges to debt financing. These cyclical factors affect the deficit picture. In reality, we believe that the size of the deficit is more modest than the Gass Report suggests and our future prospects are brighter than we are led to believe.

Since 1982-83 the accumulated government deficit has gone from zero to 25% of the provincial GDP, but in comparative terms, Saskatchewan is not out of line with the other provinces. Indeed, the trends are not all bad news. While the run-up of the deficit has been swift and significant, the result merely places us in the same league as the rest of Canada.

Now how about that. And guess who wrote that -- the Public Sector Bargaining Coalition. That, I believe, would have a few months ago been identified as a group that might have supported the government more readily than anyone else in political circles. But even they have seen the light of what the reality is.

The former minister of Finance travelled around this province asking people to take the financial crisis seriously. And the member from Riversdale called it a smoke-screen for an attack on health and education. It was the political choice of the members opposite to tell the people that there was no financial crisis that could not be solved by cutting advertising and eliminating patronage.

In fact the Premier made a doozy of a commitment in Yorkton where he told people he would save \$100 million by eliminating legislative secretaries. Well he's eliminated the secretaries. So now where's the hundred million? Mr. Speaker, the Premier had his political choice and he sold a bill of goods to the people of this province. He cannot now get . . .

The Speaker: -- Order. Order. Order. It is very difficult to hear the member speak with all the conversations that are going on, particularly across the floor. I would ask those members if they could write notes to each other and meet outside the legislature. Okay?

Mr. Goohsen: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The previous government, Mr. Speaker, must take its share of responsibility indeed. After all, they were the government. It was unable to communicate through the protests and the rancours of the NDP just how serious things were. And that certainly has to have been a failing, because the situation was rather bad and we should somehow have found a way to be able to educate the people and let them know what a lot of other folks naturally did know.

The media, rather than helping to communicate that message as it has now, at the time chose instead to focus on things like crowded class-rooms, magnifying the belief of the people that more money could somehow be had to solve the real problems.

And as the former government tried to get the message out that revenue was needed, and the fairest, most efficient and economically productive way to raise that revenue was through tax harmonization, every special interest group in the province jumped on the NDP bandwagon to frighten the people and to destroy rational debate. The people had no idea that the NDP was talking about taking off harmonization only to replace it with the new provincial family tax on health care. Instead of the PST (provincial sales tax) we are going to get the PFT (provincial family tax).

People had no idea the NDP would be increasing taxes because the leader of the NDP solemnly gave his word this would not happen. He swore an oath to the people of this province that he would force government to live within a \$4.5 billion budget. He made the direct, clear, and unequivocal promise, and now he wants to pretend he didn't know what he was talking about. He says he didn't know how bad things were.

Well Donald Gass says the Premier is not being fully honest. Donald Gass says anyone who was interested knew the financial situation. Is the Premier now going to say that Donald Gass was paid to make a false report? The fact is that the member for Riversdale did know. He knew but he didn't care. Just so long as he could become Premier, that is all that mattered to him. And as his back-benchers are learning now how dangerous it is to put someone like that in the Premier's chair, they too are realizing the seriousness of the hoax that is being heaped on our population.

We know for a fact that a number of those MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly) are under great pressure from their own constituents to get out of the party of broken promises, betrayals, and disarray -- to get out of the hypocritical capital and form their own party in opposition to this outlandish cabinet. Whether that pressure bears fruit only time will tell, but the fact that it is there tells the people a great deal about the chaos the Government of Saskatchewan is in.

Let us now look at the blame the member for Riversdale wants to heap on the former government over the matter of the larger deficit due to unfunded liabilities and Crown corporation finances.

First, Mr. Speaker, on the matter of unfunded liabilities. It is simply a fact -- again publicly attested to by Donald Gass -- that these debts were incurred under the NDP government of the same member for Riversdale. It was his government that brought those debts into existence by stealing from the teachers and employees of this province to pay for their adventures into nationalization. And of course we could mention the pension fund of teachers, as well as that of the SGEU (Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union).

That is a fact, and Donald Gass has said so. Is the Premier again going to refute Mr. Gass? If the Premier has no confidence in Mr. Gass, why did he pay him to undertake this massive study?

An Hon. Member: -- Three hundred thousand.

Mr. Goohsen: -- Three hundred thousand somebody says it cost us. The fact is that the billions of unfunded liabilities are an NDP albatross. And the previous government tried, and tried, to get that message out. But it was ignored with all of the radical opposition that was master-minded very well indeed by the NDP.

What about the position of the Crown Investments Corporation, Mr. Speaker? What about that? Well let us first look at the end result according to the Minister of Finance himself, when he had what the Premier used to call in this House a toy minister. The Associate Minister of Finance, acting for the real minister, issued a report called "accounting initiatives", on April 14, 1992.

In the news release, the minister did not mention what effect all the smoke and mirrors would have on the taxpayers. But in the actual report itself it is revealed that the total impact of all the hysteria, about \$900 million here, and \$600 million there, and maybe \$500 million over there, that the end result in terms of actual dollar cost, the government would be really, Mr. Speaker, 4.5 million -- not billions, million -- 4.5 million would be the total impact, Mr. Speaker. After all the public terrorism, after using these huge numbers as a rationale for a new flat tax, after using the hysteria to frighten old people, we find the total impact will be less than the cost of the political staff in the Executive Council positions -- all that fear and all that terror for 4.5 million.

Mr. Speaker, it is shameful beyond words that this government continues in government in its mean spirit that is crafted so thoroughly and was crafted there while they were in opposition. So whatever the bouncing ball of CIC (Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan) numbers really means, we know now the bottom line is 4.5 million. A significant number to be sure -- that is a lot of money, especially if it was in my pocket -- but not terrifying in government terms; not worth an entire speech to a fund-raising dinner. Because it is not even 1 per cent of 1 per cent of the total budget of this province. You all have a calculator. I am pretty sure you got it out now.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what about the Crown debts themselves? Are they a surprise? When the previous administration proposed to sell shares in SaskEnergy and SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance), it was made clear that the province desperately needed to substitute equity for debt. There was no doubt about that. We need serious capital injections into the Crown corporations. We needed it then, and we probably need it now. This was exactly the message the former government delivered.

Did the member for Riversdale take the message seriously? Did he examine the severity of the need? No, Mr. Speaker, the member for Riversdale again resorted to the hysteria, and he took his caucus out on strike for 17 days to do as they promised, and that was to make the province ungovernable. And that was his response.

(1930)

And now he has the bald audacity to say he was surprised. Seventeen days on strike and now he's surprised at why he did it, maybe. He made his choices, and they were made purely political. The people, Mr. Speaker, should not have to pay for the NDP's bad choices.

What about the health care spending, Mr. Speaker? What about this wellness model? Mr. Speaker, the former minister of Health was talking regularly about a wellness model; we remember it quite well. The former government developed a first-rate system of breast cancer screening. It developed community physiotherapy clinics and local chiropractic clinics to remove the needs for excessive visits to major hospitals. Foot care, Mr. Speaker, is important to old people. It might be a joke or a laughing matter to the members opposite, but when you get to be an old person and your feet hurt and you can't walk around, then it's serious stuff. So humour doesn't enter into the health care in this matter.

The previous government developed the Everyone Wins campaign which initially I see being advertised again. How about that -- the same old program and they call it new. So the wellness program, Mr. Speaker, is not new, as most things in life are really not new. The current Health minister is light-years behind on the wellness model, and if she thinks all it means is closing hospitals and taxing the sick, she is with the dinosaurs of health care.

What are people who are sick supposed to do, Mr. Speaker? Read one of the minister's pamphlets and heal themselves? The fact is that history records it was a PC (Progressive Conservative) government, the previous government, that outlawed extra billing by doctors. The NDP had decades of power to act and refused. It was the former PC government that had to rebuild a dilapidated and dangerous health care infrastructure. The NDP had been in government a great long time, and in that time our hospitals got to the point that there were literally stories about bats in the belfry in the hospital right here in Regina.

Those are the facts. And yes, it cost a lot of money to rebuild the health care system, and yes, it contributed to the deficit. But the fact is the cost was the cost stored up

from years of NDP neglect.

It was Tories who rebuilt the health care, who funded it fully, who outlawed extra billing, and who began the process of reform. And the NDP, who have sold the people on the mythology that they are the defenders of medicare, this party, this government, is going to be the government that undoes all that has gone into building our medicare system, all that has gone into building this system since John Diefenbaker first proposed it in 1938 and Tommy Douglas who instituted it in 1962.

A betrayal of everything that has ever come out of the mouths of this Minister of Health . . . this minister who vowed she would never allow user fees or premiums now tells the people of Saskatchewan that she was just playing politics. She will go down in history as the Minister of Health who presided over the first major assault on her own sacred trust, an assault, Mr. Speaker, on our most dearly held, shared value in this province. Shame on her and shame on the MLAs over there who are allowing her to get away with it.

It is not possible for this Premier, this Minister of Health, or that caucus of the NDP chorus singers, to blame this on anyone but themselves.

Mr. Speaker, one last point of blame to dispense with -- that is the political nonsense about the waste and mismanagement mentioned earlier. It was really very, very heart rendering to hear about the Government House Leader, the minister of everything, crying a blue streak about how the previous government spent away the future of his children and the children of the gathered reporters.

Quite a performance indeed, and based in large part on the old, mean-spirited tactic of that man and his party that somehow would have people believe that my children are not children, that the Tories do not have children. And if they do, then that Tories do not care about the future of their children.

That member from Elphinstone ought to know better, Mr. Speaker. And let us look at that substance of his charge. The big ticket item for the member opposite in regard to waste and mismanagement has been patronage and advertising. I will go into the patronage in some detail in a few moments.

But what about advertising? Does this government really believe that our people are so mathematically retarded that they will not realize that hundreds of millions of dollars cannot come from savings in advertising or even employment? Fire the entire civil service if you like, just to be sure you have rooted out every Tory there is, and you still won't come up with the kind of money you need to address the problems.

And what about advertising and polling, Mr. Speaker? This government has been using taxpayers to have their buddies at Thomas Brook's poll the people about how best to sell an irresponsible budget and this irresponsible throne speech. The questions are blatantly political, and the poll should be paid for by the NDP party itself. But the minister of everything under the sun is quite content that

the taxpayer is paying for the NDP's polls. And what about the Phoenix Group, Mr. Speaker, NDPers from away back? Those friends of the Premier are getting their millions from the taxpayer. Is this how you solve waste and mismanagement?

Then there is SEDCO (Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation), Mr. Speaker. The member from Riversdale constantly harped on SEDCO as an example of wasteful spending. And what do we get from this new government? News release after news release, extolling the wonders of SEDCO loans to everything from hotels to flower shops. They clearly don't think it's wasteful any longer, Mr. Speaker.

In fact, the fact of the matter is that the spending of the previous government went into assuring a future for all of the children of this province. I dare say the incomes generated by workers at the Shand went to support the children of people who voted NDP under union orders. We care about all the children, Mr. Speaker, all of them regardless of political politics, unlike the weeping willow from Elphinstone. And the new Minister of Finance in his first economic review confirms that the previous government did act to protect that future. Let me quote from page 6 of that report, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Finance . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order. I would remind members not to converse with people in the galleries, please.

Mr. Goohsen: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was so engrossed in the seriousness of my speech I never even noted that indiscretion. And I do appreciate your straightening the member out.

. . . the construction of a second . . . oil upgrader, a fertilizer plant and a pulp mill will help support economic growth in 1991 as well as offer opportunities for more growth in future when these new facilities come on stream or reach full capacity production.

Provide more opportunities for growth in the future is what the Minister of Finance says the previous government did. Isn't that interesting? We did build bacon plants and fertilizer plants and turbine factories and uranium mines and computer companies and huge natural gas industry and on and on and on it goes.

The previous government built for the future during very difficult times. The previous government did spend money on health and education. We might be condemned for it, but we don't apologize for it. And we built facilities for community care and distance education and regional college systems. And yes, it did cost money. Why would you want to be in government if you didn't spend money?

But if we had not done so, if we had not built in the tough times, there would be precious little left in this province today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: -- We built for the future of our children

and yes, for yours as well. And, Mr. Speaker, this government has choices -- many of them. But they insist they do not. They abdicate all responsibility and engage instead only in blame.

I say again, Mr. Speaker, it is a government based on blame and not motivated by responsibility -- a government of blamers, by blamers, and for blamers; a government composed in equal parts of what social scientists have classed as busybodies and victims, Mr. Speaker. The busybody is the one who has to tell you every detail of your life and how you are doing it wrong, how it has been wrong never before, and how you must do it a new, their perfect way.

The victim is the one who is never responsible for anything but always the victim of someone else's bad deeds. Busybodies and victims occupy the larger part of this Assembly, and it has already begun its degrading effects on the social, political, and economic fabric of our province.

Let me read for you, Mr. Speaker, the words of **The Melfort Journal**, and perhaps the member for Melfort might sit up and listen to this from the February 4 edition:

Since their election however, the government seems to be preoccupied with digging up as much dirt as possible on the former government's financial mismanagement.

. . . At the same time, it would seem the electorate is aware of circumstances, beyond the control of the past government, which also contributed to the present situation.

Circumstances such as the drop in export grain prices, drought, falling world markets for potash and oil, and increasing social demands on the government -- all contributed to the province's financial situation.

At the same time, the electorate may also remember from the then opposition New Democrats, calls for more money for health care, more money for education, financial aid to the agricultural sector, and so on.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me say once clearly that whatever the ills of the former government, and there can be no question that significant mistakes were made, the fact remains that people exercised their judgement, and I stand on this side of the House. The Premier must learn to understand that with the throne he has crafted must go the responsibility he asked for when he sought election. The members opposite must understand that it is now their job to government actively, honestly and enthusiastically. The fact that they are unable to do so is a powerful condemnation in itself.

On the patronage question, what happened to the moral outrage of the members opposite? What is the member for Regina Victoria doing trying to exercise influence in Crown corporation hiring? What is the NDP caucus committee on hiring? Why has its existence not been made public, and what are the criteria that are applied to

the people of this province in secret, behind closed doors and closed to the scrutiny of either the Provincial Auditor or this Assembly.

What kind of conviction is represented by the member for P.A. (Prince Albert) Northcote when he says in the *Daily Herald* quote: it's the Minister's prerogative to organize her department; if Mr. Hiltz doesn't fit into her plan I guess that's just the way it is.

(1945)

Doesn't he know, Mr. Speaker, that we have done away with royal prerogatives of that sort over a hundred years ago? Does the member honestly believe that the boy-king has brought with him a new set of royal privileges that go beyond the rights and dignities of individual employees? Why did the member not think it was the royal prerogative of previous ministers to fire people at will who, quote: didn't fit into their plans.

What moral standard can be used to measure the judgement of the Tisdale *Recorder* on this government when it wrote, and I quote: step out of line and your job could be gone. That is the message that the SGEU has delivered to its members. The message came in the form of the Christmas Eve dismissal of Saskatchewan Liquor Board employee, Helga Bittner, by the new provincial government. The SGEU supported -- I'm quoting -- supported the Romanow campaign and now the Romanow government is returning the favour, end of quote.

Helga Bittner knows that this government . . . what it means when it says it wants honourable government. It means it wants to honour its debts to the union bosses who made war on her family with the member from Canora wielding the weapons that brought great harm to this single parent family.

What did the Humboldt *Journal* have to say after this government, this Premier, coldly broke his promise to examine each Fair Share move on its merit and instead simply cancelled it outright. The *Journal* wrote, and I quote: last year the NDP were caught up in an election campaign and were supported by labour unions who were resolute in the defeat of the Conservative government. The labour unions demonstrated that commitment by contributing an impressive \$250,000 to the NDP's election war chest, end of quote.

That's unbelievable. What a figure. The SGEU bought the election for the NDP, and in return the NDP has given them the right not only to say who will be fired but also to undo other promises of the Premier himself.

During the election the Premier made great fanfare about the cost-of-production guarantees for farmers. What did the *Davidson Leader* say about the results after the election? The headline on January 12 read, and I quote: "NDP betrayed farmers." And this over a story written by a reverend. The hypocrisy was so blatant that even a man of the cloth was pressed to calling the Premier on his broken promise. NDP betrayed farmers. The headline showed it. Betrayed indeed, Mr. Speaker.

And what has been the response of this Premier to this legitimate outpouring from the people? It has been to blame it all on the Tories, to avoid the legislature, and now to present to this Assembly a throne speech so devoid of hope, devoid of responsibility, devoid of meaning, so empty and pitiful this throne speech, Mr. Speaker, that one has to wonder how even this Premier can keep a straight face in presenting it.

Mr. Speaker, this is no Speech from the Throne, but a set of mumbles from the Premier's office. What is missing from this speech, Mr. Speaker? What is missing from this speech? -- Garry Aldridge who wrote the better part of it. He is missing, Mr. Aldridge who was perfectly able to be the chief of staff of the Leader of the NDP for something over \$40,000 per year. Now after one day is chief of staff of the same leader, but now with the power of the people's purse, now he needs \$85,000 per year to be the NDP leader's chief of staff. The math works out to more than an 80 per cent increase in salary, Mr. Speaker, just for walking from one office in this building down to a different office down the hall. Quite the nice terms -- an 80 per cent increase for Garry Aldridge.

At a 20 per cent cut for our towns, our villages, and our cities, we can see why the Premier needs to find money. And we can see why Mr. Aldridge is not a part of this speech. Indeed I suppose we can call this the \$85,000 speech since that is what the taxpayers are forking over to the man who wrote it.

Jack Messer is not a part of this speech, Mr. Speaker. The Premier's campaign manager, a political creature who in 1975 told farmers that there was no such thing as private ownership, this man now runs SaskPower on the strength of a verbal contract -- nothing in writing. A verbal contract, Mr. Speaker, so that we will never know the secret deals, and the ones we can discover include such important things as building him his own bathroom, buying him a top-of-the-line Lexus automobile, installing the finest electrical telephone in his car, and what other perks we will probably never know.

Carole Bryant, another NDP campaign worker, she's not in this speech, Mr. Speaker. She has found a job at SaskPower too. She told reporters she's needed to implement government policy at the Crown corporation. Remember, Mr. Speaker, busybodies and victims -- and here we have a busybody job for the NDP campaign director at tens of thousands of dollars per year and unknown, unrevealed, secret perks for her as well.

No wonder the Premier has to take away rural schools to cover the expenses. After all, Carol Bryant's salary and benefits would keep open the school at Conquest for a year and her salary has to come from somewhere.

What about the former NDP MLA for Estevan -- John Chapman? He's not in this speech, Mr. Speaker. No, his patronage appointment to the Souris Basin Development Authority is to remain a quiet affair between him and the Premier.

Let there be no discussion of John Chapman, but what about Deborah J. Hartung. No sir, she's not in this speech either and she has already gone through two -- not one,

but two -- jumps in salary. Now, Mr. Speaker, she occupies a brand new job title in the office of the Premier, the job title of senior researcher for Executive Council, a position that has never before existed that I can determine, but perhaps under the old NDP government sometime. And as you know, Mr. Speaker, her \$53,000 has to come from someone and it may as well come from the nurses whose jobs are about to disappear.

And what about Bill Hyde, a campaign manager, I understand, for the member for Regina Victoria. What about Hyde? Hyde's job is worth a pound of flesh to the taxpayers over at his nice offices. Has he his own bathroom? I don't know. He's got some pretty nice offices over at SaskTel; hard to tell what's in them.

Then of course, Mr. Speaker, I could go on down the list of the feeding frenzy of the Minister of Community Services who the member from Northcote tells us has prerogatives. A veritable feeding frenzy of hiring and firing and reclassifications to get sneaky salary increases while the people of this province watch their power bills and their phone bills and their heating bills and their car insurance all go up to support the prerogatives of the minister of SPMC (Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation). None of them are in the throne speech, Mr. Speaker, none of them at all.

And what about, Mr. Speaker, the entire law firm of the Premier? A firm that was once named Romanow Mitchell Ching. Now it doesn't exist because every one of his partners has got on the taxpayers' dole. Every one of them is on the dole. Never before has a politician managed to wipe out an entire law firm by hiring all of them at taxpayers' expense, never before. It's all rather incredible, Mr. Speaker, when you match the public morality of this Premier against the private greed that we have seen practised in six short months.

Now I want to relate to you some recent history, Mr. Speaker, that has profound implications for the leadership of this government. Mr. Speaker, I note that Beauchesne states in the 5th Edition that no one -- that one may not, rather, and I quote, "impute to any Member or Members unworthy motives for their actions in a particular case." The gravity of the case that needs to be presented is such that it would easily cross that line. However, the saving grace of this matter, Mr. Speaker, is that the unworthy motives are not related to a particular case. They're related to the general practice of the government by members opposite; to the general attitude and approach of the NDP government. And therefore the case does not need to be made in the particular but in the general.

I also checked carefully Beauchesne's for the list of unparliamentary words and phrases, because the case needs to be made strongly without offending the decorum of the Assembly. And while that list is a long one, Mr. Speaker, I found a word that characterizes this government overall approach to the people of Saskatchewan that is not unparliamentary and that in fact has been used many times in this House. And the word that characterizes this government so well is deception. I say to you that the evidence is in. What the people of this province are facing is an election based on deception; a

government born of deception; a Premier entrenched in deception; a political party practising deception. Mr. Speaker, these are hard words but the evidence is in fact already before the people.

Let us take the biggest deception of the Premier in his course to date -- what the business community is calling the dancing deficit. We have two kinds of manipulation of truth right out of the starting gate.

First the government is using every clever means at its disposal to enlarge the size of the 1991-92 deficit, including some rather blatant exercises in back-charging. It is also interesting to note that today in this very Assembly, two separate members of this Assembly from the opposite side have used two separate figures in explaining their idea of the terror of the deficit. Early this morning when we started . . . or afternoon . . . This early afternoon the member from Riversdale quoted a figure of \$14 billion. A little while later the member from Moose Jaw quoted \$9 billion, or was it vice versa?

Well it doesn't matter because it flip flops this way and that way and this way and that way. And you never know what they are going to say next that the deficit figure was because they never ever really figured out what kind of a story they are going to tell us. Because they really did know. And let me explain this, Mr. Speaker, for the members of the public.

What the Premier is doing is charging . . . taking charges that would normally accrue in the 1992-93 year, and at least in one case over the next four years, and he is, by executive order, paying for these charges out of the 1991-92 year. You take something that was planned to be paid over the next years in the future, and you suddenly declare that they all have to be paid immediately out of last year's budget before you bring in your own budget.

And then you build this thing up. What this does is takes tens of millions of dollars of spending out of the next account and puts it into the old account, swelling the old deficit. This is not only deceptive, it is also serious financial management. It artificially inflates the 1991 deficit. The Premier is incurring additional interest charges for the future. He is grossly misusing taxpayers' money for purely political reasons.

The second thing the Premier is doing in the dance of the deficit . . . and this one is much more difficult to understand because it's rather complex. We all know that Donald Gass reported the size of the deficit, if the government used a new accounting method, would be in the order of 1.2 billion. Mr. Gass said that this is not a change in the financial position of the province but simply a new way of reporting that position.

Now the Premier runs around the province telling everyone two things. First, he thinks he will stick with the old method, and second, that the deficit is 1.2 -- think about that. First you use a different method. Then you go back to the old method. I hope you can see what he's doing here, Mr. Speaker. It's called deception. He is rejecting the new method that would report the deficit at 1.2 billion but he is still claiming a deficit of 1.2. Reject it but claim it.

(2000)

Now why is he doing that? He is doing that because when his Minister of Finance brings in a deficit of around 500 million, he does not want to have to take the responsibility for his decision not to harmonize the sales tax. Instead he intends to continue the deception by claiming he reduced the deficit from 1.2 billion to 500 million, just like his Minister of Finance got into the Premier's game of deception by telling everyone he made a cut of a 115 million. He actually overestimated the value of the cuts by 400 per cent -- a 400 per cent error man, off in his first statement by 400 per cent.

Now think that through, Mr. Speaker. We are not talking about a projection, a prediction, or an estimate or something down the road. We are talking about a statement of fact that is easily checked by the minister himself. Yet he mistook a \$30 million reduction for a \$115 million reduction. Well, Mr. Speaker, let's do a little math to see what the deficit should be, not accounting for any of the extraordinary spending of the government has done on its own agenda.

Take the 265 million projected in the last budget. That was the projected deficit. Now add the 180 million the NDP gave up when they cancelled harmonization, because after all in the proposal that was made, that was a real figure that would have been collected: 265 plus 180 equals 445.

If you can't follow this, you can get your calculators. So without accounting for anything else, the deficit would come in at 445 million.

Now, Mr. Speaker, during the election, the Premier claimed that the deficit was dramatically higher than forecast. In the middle of that election, and I want to emphasize that it was actually during that election, the former minister of Finance wrote to the NDP leader and explained the financial situation. Included in that explanation was the provision that there had been a \$58 million overexpenditure on farm support due to a larger than expected uptake in the GRIP program.

Now let's add 265 plus 180 plus 58. Just with those three items, we get a deficit of \$503 million.

Well surprise, Mr. Speaker, surprise. Without taking anything else into account, the NDP leader was fully aware that his own agenda would result in a minimum deficit of over \$500 million. And it is truly sad that the media has not been able . . . has been unable to fully explain this simple math to the people. I understand some of the unwillingness to explain the dance of the deficit. There is a personal commitment to a deficit reduction that has gone so far as to excuse whatever deception, if the deception is seen as serving the interest of deficit reduction.

But that is not fair to the people of Saskatchewan. The hyperbole and exaggeration of the government has removed the middle ground in the debate for the deficit. It has created a climate of almost despair. That very well serves the political interests of members opposite but

which does not serve the people of this province at all.

And as I said to the Premier and to his caucus, this throne speech had better be the last deception you practise on the people of Saskatchewan. If the long-overdue budget that is coming does not correct the deception, there will be a price to be paid. And we will cause the Minister of Finance to step by step account for each of his manipulations in the Committee of Finance, and we will cause each member to explain in detail where the spending they did and are about to do came from, and how they arrived at paying this year's bills with last year's debt.

There will be a price to be paid, Mr. Speaker, because in the end, deception will not stand, and in the end this government will not stand either.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a great pleasure to be able to participate in this debate on the Speech from the Throne. I'm very honoured to be here representing the constituency of Saskatoon Westmount and the Ministries of Social Services and Seniors.

Saskatoon Westmount is a constituency with a high percentage of seniors, many of whom are my neighbours. It's also an inner-city riding in which there are people on social assistance. We who live in the riding experience in our daily lives some of the social problems which this new government is committed to addressing.

The Speech from the Throne set out a blueprint for the next four years. It outlined the government's commitment to get in control of the deficit, creating jobs, protecting our environment, improving the quality of life, and restoring ethical and open government to Saskatchewan. It also spoke about compassion and fairness, and it's these two themes that I want to focus on.

We have major social problems in this province which the former government ignored and even worsened. Since becoming Minister of Social Services, I spent a good deal of my time travelling around the province, visiting employees and clients whom my department serves. It's been interesting, and it's been sobering.

I have seen the devastating affects of poverty. During the last decade, poverty has increased dramatically in this province. Ten years ago, Saskatchewan had one of the lowest child poverty rates in Canada. Today we have one of the highest. One child in five in Saskatchewan grows up in poverty. Children are poor because their parents are poor. Because their parents are working but don't make enough money to make ends meet. Because their parents are only working part time even though they want to work full time. Because their parents can't find jobs. Or because their parents require training to prepare them for the job market.

We simply cannot allow one child in five in Saskatchewan to grow up poor. There's the cost to the

taxpayer. Poor children have many more health care problems than others. They have more problems at school. Dealing with the poverty crisis today will actually save us money tomorrow.

But poverty is not just about numbers. It's about people. Poverty means children who can't concentrate at school because they're hungry. Poverty means tension, conflict, and even violence in homes plagued by financial insecurity. It means frightened children who have to be left alone because parents can't afford child care. It means the exhaustion of the single parent trying to juggle the competing demands of her job and her family. It means the despair that leads young people to early experimentation with alcohol, drugs, teen-age pregnancies, and crime.

So in the last decade there has been a dramatic increase in poverty and the accompanying social problems. And how did the last government deal with this emerging social crisis? We must never forget their response. We also have to remember Grant Schmidt and how he treated poor people. Mr. Schmidt and the others ignored the poverty crisis and even denied that there was a problem. Grant Schmidt said, where are the hungry children? -- show me. He wouldn't even admit there were hungry children in the province until the city of Regina did a lengthy report describing in heart-rending terms the lives of the hungry children.

The previous government put down the poor. What did they offer poor, single parents, struggling to make ends meet on incomes well below the poverty line? Grant Schmidt gave these mothers lectures and told them that they had to learn how to manage their money properly or grow gardens. The previous government's attitude toward the poor was punitive. People on social assistance were forced to pick up their cheques -- after their transportation allowances had been taken away from them. Grant Schmidt took every opportunity to belittle poor people and to imply that welfare fraud, not poverty, was Saskatchewan's main social problem.

An Hon. Member: -- And look at what they did with the money, Janice.

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: -- And look what they did with the money. Right on.

The regulations which describe what people on social assistance are entitled to were kept from recipients. Not that the regulations would have helped the recipients much. The regulations are so complicated, bureaucratic, and full of red tape that practical people can't make head or tail out of them anyway.

Not only did the previous government attack the poor, they also attacked the people who tried to help the poor. The Department of Social Services that I inherited was a demoralized department, rife with political interference at all levels. Social workers were not encouraged to be compassionate and their professional judgement was not respected. The NGOs (non-governmental organizations), which often operate on shoe-string budgets to provide invaluable services to the needy, were gagged. That is, they knew that if they criticized the government they

risked losing their funding.

So, Mr. Speaker, while the social problems in this province were worsening in the 1980s, the members opposite were blaming the victims. They were lashing out at the poor instead of trying to deal with the problem of poverty. And they were pitting people against each other, encouraging others to disparage and look down on some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

The verdict delivered by the electorate in October 1991 was richly deserved. The previous government and its soft-headed and hard-hearted approach was rejected in favour of a new government committed to compassion and fairness. This is a government committed to tackling poverty. We're simply not going to do what the member from Rosthern did when he was minister of Social Services. Three hundred and seventy-two days ago, in this very House, the member opposite said that NDP plans to tackle poverty would cost a billion dollars. And he used that as an excuse to throw up his hands and do nothing.

We can't perform miracles, and we don't have a billion dollars. But we won't stand idly by while children go hungry in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: -- We will unleash the creative energies of Saskatchewan people and appeal to the more nobler instincts of compassion. We will ask them to work in partnership with us to solve our social problems.

Our dollars are short but we will use them well. We will review all income security programs in consultation with interested groups to ensure that our scarce tax dollars are most effectively targeted at those in need. We will conduct an interdepartmental review of all seniors programs to work toward a guaranteed level of support for seniors. We will work in partnership with the NGOs to better integrate services and avoid duplication.

(2015)

People who are in my constituency who are on social assistance want to work. They want jobs and training. This government, through its community employment program, will offer them both. People on social assistance will be given jobs working on worthwhile community projects or working with volunteer groups or NGOs.

Both the recipients and the communities will benefit. Understaffed and underfunded agencies like food banks or child care centres will get some much needed help that they would not otherwise be able to afford. Job creation programs will get the economy moving again. Money will be put into the hands of people on social assistance who will in turn spend that money at our local co-ops or small businesses.

And the program will lever federal funds into the province. For every dollar that the province spends on training and employment, the federal government is committed to an equivalent investment.

The recipients will also benefit. They will receive sensitive training from agencies accustomed to dealing with the needy. I would like, for instance, to see food banks offering programs to clients teaching them how to cook. But I would be especially pleased to see someone on social assistance who has to use the food bank being trained to offer the cooking lessons themselves. If poor people in this province are going to work on projects, I want them to work on projects that benefit poor people.

Economic success in the 1990s requires a trained and educated work-force. By consolidating all training and employment programs under one umbrella, New Careers, the government will provide a more co-ordinated and cost-effective service. Recipients will develop a long-term career plan which will involve skills development, educational upgrading, and on-the-job training.

Mr. Speaker, the government also has to change the way it deals with aboriginal people. We want to form a partnership with them. For over 100 years white people have told Indian and Metis people how to run their lives. And the record clearly shows that that approach was a dismal failure. When some 70 per cent of the institutionalized young offenders in this province are of aboriginal ancestry, this tells me that we as a society have failed miserably.

This government is moving to a new and better system where aboriginal people will have a greater and greater role in designing and delivering their own social programs. We're going through a troubled time in this province. We all know this. The previous government not only bankrupted the treasury, it also took the heart out of Saskatchewan and pitted people against each other. We have to join together so we can begin to heal the hurt of this province and create a renewed value system for Saskatchewan -- create a value system that recalls the co-operative history of this province; our tradition of facing adversity together, of neighbours helping neighbours, communities helping communities.

In Social Services, we've already begun. People on social assistance are no longer being forced to pick up their cheques. They are being told why decisions which affect them are being made and they are being given access to the regulations. The commitment of this government is to treat all people with dignity and respect.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: -- Our vision is of a province where people and communities are involved in the decisions which affect their lives. Only through co-operation can we make our communities strong again. This government will turn around the financial mess of the province. We will get control of the deficit. And we must reach out to others in the community and ask them to join with us in rebuilding a Saskatchewan based on co-operation, compassion, and partnership.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kluz: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is definitely an honour to rise in support of the Speech from the Throne

And it is good to see you back in the Speaker's chair. You are a man of very high standards, and I am sure you are going to restore the proper decorum in this legislature. It is just part of the process to reassure the people's confidence in elected officials.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly a very special person that is important in my life. She is seated in the east gallery. My wife Carol is here tonight. And she is accompanied by her sister Gloria Stefanson and two of their children, Sarah and Matthew, are here to watch the proceedings tonight.

Mr. Speaker, ask yourself this very important question: why are we here? Why are we all working so hard, and why are we doing this?

This is a very young province, started to be settled a little over a hundred years ago. My grandfather was one of those first immigrants or those settlers. He came from Poland when he was 17 years old. He first worked in coal mines in Bienfait. He worked on the railroad in Melville. He started farming in the Brewer district in 1925. Being a young farmer, he went to his neighbours to borrow some seed. He was going to replace it that fall, but he was hauled out. So he went back to those same farmers, asked them for more seed. He was hauled out for a second time. Those first years were very, very tough, and he seldom talked about it.

Those are some of the hard times our early pioneers went through to build this very province. He moved to Bankend district in 1930, and in 1935 he built his first house. In his early years, moving to Bankend, one year he broke 80 acres with horses. He overworked those horses so hard that he lost 18 -- 18 of them that next winter. Definitely hard work our pioneers went through, like I stated before, and a lot of tough times.

You ask yourself, why, why are we doing this, Mr. Speaker? Well it is definitely for our children. And certainly we are also here to better oneself, but the main reason is for our children. When you see some of the past happenings of the last nine and a half years, it seems to me the past administration was in it just for themselves. Mr. Speaker, my grandfather passed away in 1978. And at least he didn't have to see the deterioration of this province that he helped build.

When I was campaigning to be a member of this Assembly, the issue that came up time and time again was from seniors, very concerned about the deterioration of the very province that they worked so very hard to build. You can think back how tough it was after the '30s and the Anderson and Bennett governments. We did straighten that mess out. Now we are confronted with another mess the former administration left us with.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to recite a little poem just for some comparison purposes. It goes like this:

In days of old
when knights were bold
and journeyed from their castles
Trusty men were left behind

knights needed not the haste
They helped themselves to food and wine
And drank from the king's own chalice.
Oh, it was a stirring sight,
Those gypsies in the palace.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, in 1982 . . . Yes, Mr. Speaker, in 1982 the knights did leave this palace but they left because of a decision of the electorate.

Compare the food in the poem that was taken to the people's money. You compare the wine . . . Well I guess we can just compare that to the wine or the liquor that was transferred from the Sask Liquor Board warehouse to the ministers' offices.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kluz: -- Yes indeed, Mr. Speaker, no doubt in my mind. Gypsies in the palace.

Where do political parties get their names? Their names should say what they stand for. In 1934 a farmer labour party was started. George Williams, the member from Wadena, was one of the first five elected to that party.

It later turned into the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. Then later, the New Democrats. Think of it this way: farmer-labour, co-operation; commonwealth, not individual wealth, common wealth; new ideas; democratic.

Take the members opposite -- Progressive Conservatives. Where did that name come from? Maybe it came from 1929 when the Liberals had elected 28 members; the Conservative Party, 24; and the Progressives, 5. There was a Conservative and a Progressive coalition to form government, although they did not use that name until the 1944 election where they elected zero members.

You think about that name -- it is neither progressive, or it is conservative. And progressive, when you look in the dictionary, it means they want change. Conservative is resistant to change.

So which way are you going? One way you want it and the next way you don't. No doubt it seems you're quite mixed up. Sounds like mass confusion to me.

Mr. Speaker, maybe they should change their name from the PC to the WM or waste and mismanagement party.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kluz: -- Yes, it is quite obvious after we've opened the books -- all the waste and mismanagement. Almost \$14 thousand of debt for every man, woman, child, and infant in this province.

Yes, I wish things were different, but wishful thinking doesn't make it so. But October 21, '91, the people voted through the democratic process, and they voted wisely I must say, but they voted for a difference. They also voted for a clear mandate for change to open, honest, accountable government. By working together, we're

going to pay off this debt. It will give us the financial freedom -- the freedom to make good decisions and to control our own destiny.

Mr. Speaker, my constituency of Kelvington-Wadena, it stretches from the southern fringes of the Porcupine forest to south of Kelliher, and from the Quill Lakes east to Invermay. It is full of good, hard-working people.

When I was in one of the grocery stores here in Regina this week, I noticed on the shelves some peaola chips from Kelvington . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You bet, it's good stuff. It's made from pea flour, and they form it into chips and fry it in canola oil. It's high in protein, low in cholesterol. It is quite healthy, and I hope all members of the Assembly go out and try some tonight.

It is people working with the people's ideas. And, Mr. Speaker, this new administration, our government, will work with businesses and individuals who will create jobs and value added products. That is going to be helped by the changed mandate and the community bonds to allow co-operatives in that system.

(2030)

Mr. Speaker, people long fought for job rights and job equality. Now that they have them, there are no jobs. Mr. Speaker, a legacy of the last 10 years -- and you can look at the latest census figures to reassure this belief -- Saskatchewan was the only province in this nation to lose population.

Mr. Speaker, we all know the feds have been off-loading, especially in agriculture. Coming from a rural constituency it's very noticeable, but it affects all of Saskatchewan. We all know that the feds propped up GRIP last year to the tune of \$78 million. They say it was to get farmers to sign in; they were just trying to buy election. We all know that. We know it's a national program, it's got to be. It's a national responsibility. We're going to work to enhance the cost-of-production formula. We will press Ottawa for the 500 million it owes farmers for the '90-91 crop year.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kluz: -- Mr. Speaker, we have already extended the deadline for the sign-up of the safety nets. And members opposite voted against this in a recorded vote; in a recorded vote they voted against this.

They had a chance. They had a chance to stand up for farmers, Mr. Speaker. They had a chance to send Ottawa a strong, clear, unanimous message, but they chose not to. They let the farmers down again. This reassures my belief that they are in it only for themselves. Instead of the members opposite whining and complaining and hollering and screaming, why don't you join us in rebuilding Saskatchewan?

An Hon. Member: -- That's called co-operation.

Mr. Kluz: -- That's right. It's called co-operation.

Some of the past waste and mismanagement of GigaText,

Supercart, Joytec, High R Door, Austrak, Pro-Star Mills, Nardei Fabricators, Canapharm, Rafferty, STC (Saskatchewan Transportation Company), and it goes on and on, Mr. Speaker -- this is only a few.

And you couple this with the patronage of the former PC members and candidates. And the Provincial Auditor report reveals even more waste and mismanagement. Mr. Speaker, they have left this provincial treasury like old Mother Hubbard's cupboard. It's bare, Mr. Speaker.

After October 21, '91, there is new faith and optimism spreading over Saskatchewan. We're going to rebuild Saskatchewan again, as we did in 1944 and in 1971. We're going to do it again in 1991. Mr. Speaker, this is the third time the people of Saskatchewan have called on the New Democrats to fix up the mess left by the previous administrations.

By working together we're going to obtain the freedom to control our own destiny, Mr. Speaker. And it is up to the people of this fine province to help us keep those gypsies out of the palace.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Stanger: -- Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to support the motion from my colleague from Meadow Lake. We both live in the beautiful north-west, and we both are dedicated to improving the conditions of our constituents. Even though it is less than five months since we assembled in this House and debated the throne speech from the last session, it is this sitting that feels like a true beginning for this government.

The member from Regina Wascana was completely correct in her description of how we must clean up this mess before we can move forward. And what a mess was left behind in terms of the provincial finances. As a member of our caucus fiscal policy committee, I have been shocked and appalled at the magnitude of waste and mismanagement of the previous government.

The members who created this mess and are now in opposition whined loudly about how the Gass Commission has vindicated them. How? Because it showed at the very least they were not criminals. Good heavens, what kind of standards of behaviour does your party have? Does your model for integrity and ethical behaviour state that anything is fine so long as it's not criminal behaviour? Or is it that you just don't want your people to get caught in criminal behaviour?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Stanger: -- Well legally criminal or not, what you have done to this province is certainly a crime morally. There are many people in Cut Knife-Lloydminster that wish they could have their pound of flesh out of your hides.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Stanger: -- The people that I represent are honest and hard-working. They understand that it is wrong to take and destroy what does not belong to them. Do you know

why my constituents are so angry? They know that ordinary folks running their farms, businesses, and personal finances could have never gotten away with what you did. But what they are finding truly amazing is that our laws were not able to protect the people from decisions made by the previous government.

The honest and hard-working people I represent, they would like to see you and other members of the former PC government held personally responsible. They would like to see you pay back every penny of the \$13.8 billion debt that was accumulated when you were on that side of the House.

And, Mr. Speaker, let me tell you that I understand the anger and frustration that my people are feeling -- 361 million lost when you insisted upon selling off the Potash Corporation. You were so determined to get rid of this Crown corporation that you didn't care if you lost money provincially.

You sold the potash company even though your own officials advised against it. You knew that selling PC would lose hundreds of millions but you forced the sale through anyway. Our leader and Premier promised to leave no stone unturned and to expose the waste and corruption -- little did I know they weren't stones but boulders -- but I don't think he realized how many stones there were and just how big some of them were. This government has been turning over stones since November 1. Just when we think surely this must be all, something else is exposed; then smack, we run into another boulder. We have been trying to move forward and put the past behind us but then another financial disaster is discovered.

Such was the case a few weeks ago when the Crown Management Board status report was released. There we found an organization that was completely bankrupt. While the PCs signed deals that lost money for CMB (Crown Management Board of Saskatchewan), they were also forcing the corporation to pay huge dividends to the province. This is about as smart as using your VISA card to pay off your Mastercard.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Stanger: -- The result of this disaster, now that it has been exposed, is that the government is forced to pay interest charges on CMB's debt. This is a terrible blow to our own expenses for this year.

Like I said, we are amazed at how many stones or boulders of financial disaster that we have cleared out of the way. But now we are finally reaching the end. We know the full extent of the damage and we and the people of Saskatchewan will always remember who caused it.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to endorse the throne speech. In spite of the crushing financial situation, it is clear that this government is already starting to rebuild and to make some positive changes in people's lives.

I'm particularly pleased and encourage the emphasis this government has placed upon education. It shows, Mr. Speaker, that this government truly understands that a

properly trained and educated work-force is absolutely key to improving the economy and to solve the issue of poverty in the long run. As a teacher myself, I've been aware for many years how our schools were often not addressing today's needs. I commend the government for taking the initiative to establish the Saskatchewan Education Council. I am excited about the possibilities that this represents to the people of Saskatchewan. This government is prepared to play a key facilitating role, but clearly they are providing an environment which brings people together and allows the community to develop solutions on their own.

There is certainly no shortage of good ideas. I know that by working together co-operatively that we will create the education system that is required to meet individual, social, and economic needs.

I also want to mention the special training initiative for aboriginals and for women. Once again, this government not only talks about equality, but they understand the underlying causes of injustice. Only by having adequate and appropriate training can people have access to job opportunities.

Another area that I am personally very excited about is health care. We have the potential to revolutionize health care services. Equal access to health care is a fundamental right for all people.

Tommy Douglas and Woodrow Lloyd preserved and implemented universal health care programs during a time when many people had not even thought of the concept. They were accused of being dreamers, and I'm old enough to remember that. They were told that it couldn't be done. Then they were even told that medicare would endanger people's lives -- remember that. It sounds like some of the stuff I've been hearing the last couple of days . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Is that right? In spite of all that opposition, as we all know medicare was created in this province and served as a model for the rest of the country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Stanger: -- Well now we are ready to implement the next phase. People are telling us that it can't be done, or we will destroy the health care in the process. Just like 30 years ago we have the naysayers, same old story. But just like 30 years ago, our party has the vision and commitment to break with tradition and develop a better system.

I am proud to say that the people in the constituency of Cut Knife-Lloydminster are ready to welcome with open arms a new wellness model. They appreciate and understand the need for community-based care. They understand because they have already pulled together and co-operated to develop some very innovative services.

The Twin Rivers Home Care district has already established one of the first wellness clinics for seniors in Canada. This provides a wide range of service. It is community based and controlled. It is having a positive impact on many peoples lives.

The Lloydminster Health Board has already amalgamated to provide effective and co-ordinated health care. Remember that people in Lloydminster must work with not just one but two provincial governments. Their example proves just how far communities can go when co-operation is flourishing.

So I and the people of my constituency would like to say to the Hon. Minister of Health -- go for it!

(2045)

This is one corner of the province that understands the concept of wellness, and we have been practising it as well. The health care professionals in my area are absolutely delighted to have a minister that finally is supportive of the fundamental changes and attitudes that they know are required.

Fundamental change -- that's the key message of hope and optimism for me in this throne speech. The world is changing around us. The institutions that were developed decades and centuries ago are no longer reflective of society's needs. If institutions are to survive, they are going to have to adapt. The very fact that our party has 11 women sitting in this House, and that 4 of those women are also in cabinet, that convinces me that this government is prepared to adapt to meet the needs around them.

The world is becoming smaller as communication improves. Not even political institutions can afford to remain out of touch. I'm going to repeat that again, because some people aren't listening. Not even political institutions can afford to remain out of touch.

Our government and our legislature must reflect the needs and values of the larger society. The only way that is possible is to include all members of society. As I have indicated, our party has made great gains in ensuring that women are included in this government. There is certainly room for improvement, but I am proud of our achievements thus far.

The inclusion of women changes the face of government. I believe our views and perspectives will help the political process adapt to the changing needs around us.

In the same manner, it will be important to see more aboriginal members in this legislature. They too will bring a different perspective and different emphasis to the processes of this House.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech shows that this government is not afraid of change. Out of the rubble of the financial disaster, we are going to forge a new economy and a new society. We will do this by linking arms with the people right across this province. And we will work together to make the changes required.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support the Speech from the Throne. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise with great pleasure tonight to speak in support of the Speech from the Throne which was delivered in this Chamber on Monday afternoon. I want to first congratulate my colleague and desk mate, the member from Meadow Lake, on the excellent job that he has done in moving the throne speech. I also want to congratulate . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: -- . . . I also want to take this opportunity to congratulate the member from Regina Wascana Plains on her excellent job also of seconding the motion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: -- Mr. Speaker, I want to at this time to say how nice it is to be back in this House where the government elected today can finally start putting some of its policies, and its dreams, and legislation in place to turn this province around.

I also want to congratulate you, sir, on the decorum that you have kept in this Legislative Assembly, and I can see that things are going to calm down quite a bit in here with you in the Chair, and I thank you for that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: -- Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . He's calm. Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne refers to actions this government is initiating towards being open, honest, and accountable to the people of Saskatchewan.

Last October, Mr. Speaker, these people served overwhelming notice that they had had more than enough of the closed and secretive practices of the previous administration -- an administration which operated behind closed doors, and which actively prevented the public from having access and knowledge of its operations on a regular basis.

The people of Saskatchewan rejected this negative approach of government, Mr. Speaker, in favour of positive and proactive leadership, government, and administration. This is the type of direction that our government has said that we would take and bring forward, and this is the type and direction of government they said they wanted. And this is the man that they gave this government. And that is the kind of government that we have pledged to provide to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we have already begun this process and more -- much more, much more -- will be done in the weeks and the months ahead. And, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are already beginning to see evidence of our work here, good, solid evidence that I will give specific examples of in a moment. And that evidence, Mr. Speaker, is also only a beginning. The people of Saskatchewan will see much more of it in the weeks and the months ahead.

This evidence, Mr. Speaker, reflects the mandate of this government to be open, honest, and accountable. It also reflects the commitment of this government to be one that the people of Saskatchewan can trust and have faith in as we work together to rebuild our province.

Let me give you some specific examples of the positive steps this government has already taken to be open, honest, and accountable, Mr. Speaker, by contrasting what we have already done in only six short months with the kind of mismanaged practice by the members opposite during their 10-year reign of error. Let me begin, Mr. Speaker, with our pledge to the people of Saskatchewan that the first action of our government would be to open the books and contrast our approach to the financial state of our province with that of the previous administration.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan will remember that the previous administration used every tactic in the book to stall and delay public scrutiny of the spending habits by the Provincial Auditor. This meant that public account documents were up to three years old before they were open to this scrutiny.

What's more, Mr. Speaker, is that the previous provincial auditor was actually denied access to some of the information he needed to do his job, while in other cases the previous administration refused to co-operate with him to the extent that it was obligated to by law. This led the previous provincial auditor to complain that the former government had perhaps broken its own laws, Mr. Speaker.

Activities which we hear even this week may have continued year after painful year under the former government. But what did that government do when it was faced with these complaints, Mr. Speaker? Did it do the decent thing and agree to subject itself to its own laws? No, Mr. Speaker, it did not. Indeed the former Justice minister himself launched a personal and vicious attack on the previous provincial auditor.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite have accused our government of knowing what the debt was.

An Hon. Member: -- You knew.

Mr. Flavel: -- We knew. That's what they said. And I want to quote, Mr. Speaker, from a letter that was written by the late minister of Finance, Mr. Hepworth, to the now Premier of the province of Saskatchewan. It first says:

First, you suggest that there is no way of verifying whether expenditures undertaken to date, by way of Special Warrants, have added to the current year's budget deficit forecast of \$265 million. Second, you suggest that announcements in recent weeks may have added to the provincial deficit. Third, you question the government's track record on deficit forecasts.

Mr. Speaker, it goes on to say:

Expenditures of the combined funds up to and including August 31, 1991, total 1.9 . . . billion

which is 40.9% of the total budget expenditures provided for in the 1991-92 budget. This compares favourably to the previous year . . .

As you see, we have kept an extremely tight rein on 1991-92 provincial expenditures (is what he reads).

And I go to the end, Mr. Speaker, and I quote from the letter. It says:

On balance, however, I see no reason to alter our target of a \$265 million deficit.

Quoted in a letter from the former Finance minister to the now Premier, and it says that -- and I repeat again for the members opposite:

On balance, however, I see no reason to alter our target of a \$265 million deficit.

How would we know when the former Finance minister wouldn't tell us the truth? We campaigned on a budget of \$265 million and now we find out it's over \$1 billion . . . 1 billion, excuse me.

Mr. Speaker, I want to go on to talk more about the throne speech. I could talk about some of their shenanigans for the past several years. And I think if anyone gets a chance it's all writ up in this **Report of the Provincial Auditor** -- a report that is usually one-tenth the thickness of what this one is. But because of nine years of mismanagement . . .

Mr. Speaker, it is truly fitting that the party that created hospitalization and medicare should be the same party that is embarked on reforming our health care system. Health care has flourished and advanced to a very technical level. Modern medicine is performing miracles in many people's lives.

These advancements are important and needed, but now there is a growing awareness that we should take steps to keep people healthy. If we can prevent disease, people will have a better quality of life but they will also not have to take advantage of the highly advanced and technical health services. An example is coronary care. Rather than waiting for a heart attack to occur, which requires quadruple bypass surgery, it makes sense to be concentrating on a life-style designed to keep our hearts healthy in the first place.

To have health care services co-ordinated and integrated only makes common sense. I commend my government and the Minister of Health for steps that they have taken in this regard already. Encouraging people to work co-operatively together will be the secret to the success of changes that are made.

The public health care professionals know that changes must be made. They are also counting on us to make those changes in a fair and compassionate manner. We recognize that there must be a transition period in many cases. Wellness and preventive programs will need to be firmly established before we will see any reduction in people requiring highly intensive health care services.

I am confident, Mr. Speaker, that this government will deliver the needed changes effectively and I am looking forward to a new age in health care.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: -- Mr. Speaker, if our goal is to ensure that we have a healthy population then we must also be addressing the issue of poverty. People that cannot afford a nutritious diet or proper housing will not be able to maintain good health. I'm very pleased with the steps this government will take this session to break the poverty cycle: support for children's food programs; review of safety net programs; emphasis on training and employment. Unfortunately we will not be able to solve the problem instantly. I know all of my caucus colleagues wish that we could but the throne speech has shown that we will make a start. We have much more to do but we have made a start.

This government has also made a very significant start in correcting some of the injustices that have occurred against our aboriginal people. There are five reserves in Last Mountain-Touchwood so I know that there has been much unfairness and oppression. And it is time for our indigenous brothers and sisters to be allowed the freedom and the power to control their own affairs.

I welcome the support in the throne speech for self-determination and treaty land entitlement settlements.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: -- Mr. Speaker, I am also hopeful that the Metis Justice Review Committee and the Indian Justice Review Committee will be a start towards implementing needed changes in this area. As a society we can no longer continue to ignore the high incarceration rate experienced by Indian and Metis. Again it is high time some action has been taken after 10 years of neglect and we will take that action, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot about agriculture and we have heard a lot about farm debt and we've heard a lot about GRIP and, Mr. Speaker, we're going to hear a lot more before this thing is over. Why? Because if you take a few minutes to take a good, long, hard look at what has been going on behind the scenes, you'll see that the federal government has, without a shadow of a doubt, landed our farmers with a massive, untenable burden -- a burden that they may not recover from if we cannot turn the tide around.

(2100)

The federal government has spent so much of its time trying to dump its financial responsibilities on us that they have not paid the least bit of attention to the anxiety and the anguish they are causing for this agricultural-based province. Our whole way of life is directly affected by the decisions Mr. McKnight is making and he is making them as casually as deciding whether or not to take an umbrella because it looks like rain.

Mr. Speaker, it's not a whole lot of fun to be placed in the situation of being responsible for cleaning up after the

horses in a parade. But this is the situation that we find ourselves in, thanks to the members opposite, who for nine long and painful years formed what barely passed as a government.

We are faced, thanks to them and to the federal Tories, with a GRIP program that was shaky in the first place and promised all sorts of things it never delivered. Did anyone see the cheques from the interim GRIP payments this year? Did anyone get a bill instead of a cheque? Indeed they did, Mr. Speaker, and it was because of the tricks and the twists and the turns the federal Minister of Agriculture has been throwing us over the last few months.

Mr. Speaker, it is time that Mr. McKnight got real. The Saskatchewan farmers you are trying to rip off have your number, Mr. McKnight, and they are demanding that you make good on your promise of a third line of defence for the farmers of Saskatchewan. You told us that the third line of defence was to be for identifying and solving problems. Well I suggest to you, Mr. McKnight, that our farmers have identified problems for you that you have not acted on, and it appears that you have no intentions of acting on.

So where does that leave us, Mr. Speaker? It leaves us trying to fix a bad program by trying to make it a little better. We did the best we could with what the former government left us with. Because of the financial restraints and the time restraints, the committee has done a remarkable job. We know what we have needs work, and we are prepared to go the additional mile to find workable solutions. But we will need the help to do that and we will want input from our farmers.

We did strike a review committee to take a look at the GRIP program but as we all know, Mr. Speaker, the committee had little time to accomplish what they wanted and needed to. They had their backs up against the wall because we were so close to the critical deadlines. The committee did recommend some viable alternatives. We have since included more enhancements to GRIP and yes, we still know that we have a ways to go to make all the people happy. But I have to point out, Mr. Speaker, that even Rome wasn't built in a month. We know we need to work on the finer points of GRIP. We also know that this will take the help of the people that elected us, our farming communities.

The Minister of Agriculture recently stated that we will be designing a new safety net program for farmers. I feel that those are words of vision for the next decade. We are going to work towards an equitable solution and we are, Mr. Speaker, going to go to the people who have the most to say, our farmers. Admittedly we will spend some time designing the process to make it feasible for all those who ultimately participate, but that is the key, Mr. Deputy Speaker, participation of those the most affected. For our farmers have been saying loudly and clearly that they have problems we need to work on together.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I take a great deal of satisfaction in the proposed future direction for an improved agriculture safety net program, a program that will be better than GRIP.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Flavel: -- A program that will turn this desperate situation around and create some optimism for the future.

Mr. Speaker, this throne speech sets this province, that is close to bankruptcy, on the road to renewal and new direction. As the speech reads:

A community that lives beyond its means will not long prosper. A community that has lost faith in its elected representatives will not flourish. A community without compassion will not know true progress. A community divided will not succeed.

We as a government are determined, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to bring the government spending under control so we that we do get back to living within our means.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people of this province lost faith in the former government and on October 21, 1991, they showed them that they had indeed lost the faith of the people. And we as a government will work very hard to maintain the trust that the people have put in us.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we as a government are committed to dealing with people and groups with fairness, openness and compassion. Because by working with people instead of against them there will be true progress in our life-style and the life-style that we will leave for our children and our grandchildren.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the former government ran this province for 10 years by the theory that you divide people and put one sector against another -- divide and rule. We, Mr. Speaker, as a government, believe that what is needed is people of all sectors working together in the spirit of community and co-operation, working together in a mixed economy where the co-operatives, the Crown corporations along with the private sector, work together to bring this province to the point where they will once again have control of their own destiny.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we inherited an overwhelming debt -- a debt of some \$14 billion -- that is the result of the former government's waste and mismanagement and patronage rewards to their corporate friends. Mr. Speaker, this horrendous debt threatens our economic stability today and jeopardizes our hopes for economic recovery tomorrow.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are committed to turn this province around and by working together, we will meet the challenge. We will rebuild Saskatchewan, and we will turn our economy around because, Mr. Speaker, we not only do it for the people of today, but we do it to provide a brighter future for ourselves and our children. And we do it because we care. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm very pleased tonight to enter into the debate on the first throne speech from this new government. And I would want to say, Mr. Deputy

Speaker, in the outset, that I find this document to be a very radical change from what I've seen and what has been presented to this legislature in the past.

And I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I believe that this, as is our British parliamentary system, to be the prelude to the budget as it always is. But I want to say that this throne speech is a prelude to a different kind of a budget than we've experienced in this province since this rump group, this opposition across the road, took power in 1982.

And, Mr. Speaker, in referring to the throne speech, I thought one of the most useful things that I could do for my constituents and for the people of Saskatchewan is to reaffirm some of the headings in the throne speech which clearly indicate the direction of this Premier and his government.

One of the headings, the first headings, is mandate for a change. And I believe that this government does have a mandate for a change. People are looking for a change, and indeed they will have one.

And the second heading is putting your financial house in order. And clearly, if there's ever been a time in this province that we need to put our financial house in order, it's after 10 years of the leadership of the PC Party and the present Leader of the Opposition.

And I want to say some of the reasons we need to put our financial house in order leads me to the next headline, and that's open, honest and accountable government -- something which has been sadly lacking in Saskatchewan since the Leader of the Opposition took power in 1982.

Jobs and economic opportunities -- another headline, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Agriculture and the economy -- and another headline, Mr. Speaker, quality of life, which has been sadly eroded under the misguidance of the former administration in Saskatchewan.

And I want to say as well that, as I sat in the member in the opposition benches prior to the election, one of the points that we tried to make and one of the arguments that we tried to make to the then government -- the PC government of the day -- was that they've got to start putting people first.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they were putting some people first. We recognize that. They were putting friends of the PC government first. But I want to say, when you read this document, this throne speech that was presented to this legislature, our definition of putting people first includes all people of this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: -- I wanted to, Mr. Deputy Speaker, during the course of my remarks, refer to the debt load that we carry in this province. I want to speak about why I believe that's happened.

But I want to first of all express my disappointment in the performance of the new members of the opposition since

we've been in this legislature. I can say, Mr. Speaker, that I expect no better from the veteran members because we saw them perform in this legislature prior to the election when they sat in the government benches and sat on the Treasury Board and delivered the massive pain and inflicted the hurt upon Saskatchewan people that we're all too familiar with.

And I believe that from them, and I understand why that is. And I understand why they will stand in this House in this throne speech and defend their miserable record of the last ten years. And I understand that because they were part and parcel of the destruction of the economy of this province. So those people I can understand. I can understand that, sir.

But what I fail to understand is new members elected to the opposition benches. I can't understand members like the member from Maple Creek who spoke tonight. I can't understand where this person comes from. And I can't understand where he intends to go. Because I want to say, Mr. Speaker, he's following directly in the path and the direction of the veteran opposition members, and surely he must realize, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan have had enough of that kind of government. They've had enough of the waste, and they've had enough of the gross mismanagement and the arrogant attitude of the members that were here and sitting on the government side. And there's been enough of that.

What we're looking for, and I think what the people of Saskatchewan are looking for with this government -- and that includes the members of the opposition -- is some fairness and a new direction in getting our financial house in order.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: -- And I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in all sincerity, I understand the . . . I know, and I know members of the legislature know, that the now member of . . . or Leader of the Opposition, the defeated premier, is not going to be around that long. He's going to be disappearing out of this Chamber and out of the political scene and away from the embarrassment that he's created . . . some members of his political party. He's going to be gone.

And I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't believe he's going to be speaking to many more throne speeches. And I don't believe he'll be addressing budget speeches because I think he's going to be gone. And I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not only out of this legislature will he be gone. My guess is that he won't be living in this province because he doesn't want to face the embarrassment of destroying the families, and having them recognize just what's he's done after this government has opened the books and let the light shine in on just how bad his government was, and how corrupt that that government was for the last 10 years. So I want to speak to that just for a minute. The fact that the Leader of the Opposition won't be addressing many more throne speeches in this legislature.

(2115)

But we have on the other side legislature some bright, shining stars. We have the member from Rosthern, who was part of the destruction and now wants to try and lead this . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . group of politicians back into power sometime down the road. My guess is that he'll never live long enough to do that because I believe the people of Saskatchewan will not elect the PC government for decades and decades.

And then we've got of course the other bright, shining star, the House Leader, the member from Thunder Creek, who will be clearly as positioning himself and trying to line up some of their back-bench members over there for support for this new leadership race. And I want to say I look forward to it. I look forward to this because that's still part and parcel of the operation that destroyed this province. And the people know that, and I want to suggest that under the leadership of either one of those two members the PC party will go nowhere, and we'll be able to continue on with the rebuilding of this province with a government that's built fair . . . that's here because of compassion and of caring for the people of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: -- And I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I would be remiss if I didn't mention the member from Morse, who sits in the back and one of the triumvirate. And he too may have leadership aspirations. He too may try to decide to lead that group of right-wing, incompetent politicians out of the wilderness. He may be part of the triumvirate. And it will be interesting to see just what direction that takes. But I want to say to all three of you . . . I say to you, shame on all of you, that you haven't come clean with your back-benchers and at least told them and been honest that you were part and parcel of the destruction of the economy of this province and that you were parts and you were the master-minds of the corruption that this government was riddled with for 10 years.

And I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I find it sad that they wouldn't have come clean with the new members and have said why don't you start on a new course and join with the government members and support them in their direction of trying to turn this economy around, and support them in terms of fairness for all people. But clearly you got to them before they could make their minds up, and the speech by the member from Maple Creek tonight was just a very good example of that having happened.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people of Prince Albert Northcote, who I want to say I am so proud to represent, have given me a message in no uncertain terms in the last four and five years. They've been very clear about their expectations and about their needs and about what they expect of their member of the legislature, and how I react and how I work with this government and how I work with them in order to turn this province around.

And I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I never wrote this throne speech. I never wrote this, but I tell you whoever wrote this throne speech clearly understood what the people of Prince Albert Northcote were asking of their member of

the legislature.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: -- You know, Mr. Speaker, two of the key words I saw in this throne speech that really spur me on and make me feel comfortable what I'm doing and that I'm sitting in a New Democrat caucus and that I'm sitting on the government side, and two words that really twiggged with me are fairness and compassion because that's what my folks send me here for. They sent me here to work with this government to build a budget and to build a direction in this four years with this government that demonstrates fairness and compassion and just doesn't talk about it. And they're asking, Mr. Speaker, for common sense and they're asking for competence.

And I look around me and I look at the members of the legislature that sit in the treasury benches, the members of Executive Council, and I tell you it's a small group. We've got a small cabinet, but they're a competent and they're a caring bunch of men and women who I know will do the job working with the rest of their caucus.

And we're going into this, Mr. Speaker, with our eyes open. We know it's a massive challenge and we know we have some big problems in Saskatchewan, but we also know that they can be addressed. And working with the people of this province we're going to clean up the destruction that members of the opposition were such an integral part of building. And we know, Mr. Speaker, that to find \$700 million just to pay the interest on our provincial debt is not going to be easy.

And we know that if we have that \$700 million and if we could put that directly into health care or into education or into an agriculture program or if we could put that towards feeding some of the hungry children that these people on the opposition benches were so much a part of creating, we know that if we had that \$700 million there's so much good that we could do.

But we also know that the reality is, sir, that we just don't have that \$700 million. It's money that's going to drift directly out of our economy into the bankers and bond dealers in New York and Zürich and wherever, and we know that. We know we haven't got the opportunity to take that money and inject it back into our economy and do good things with it. We know that.

But I want to say, Mr. Speaker, there are other things we know we're going to have to do. Some of the things that we would rather not have to do. But we give you the commitment, and we give the people of this province a commitment, that those changes are going to be done with fairness and compassion.

You know I looked through a list of quotes that came from members of the opposition, members of the former PC government that helped to develop this massive \$14 billion debt that we have that then created the 700 million that we have to pay in interest every year, and I look at some of the quotes.

And the member from Rosthern was quoted as saying: if you don't manage today, you'd run out of money for

health and education and social services. And do you want to know something, Mr. Speaker? He was quoted as saying that in June 1987. Right into the new mandate after '86, this member then understands that you've got to have good management, or you're going to have problems with respect to health care and education and social services.

And I want to say another quote from the same member. He said: the alternative is just to let the deficit grow. And he says, and that would not take courage. It would just put your head in the sand and say I don't have the money, and I have a deficit now, but I will just continue to borrow, and it won't matter.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what they did. They put their heads in the sand, and they kept on spending, and they let a deficit grow. And I'm a firm believer that if they had been re-elected, there would have been no change, that they would have continued. They would have taken the easy path to just continue borrowing and squandering. And that's the direction they would have gone, Mr. Speaker.

But I tell you what. The members on this side of the House have got the courage and the will to put on the brakes.

And I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, that I think after four years of this government the difference will be so clear in terms of our commitment to turning this province right side up and not continuing the way the opposition does.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: -- Mr. Speaker, as I said, it would be easy. And that's the easy road to continue, but we've made a commitment and I believe we have the support of the people of Saskatchewan to turn this province around. And it's not going to be done without pain. But we have pain now and to continue on that road would just compound that pain and it would just make it worse for many more families down the road.

Mr. Speaker, there's a different attitude on this side of the House. We're not going to make excuses because we didn't create this mess. They can make all the excuses they want, but the people understand. There are no excuses for the kind of incompetence and the kind of mismanagement that they laid on the people of this province. And there is no excuse for putting a single person in this province in debt to the tune of \$14,000, and almost \$55,000 for a family of four -- a debt that they've put on to the backs of the people -- there are no excuses for that.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that we're not going to make excuses for delivering what will be, I believe, a very hard-nose budget. But the leader of this province and our Premier said it's going to be a fair budget and I believe it will too.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lautermilch: -- So, Mr. Speaker, I guess we've almost come full circle. This province has changed over

the years, the '70s and the '80s and now the '90s. And I would want to think we're like a family in Saskatchewan and we're into the third generation.

We had a generation in Saskatchewan in the 1970s, we had a decade where there was a government of compassion and competence, balanced budgets, programs, job creation, fairness and compassion, as I said before. And then we went into the 1980s and we had those that would tell us there was so much more we could be and at the same time we're destroying our economy. And we had 10 years of that. So that was the next stage.

But I want to say, Mr. Speaker, we're into a new era in Saskatchewan. We're now governed by a forward looking group of men and women who are willing to work with and for the people of Saskatchewan. And I believe the 1990s hold a very bright future for us, simply because of those facts.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, I know that there are business men and women in this province who are looking forward to working with their government. And I know that the rural community is looking forward to working with their government. And I want to say that we're committed to doing just that in the 1990s, and I think that it's going to become abundantly clear within about four or five years that we've taken the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of members who have many words to say with respect to the throne speech, and can probably do it in a much more eloquent fashion than I can. But I want to say to you that my words tonight come from the bottom of my heart. I believe that this political party is moving in the right direction and this government is moving in the right direction, and I want to say to the people of Saskatchewan that we're going to work hard with you and work hard for you. And I want them to know that their government feels that we have a bright future and this economy can be turned around, and we can create jobs and we can keep our young people working here in our province. It's going to take a little time and it's going to be a struggle, but we can do it.

I want to say in closing, Mr. Speaker, that to the people of my constituency of Prince Albert Northcote, I want to give them a special thanks for their patience as we've been working to put together this budget that's soon to be presented in this legislature. And I want to say to them that I appreciate the support that they've given me -- not the electoral support only but the moral support. And I want them to know that the relationship that we've built over the past five years will continue, whether in opposition or government, and I will continue to be consulting and working with them because that's a process that makes this job all worthwhile. And without that process it becomes pretty much meaningless.

(2130)

We're going to rebuild this province, and there's no doubt in my mind that we're going to be putting this province back right up on top in Canada, with a sound economy, with a good working force, and a good relationship with the rest of our country. And I firmly believe that we've

chosen the right direction to do that. And I just in closing ask them to continue to work with me and the rest of the members of the legislature in order to ensure that that happens. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Crofford: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to begin by congratulating the member from Meadow Lake, who moved the Speech from the Throne, and the member from Regina Wascana Plains, who seconded the Speech from the Throne. You both had very eloquent and heartfelt words.

Mr. Speaker, as we embark on the many excellent directions put forward in the throne speech, it's important that we pull together behind these initiatives so that this province can turn the corner and begin to implement the mandate for change that was given to us on October 21. In our excitement over the new potential of this mandate, I think it's important that we reflect for a moment on what I refer to as a decade of suffering that we have just been through. Because in order to get a clear sense of where we're going, we have to know where we have been so we can avoid the missteps of the past.

In 1982, the day the Tories were elected in Saskatchewan, not only did this province halt in its forward progress, but for many the clock began to turn backwards, removing much of the progress made possible by sound financial management and compassionate public policies demonstrated by Tommy Douglas, Woodrow Lloyd, and Allan Blakeney. However, over the past 10 years, the decade of suffering, we experienced the steady implementation of a conservative agenda that reaches beyond the boundaries of North America and is at the very root of the problems that we face in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, whether the members opposite were wittingly or unwittingly -- I'm not sure if it should be witlessly -- complicit in implementing this Tory agenda has been the subject of some discussion. If they were wittingly complicit, they have a great deal to answer for. For not only have they destroyed the financial integrity of the province, but they have greatly undermined our ability to recover.

The topic I'm about to discuss reflects on the past but it's also a starting point for renewal and rebuilding. As a member of the legislative Committee on Crown Corporations, the particular area I am referring to is the revenue-generating capacity of the Crowns. Our government has always been aware of the cyclical nature of Saskatchewan's resource-based economy. In this province, which has a small population and a relatively small tax base compared to provinces such as B.C. and Ontario, these two factors led to the government taking a significant role in stabilizing the economy.

In terms of the revenues needed to support important health, education, social, and economic objectives, the Blakeney government established the Crowns. The Crowns provide three essential benefits to Saskatchewan residents. The first, Mr. Speaker, is ownership and control of our provincial resources that ensures that decision

making and benefits are retained in Saskatchewan. This provides us with more control over our destiny.

Second, Mr. Speaker, where joint ventures are involved, it gave Saskatchewan a role in the industry and provided us with important information on wealth being taken out of the economy and resources and made us an informed participant in those decisions. And I believe this is important in terms of stewardship of our resources.

And third, Mr. Speaker, primarily it gave us another direct source of revenue aside from taxes to support developmental activities and investments in education, health, and social services and enabled the establishment of the now defunct Heritage Fund. Overall it greatly strengthened our material ability to meet people's needs. And it was this willingness of an NDP government to take a strong role in the economy that ensured that revenues did not flow out of the province. This is what public policy is all about -- using resources well to meet people's needs.

In 1982, Mr. Speaker, enter the agenda of the Conservative government, when we started down the road of using public resources to meet private greed. In the interests of history and for the record, let me refresh our memories with a few examples which led up to the Crown management financial fiasco recently revealed in an April 7 update released by the Premier on the audited financial statements for Crown Management Board operations still under review.

In order to embark on this discussion, I wish to clarify something that the members opposite fail to understand. Are you listening over there? In order for an expenditure to be considered an investment, it has to be able to provide returns to self-liquidate the debt.

I would compare this kind of debt to a house mortgage or an investment in your education that would provide higher returns in the future on your initial investment. Failure to understand this very basic principle is what's gotten us into this mess.

As part of its 1992-93 budget preparation the government ordered a thorough review of Crown Management Board's major assets, those one million and higher. This review was conducted by the national accounting firm of Ernst & Young and was completed early in April.

Mr. Speaker, the book value of our assets has been completely eroded. At the end of the Blakeney administration our assets stood at 9,296 million and our liabilities at 6,688 million. Our equity stood at 2,607 million.

At the end of the Conservative administration, our assets stood at 14,060 million, and our liabilities at 19,085 million, with a resulting net debt or a minus on the balance sheet of 5,024 million.

In other words, that means if we had sold off all of our assets in 1982, we would have realized a net benefit of 2,607 million. If we sold off all of our assets today, after nine years of Tory mismanagement, we would be in the hole to the tune of 5,024 million. And what a black hole it

is, Mr. Speaker.

And we ask ourselves why. Why did this happen? Well there's two primary reasons. First, significant losses occurred in the privatization initiatives such as the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and Cameco Corporation. And second, the accumulated operating losses from investments such as -- you'll recognize some of these names -- NewGrade Energy Inc., which the hon. member from Thunder Creek was bragging about recently; and Crown corporations such as Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation; Sask Forest Products; STC; Saskatchewan Diversification Corporation, that invisible corporation; and the Agricultural Development Corporation. I am sure that all of us will recognize these losers as the flagships of the Tory government. If this isn't enough, in addition, significant dividends paid by Crown Management Board in the last two years have stripped the corporation of its retained earnings, leaving no cushion for Crown Management Board to absorb the impact of losses in the future and no ability to pay dividends.

So you can see, Mr. Speaker, with the very diligent help of the Tories, the ability for the Crowns to provide significant financial resources has been almost totally disabled, for sure in the short run. The net result is the taxpayer having to pick up the load that was previously shared by the Crowns. Prior to 1982 the Crowns provided 20 per cent of revenue into the provincial treasury. And I ask you to remember, Mr. Speaker, who brought Saskatchewan this fiasco. It was the Tory government of the member from Estevan aided by Brian Mulroney and the members opposite.

An interesting sidelight of this whole endeavour was the misuse of money within the Crowns themselves. Some of you may be familiar with the name Oliver Letwin of Britain's Rothschild merchant bank. Mr. Oliver Letwin was hired from Britain at a cost of 64,000 for two months worth of consulting to provide us with the same advice he gave to Maggie Thatcher's government. As documented in follow-up studies, one of the results of the massive privatizations in Britain was the immediate jump in top executive salaries in the privatized firms. But we don't need to go to Britain for these examples.

Who can forget Chuck, right here in Saskatchewan? With the privatization of the Potash Corporation, we saw the appointment of Chuck Childers as the president and chief executive officer at a salary of 700,000 per year including benefits and perks. Of note is that the corporation further guaranteed that Childers' after-tax position, based on his income earned, would be no different than had he continued to reside in the United States and earn an equivalent amount of income in that country. So not only was Mr. Childers guaranteed his salary, wildly in excess of anything the average Saskatchewan resident could ever hope to make, but he was guaranteed all the benefits of living in Canada with an American tax guarantee. This is what the Tories meant by the benefits of privatization and this is who benefitted. Again we have to ask, how did this happen?

The recently tabled *Report of the Provincial Auditor* for the year ended March 31, 1991, on Page 8 states the

following:

.13 (for easy reference) Chapter 35 relates to the Saskatchewan Transportation Company. Only now are we able to report to the Assembly on activities that took place two to three years in the past. Public accountability is not well served (these are the words of the Auditor).

.14 Chapter 34 of Saskatchewan Telecommunications is another example. In February, 1992, we determined we could not rely on the appointed auditor's report on the financial statements of SaskTel for the year ending 1990. There was insufficient evidence for us to form an opinion on the recorded value of a significant investment.

Again the Auditor reinforces the public accountability and decision making is impaired. In fact, Mr. Speaker, due to the number of ventures that were hidden by the Tories and the Crowns, a full 50 per cent of the province's finances were not available for public scrutiny. Our government will change these procedures in keeping with our commitment to open, honest and accountable government.

Despite the Tory devastation of the Crowns and the immediate problems it presents us with, we still have the base within the Crowns to again provide strong input into the Saskatchewan economy. Crowns such as SaskTel, Sask Power, SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance), SaskEnergy, and our remaining 9 per cent share in the Potash Corporation have the ability to create new activity and contribute significantly to the economic development in the province.

Unfortunately with the Potash Corporation, Saskatchewan residents will only now receive 9 per cent of those benefits instead of 100 per cent of those benefits as Blakeney intended. He understood the cyclical nature of our resource economy and that over time the potash industry would continue to provide economic benefit to the province. The Tories, economists that they are, did not understand this cyclical nature of the industry and used a brief period of downturn as an excuse to privatize, thereby denying the taxpayers of Saskatchewan future benefit to potash revenues.

Within all the Crowns, the employees are excited about the future potential for economic growth as they move into international and local markets. They are people who are committed to Saskatchewan, who plan to stay in Saskatchewan, and will use all of their creative and productive energy to return the Crowns to full financial health.

There are alternatives. Saskatchewan residents who are interested in tax reform will need to direct considerable attention to Ottawa which plays the primary role in taxation and has the best capacity to act on the larger issues of corporate taxation and fairness of the personal income tax structure, as well as to deal with the continuing tax holidays and tax loopholes for the very wealthy.

We need to be willing to deal not only with issues of excessive taxation impacting on all of us but also the issue of excessive profits. Ottawa's increasing unwillingness to deal with these taxation issues has led to the increased off-loading of federal responsibility for cost sharing, health, education, and social expenditures.

People in Regina Lake Centre are demanding justice for the Tory destruction of our assets and financial well-being. It's with very deep resentment that they recognize that never in the history of Saskatchewan have so many had to pay so much for the benefit of so few. People are angry at the members opposite, and they have a right to be angry and to demand that the Tory government that joined forces with Brian Mulroney to attack farmers, small-business people, unions, and all of the citizens in Saskatchewan in implementing a Tory agenda that has benefitted primarily transnational corporations and the very wealthy . . .

In closing I'd like to return, Mr. Speaker, to the theme of the throne-speech, a mandate for change. At the end of a decade of suffering I was pleased to see many important new directions for Saskatchewan in the '90s.

For me some of the highlights of the throne speech included: job creation; improved protection of our environment; innovation and research in energy and co-generation; increased attention to poverty and child hunger, and a much needed review of our health system to change to a wellness model; attention to an integrated system of lifelong learning and distance education to reduce isolation and inequalities in access to education; enhanced human rights legislation; significant initiatives involving aboriginal people in the province, and particularly in the North; as well as important and long-overdue changes to legislation to protect and enhance the quality of life for working people in the province.

I've not mentioned everything, to prevent repeating the throne speech in its entirety, but I wish to conclude on the topic of accountable government, co-operation, and community.

After six months I'm getting to know all the MLAs in the government caucus quite well, and I assure you that we're all dedicated to serving Saskatchewan in the best way we can. What has become increasingly clear is the need to restore balance to our thinking. Our many interests need to be united and we need to start working together in a real sense to give concrete reality to our words and our intentions. This will not be easy.

We need to look honestly at each other's needs and recognize that we have areas of great desperation in this province, including the majority of the people who live in the North and those living in rural and urban Saskatchewan at and below the poverty line. We need to ask those who can afford it to pay their way and we need to find ways for everyone, whether they're employed or unemployed, to participate in the rebuilding of Saskatchewan.

(2145)

I think the worst fate that can fall to anyone is to be left on the sidelines. And as the province turns the corner to compassion and caring, it will be essential to work in a united way to re-establish priorities in Saskatchewan. The damage of the decade of suffering went very deep and we'll need to demonstrate patience with each other as we start to put the pieces back together. We will have debates, and perhaps they will be heated debates. But these are necessary because for 10 years this province was not able to talk openly. And there's a lot of discussion that still needs to take place. The Minister of Social Services has removed the gag clause from non-government social agencies, and the gag clause has been removed from the province, the unwritten gag clause that everyone experienced.

Let's use this opportunity to get together, talk with each other, with our MLAs and with our government, and let's get this show on the road. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into this throne speech debate, the second throne speech presented by this new government and the new Premier. But essentially, Mr. Speaker, as you and other members and the people of Saskatchewan know, this essentially is the first throne speech to be presented by this government -- the speech that sets out the agenda that this government will follow for the next four years in restoring this province, rebuilding this province to the province we once knew, Mr. Speaker. That's the intention of this government, and that will be the goal for the next four years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: -- Mr. Speaker, I remind you as I would remind my own constituents in Moose Jaw Wakamow, as I remind all members and indeed all the citizens of our province, three times in our history as a province Saskatchewan people have turned to New Democrats and CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) to govern this province. Three times the people of Saskatchewan have turned to this movement to bring this province out of a desperate mess. In 1944 the people of Saskatchewan turned to Tommy Douglas; in 1971 the people of this province turned to Allan Blakeney; in 1991 the people of this province turned to the current member from Riversdale, the current Premier. Three times . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: -- Three times the people of Saskatchewan have turned to CCF or NDP governments to bring this province out of a mess and, Mr. Speaker, twice we have done it and we'll do it again. We'll do it again.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: -- Mr. Speaker, I was proud to be an elected member of this government and to be sitting on this side of the House as Her Honour read the Speech from the Throne. I would issue and offer my congratulations to Her Honour in her reading of this speech. I would offer my own personal congratulations to the mover and the

seconded of the speech for their contribution to the debate.

Mr. Speaker, I was proud to be on this side of the House and part of a government that is willing to undertake the task which lies before us, not just as government, but which lies before us as the people of this province.

In the throne speech, Mr. Speaker, the Lieutenant Governor outlined this direction for our government. It begins with a mandate for change, Mr. Speaker. If ever this province required change, it is today. Mr. Speaker, look at the situation. Mr. Speaker, look at the situation these people, this former government put the province in.

Mr. Speaker, I remind you and I remind the people of my own constituency, in 1982 when these people first came to power, if at that time you picked up a copy of the financial statement of the province, of the budget of the province at that time, Mr. Speaker, you would not find in that financial statement any line which indicated interest on the public debt. You wouldn't find it, Mr. Speaker. What you would find was a budgetary surplus of \$139 million cash -- money in the bank.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: -- Now, Mr. Speaker, after a decade of the mismanagement of the party opposite, if you pick up last year's budget -- the budget we recall the premier and his minister of Finance introduced but didn't have the courage to pass -- if you pick up that budget, you will find in that document an interest payment in excess of \$500 million.

And, Mr. Speaker, given the massive deficit they ran up in the last fiscal year, it's my prediction that the interest payment in the current budget will be well over \$600 million and perhaps approaching \$700 million.

Mr. Speaker, figure that out in terms of the people of our province. If we have about a million people in our province, that means that for every person in our province in the coming fiscal year, each person in our province -- each man, woman, and child in our province -- will be responsible to pay \$700 just on interest payments.

An Hon. Member: -- Two bucks a day each.

Mr. Calvert: -- Two dollars a day each per person in the province of Saskatchewan. What for? To feather the nest of Chase Manhattan Bank and the bond dealers and bankers in New York City.

Now that's if, that's if, Mr. Speaker, every person in the province is paying taxes. But, Mr. Speaker, as you know and as members know, the numbers of taxpayers in our province is something in the neighbourhood of 380,000 to 400,000 -- a third.

So that means that each taxpayer is required to produce \$2,100 a year just for interest on the debt these people ran up in 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, that's the record that this government has left behind. And, Mr. Speaker, if the new government of

today does not begin to deal with this fiscal crisis left behind, there is no future for our province or for our children. Mr. Speaker, if we don't begin to deal with this crisis today there is no future for our province. Mr. Speaker, that's why this throne speech delivered by Her Honour indicates as first priority of our government that we will put this financial house in order.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: -- Mr. Speaker, in this Speech from the Throne we have committed this government, as we did in the campaign and now as we have done in this Speech from the Throne, to that which the people of Saskatchewan are desirous of, and that is an open, honest, and accountable government -- an open, honest, and accountable government.

Mr. Speaker, how well I remember earlier last year, in the spring of last year, when a large number of Saskatchewan residents gathered on the steps of this legislature to protest the actions of their government. And the member from Morse says he can't forget it either. Well little wonder because he and his colleagues that night -- and I will long remember this -- that night locked the doors of this building, locked the doors of this building and would not let the people of Saskatchewan in this building; locked the doors of these galleries, would not let the people of Saskatchewan into the people's own legislature. And I say shame on that government, and little wonder they were defeated.

I contrast that, Mr. Speaker, I contrast that with the day of the throne speech when a number of Saskatchewan people came to their legislature to protest. Mr. Speaker, were they locked out of this building? Mr. Speaker, were they locked out of this Chamber? Mr. Speaker, you have today, and the people of Saskatchewan have today, an open government willing . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: -- Mr. Speaker, an open government willing to meet the people of this province and more than ready to talk to them at any time and at any place, Mr. Speaker. We're talking about an accountable government.

Mr. Speaker, in this past week, as you well know, we received in this House the copy of the Provincial Auditor's report. Mr. Speaker, you'll remember a time when the auditor's report was a thin document. You'll remember those days in the 1970s, in the 1960s, in the 1950s, when the Provincial Auditor's report was a thin document.

Now what do we have delivered . . . Does anyone have a copy? Mr. Speaker, what do we have delivered to us in the House this week? An encyclopedia. Look at the width of this thing, reviewing the last year of their management of the province. Page after page, chapter after chapter, of scandal, waste, and mismanagement -- an encyclopedia, Mr. Speaker. Now again I ask you to contrast the difference. I recall in this House, sitting on that bench across -- now occupied, I think, by the member from Wilkie -- I recall . . . I recall when the Provincial Auditor made his report to this House and the

government of the day, did they receive that report and commit to the people of this province they would act on it? Now what did they do? They attacked the Provincial Auditor, that's what they did. If we don't like the message, kill the messenger. Contrast that, Mr. Speaker, with the actions of this government.

I point to this very day's copy of the *Leader-Post*, the front page. This document, this auditor's report, exposes the scandal and the corruption that was conducted in the Crown corporation, the Saskatchewan Transportation Company, under the stewardship of that government, the former government.

Mr. Speaker, our government, our minister responsible, has said we will inquire on what the auditor has presented to the people of Saskatchewan and we will find out who is responsible for this corruption and it will never happen again.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: -- And, Mr. Speaker, to be confident and sure that the Provincial Auditor will always have opportunity to do his work independent of political interference, independent of the interference of the politics of the day, no matter who sits in government benches, we will be strengthening in this session The Provincial Auditor Act. And we will be strengthening The Financial Administration Act of this province. And because the people of Saskatchewan rightly, Mr. Speaker, rightly demand it, this government is prepared in this session to renew The Members of the Legislative Assembly Conflict of Interest Act, Mr. Speaker, and we are proposing a select special committee of democratic reform.

Mr. Speaker, if we have one goal, one goal that perhaps overrides all goals in this legislature, it is to restore public trust in members of the legislature, in the legislature itself and in our political process because, Mr. Speaker, if there's anything surely that we all must treasure, it is the precious democratic freedom that allows us to stand and speak in this House.

And if we do not defend the tradition of democracy, if we do not defend the offices which we are honoured to hold, if we, sir, do not restore trust and confidence in our democratic system, then we've lost everything. Then we've lost everything.

Mr. Speaker, seeing that it's now near 10 o'clock, I would beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 10 p.m.