

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: -- Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly, the members of the Saskatchewan real estate board who are here in the Assembly today to meet with members and to observe the House. I want to welcome them here today. I know that I look forward to meeting with them later this evening at a reception, I believe, down at the Saskatchewan inn. I think that's correct. And so I'm sure all members will want to join with me in welcoming them here.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: -- Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the Government House Leader in extending a warm welcome to the folks in the gallery today. They play a very important and integral part in our economy of Saskatchewan and I think all members are looking forward to the dialogue that will take place later today. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Crofford: -- Mr. Speaker, I'm happy today to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly, a group of students from Athabasca School in Regina. Every day as I step out the back door of my apartment I can see Athabasca School, and one of the young women in the gallery lives in the apartment below me on Regina Avenue. So we'll see you later after the question period for drinks and discussion about the legislature, and thank you very much for coming.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cline: -- Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me to introduce to you, and through you to all members of the Assembly, a group of 22 grade 4 and 5 students from Mayfair School in my riding in Saskatoon seated in the west gallery. They are accompanied by their teachers, Barb Wright and Val Garbe, and also chaperons, Kathy Schell, Donald Gallo; and bus driver, Allan Mattrello.

They've had a tour of some of the historic sites here in Regina, and now they're touring this building and I'll be meeting with them. I know all members would like to join with me in extending a warm welcome to the students from Mayfair School.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kluz: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you, and through you to all members of this Assembly, 19 students from Wishart School. They're seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. The teacher is Mrs. Virginia Latoski. They are accompanied by Gloria Stefanson and Jodie Bachinski. The bus driver is Ed Weldon.

It is a school that is very dear to my heart, Mr. Speaker. It is the very school I graduated from in 1974. And there are a couple of students as well that are quite close to me. They are my niece, Sarah, and my son, Tyler. I'd like all members of the Assembly to greet them here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Consultations on Health Care Changes

Mr. Neudorf: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Health. Madam Minister, you and your NDP (New Democratic Party) colleagues have been saying that you consulted with everyone on this budget of betrayal that the Finance minister let loose on the people of Saskatchewan.

It's interesting to note that not one interest group is able to confirm this. And I doubt you talked to anyone about your plan for health care, simply because you didn't have a plan.

Yesterday, Madam Minister, you confirmed that you had no idea what you were going to do for or to the dental plan. The chiropractors and optometrists say that you didn't have the time of day for them. Now we see that you have cut 139 nursing and support positions, and have closed 87 acute care beds in Regina hospitals.

Madam Minister, can you tell us who you consulted with on this latest betrayal? Did you talk to nurses, Madam Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- Mr. Speaker, the decision with respect to staff lay-offs and bed closures in Regina was made by the Regina Health Board, Mr. Speaker. I understand that there has been ongoing consultation with people in the health care field, with the hospital sector, and with workers. And there has been considerable consultation in this regard.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: -- A new question, Mr. Speaker, to the same minister. Madam Minister, you and your NDP colleagues are very fond of blaming everybody but yourselves for the attack on medicare. You blame the Tories; you blame the feds; you blame the farmers; you blame the media. Your Finance minister blames the women in Saskatchewan Pension Plan for contributing to the deficit.

Very simply, Madam Minister, now you just said that you're trying to blame this super-board that you have created, that it's the board's fault. Very simply put, Madam Minister, are you telling the public that you set up this new super-board simply to do your dirty work?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- Excuse me, Mr. Speaker. I think that

the Regina Health Board was established for the purposes of developing health care reform in the city of Regina. They have a very broad mandate -- to remove duplication, to co-ordinate and integrate services, and to provide a continuum, a real continuum of health care services in the city.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, this sort of reform should have occurred years ago -- years ago. And many of these staff lay-offs today would not be necessary if the government opposite had had the courage, the insight, and the creativity to come forward in the last 10 years with a long-term strategic plan for health care. Instead, they chose to virtually bankrupt this province, Mr. Speaker. That was their choice.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: -- New question to the same minister, Mr. Speaker. She says it should have been done years ago, and I'm going to come back to that in a few questions time, Madam Minister. But consultation, I want to get to that issue once more.

Madam Minister, you knew full well that you talked to nurses. Yes you did talk to nurses. However, it was after you had announced the decrease in hospital spending. In fact we just see that last week you told the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association that bedside nurses would be the last to go. That's what you said, Madam Minister.

Now, Madam Minister, one would think that after you broke every promise in opposition and during the election, that you would have stopped misleading the public after you were elected. But evidently, Madam Minister, that is not so. A very simple question: are you saying that you had no idea what the impacts of your cuts were going to be when you talked to the nurses last week?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- Mr. Speaker, there were some 27.9 out-of-scope positions which were reduced and a number of middle management positions earlier in the week, Mr. Speaker. These people were not bedside nurses, or earlier in the last couple weeks. The fact of the matter is, is we knew that the impact of the budget cuts were going to be very hard on workers and the people in the province of Saskatchewan. We were hoping that we could, through this health care reform, reduce the impact on workers and bedside nurses and I believe that we have, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- Because of initiatives that we have taken to address reform in health care in Regina and Saskatoon, we are moving, we are moving. The member opposite laughs at this. The fact of the matter is, is health care professionals across this province know that these measures are the right direction. The fact of the matter is the budget cuts are as a result of the financial mismanagement of the government opposite, and it is not going to stop us from moving on with needed health care reform.

Unfortunately, we do have to cut back on budget, but we will also proceed with our reform.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: -- A new question to the same minister, Mr. Speaker. Surely, Madam Minister, you would have had some idea of the impact of cutting the funding was going to have. Madam Minister, when the former administration gave hospitals a small increase in funding last year, you predicted that there would be massive bed closures, nursing cuts, and a long waiting-list. People were going to die.

That was your opinion last year, Madam Minister. You had no problem with analysis then. Now, believe it or not, you are the minister. Please assure the public that you knew what you were doing when you cut hospital funding by 2.3 per cent. That's not a difficult question, Madam Minister. Will you table the analysis that you did on the impact of decreasing hospital funding, that this would have on nursing positions, bed closures, and waiting-lists. Would you table that, please.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- Mr. Speaker, the members opposite knew what they were doing when they blew some \$160 million in privatizing Cameco. They knew what they were doing when they blew another 422 million in privatization of potash shares. They knew what they were doing.

What they did is they virtually bankrupted this province with their measures of incompetence and financial mismanagement so that now in the province of Saskatchewan we have to look at health care cuts because of your incompetence and because of your privatization. We are trying to save the medicare system and our fundamental programs for the people of the province of Saskatchewan in face of the hugest per capita debt in this country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Another new question to the same minister. And I want the public to note as her voice rises in agitation as she refuses to accept the responsibility of being a minister in this government. Blame, blame, blame.

Madam Minister, you have laid off nurses, you have laid off health care professionals, something that you promised and your government and your Premier promised that you would never do -- you would never do that. And anything that you say is not going to make that go away. And I suggest that many of these nurses and health care workers campaigned for you and your colleagues, that they campaigned and knocked on doors for the Premier in Saskatoon in the mistaken belief that they could trust him.

Madam Minister, you made a pledge to help health care workers last year. You said, and I quote, a very brief quote: I want to say to the doctors and the nurses out there that the NDP are very concerned about these proposals and these cuts, and that we have been criticizing them and that we will continue to criticize these wrong choices

in the legislature and outside the legislature. End quote.

Madam Minister, were you wrong then, or are you wrong now?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- Mr. Speaker, we were right then. We criticized their wrong choices, Mr. Speaker. We criticized their wrong-headed priorities, their Tory-driven, selfish, get re-elected priorities. That's what we were criticizing, Mr. Speaker.

They had absolutely no long-term strategic plan, and obviously today do not understand yet today, Mr. Speaker, what can be achieved in the institutional sector by moving toward community-based services. They're still light years behind the rest of the country, Mr. Speaker, and that's the problem.

Mr. Speaker, what I want to say is that the government opposite have made decisions that virtually bankrupted this province, virtually bankrupted this province. That is now making it necessary for our government to make some very, very tough decisions in order to preserve our social programs.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: -- I must commend the minister, Mr. Speaker, on the false bravado that she is showing. But I want to agree with one thing that you've been saying, Madam Minister. Making health care funding more efficient is a reasonable thing to do if you know what you're doing, Madam Minister. It is painfully evident to everyone that you have no idea.

Madam Minister, my office has been flooded with calls from Saskatoon and Saskatoon area. All are very concerned about what will happen in their community. And the Premier makes fun of it. The Premier makes fun of it. They recognize, my constituents and the folks in Saskatoon recognize, that they can no longer believe anything you say, Madam Minister, and they fear for their health care.

Can you tell us what effect your cuts in hospital funding will have on the Saskatoon hospital beds and nursing positions? Can you give us your analysis of what's going to happen in Saskatoon?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- What will happen in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, is what the Saskatoon Health Board will decide to do with their funding.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- They have been asked to consult with health care professionals and workers and other organizations as they implement a very difficult budget, there is no question. But the Saskatoon Health Board will make the decision as to where they are going to cut, what programs they may reduce, what sort of duplication they may eliminate. And I hope, Mr. Speaker, that they will be

looking at duplication of programs before dealing with bedside nurses. But it is their decision, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: -- New question to the same minister. Mr. Speaker, this is absolutely unbelievable -- no acceptance of responsibility whatsoever in this minister, in this government, in this Premier, in this Minister of Finance.

Madam Minister, Saskatoon has three hospitals and a similar population base as does Regina. And as with Regina, many patients come from rural Saskatchewan, and they want to know as well. Could we then correctly assume, since you refuse to answer another question, could we correctly assume that there will be similar cuts in Saskatoon, cuts, Madam Minister, that the NDP said would never happen under their administration?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- Mr. Speaker, let's talk about acceptance of responsibility. Let's talk about the need for even one member over there to recognize that they drove up the provincial debt in this province to numbers that were astronomical and unprecedented in the history of this country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- Let's talk about the need for those members opposite to accept some responsibility for the fiscal situation and the financial debt that this province creates because they have very correctly been labelled the wrecking crew, Mr. Speaker.

We have taken some very tough measures. We have instituted reforms in the health care system that will move institutional care toward more community-based services, and it's supported by health care professionals. We have established a utilization and health research commission which will be looking at hospital procedures and institutional utilization, and will be bringing some of the facts forward to the public in Saskatchewan so that we can make our hospital system more efficient. We have . . .

The Speaker: -- Next question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: -- Before I allow the next question, I would remind the members who are asking the question, the minister is answering it. We're getting very lengthy on both sides. Let's cut down the length of the . . . Order. Let's cut down on the length of the questions and the length of the answers.

Mr. Neudorf: -- Mr. Speaker, I make my one commitment. I'm going to allow this minister to come at ease; this is my last question to her. Madam Minister, you talk a lot about how the deficit is out of control and how health expenditures need to be brought under control. That's very interesting, Madam Minister.

I want you to listen to this, and I want the public to listen to this next little quote that I have. Madam Minister, last

year, just last year you said, and I quote: The PCs (Progressive Conservative) spread the myth out there that health costs are out of control. They are playing politics, because health care costs are not out of control. They are not out of control, but the PCs are playing politics with medicare because they have no commitment to medicare.

Last year, Madam Minister, you said.

Madam Minister, can you confirm your statement that health care costs are not out of control? And if they are not, can you tell the public why you are taking such dramatic, drastic measures?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- Mr. Speaker, it's the debt that's out of control in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- When you don't have any money you can't spend it. Haven't you learned that fundamental issue -- that fundamental fact of life?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- The debt is out of control, Mr. Speaker, and it's out of control because of their incompetence, their mismanagement, and their absolutely destruction, their absolute, total destruction of the economy of this province, or the fiscal situation of the government. And they still refuse to accept responsibility.

And, Mr. Speaker, just the other day there was a young man I met riding on a bicycle, about 16 years old, who said to me, are you Louise Simard? And I said yes. And he said, you know you spoke to the LeBoldus School during the election and at that time you said you wanted to get the deficit under control. And I didn't believe you because I didn't think a New Democratic government would do that. But I take that back, Ms. Simard. I believe you and I support the NDP for the measures they're taking to protect my future. That's what he said.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Extension of SaskTel Cellular Network

Ms. Haverstock: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct my question to the minister responsible for SaskTel. We've been talking about decisions and choices here today. I'd like to talk about some 1992 decisions and choices.

Madam Minister, can you confirm that SaskTel plans to build a cellular network in the Kindersley-Kerrobert area at an estimated cost of \$5 million?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: -- Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite knows, the telecommunications industry is highly competitive and plans for extension into new areas ahead of public announcements are never made known.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: -- Mr. Speaker, in a February 6 report in the *Leader-Post* it was reported that SaskTel intends to build eight cells in the western area of the province by mid-1992. When your government is asking the people of this province to pay more in taxes, more in prescriptions, more in heating, more in insurance, more for electricity, how can you justify a cost of \$5 million, which by the way is for an estimated 650 customers, with no expected profit for 50 years?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: -- Mr. Speaker, I am astonished that the member opposite would stand up in this House one day and talk about economic development and encourage that, and the next day, criticize the expansion of our telecommunications company.

I would like to add that the reason at this time for the expansion of the mobile network, the cellular network, it is one of the only areas of potential profits for the company which will subsidize the domestic rates because the Conservative government in Ottawa is determined to deregulate long distance.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: -- Next question.

Ms. Haverstock: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In February -- apparently you've just confirmed this -- in February you announced that you had to increase the charges for basic telephone services and I quote: to make sure the company has the money to expand its profitable cellular services. Which you've just said today. Talk about voodoo economics. How can you call no rate of return for 50 years profitable?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: -- Mr. Speaker, I have no idea where the voodoo economics from the other side of the House originate, but the cellular and mobile portion of the telecommunications industry is highly profitable. And where the numbers come from in 50 years, I have no idea, because that is not correct.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If you'd like some *Estimates*, I can give them to you. Reliable sources indicate that with a population of 65,000 people in an area . . .

The Speaker: -- Order. Order. I ask the members on the government side to please let her ask her question.

Ms. Haverstock: -- With a population of 65,000 people in this area would be a typical cellular phone user population of about 1 per cent, which equals 650 people. The average bill per month, Madam Minister, is \$52.70 or \$632 per year. Twenty-five per cent of that bill or \$133 per year is profit. You multiply that by 650 users and that's going to end up with approximately \$86,000 to direct at paying off this \$5 million investment. That amounts to about 50 years to pay back the taxpayers' investment before a profit is achieved and that's if you don't borrow the \$5 million. So don't talk to me about . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order. Does the member have a question? If you have, please ask it.

Ms. Haverstock: -- How do you justify a decision to cut the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, eliminate the Department of Science and Technology, cut 139 positions at Regina hospitals, then turn around and spend \$5 million on a project that will see no return on the taxpayers' investment for 50 years?

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: -- Mr. Speaker, in a highly competitive environment, which the cellular telephone business is, we do not, as our competitors do not, discuss our returns and our market share in public. But I can assure the member opposite that her information is highly inaccurate because it is a very profitable business. The expansion of it will help to keep down the domestic telephone rates. I can't believe that the member opposite would have us reduce our economic development in this area and shut down the cellular system.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I therefore ask the Madam Minister if she would table this information for us to know just how profitable this will be in future.

Hon. Mrs. Teichrob: -- Mr. Speaker, last year's financial statement and annual report for SaskTel's operations was tabled in this House several days ago.

In terms of tabling other specific information, as I've said, in a competitive environment we're not able to do that. But if the member opposite is interested in the value and the growth of the mobile and cellular business, she might ask some of the business people in Saskatchewan, including the ones in our gallery, what they think.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Changes to GRIP

Mr. Martens: -- Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Minister of Agriculture. In light of the fact that farmers are finding out late about the changes you made to GRIP (gross revenue insurance program) and agents are having to re-establish contact with farmers to sell them the variable price option, and in light of the fact that you only gave notice after March 15, will the minister extend the deadline past May 16 for farmers to sign up for the GRIP?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wiens: -- Mr. Speaker, farmers were originally all visited, virtually all visited before April 30, the original deadline. We extended the deadline in order to facilitate the reconsideration of the question the member opposite raises. It's my understanding that the agents have made those contacts, and farmers are ready to make those choices. And there is no value in extending the deadline further. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Teen Pregnancies

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on an issue of importance to the people of Saskatchewan. And I may go on a little longer than one would anticipate, and I just hope you'll bear with me because of the importance of the matter.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to report to the Assembly on the action my government is taking to address a serious problem facing Saskatchewan -- unintended pregnancies, particularly among teenagers.

Statistics show that although the teen pregnancy rate for our province has declined, the magnitude of the problem continues to be alarming. In 1990 there were more than 1,600 babies born to young women under the age of 20 in this province. Mr. Speaker, this is the second-highest teen live birth rate among the provinces.

Further alarming statistics show the extent of the problem. In 1990 young women and girls between the ages of 10 and 19 received 26 per cent or 328 of the 1,261 abortions performed in the Saskatchewan hospitals that year. Although the pregnancy rate for girls under the age of 15 shows signs of decreasing nationally, in 1989 it increased in our province. In addition, a disproportionate number of the births to girls under the age of 15 in Canada occur in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this is unacceptable and of deep concern to my government. Unintended pregnancies have serious health, social, and economic consequences for the individuals involved, their families, and society as a whole. In addition to the health risks and social consequences, pregnancy and early parenting in adolescence frequently interrupts education and eliminates many of life's options for young parents and their children.

A 1980 study found that the average sexually active young person in Saskatchewan has their first sexual experience at age 15. And more recent Canadian studies suggest that close to half of Saskatchewan teens over the age of 15 are sexually active. Many of these young people are sexually active without having had any information or education to help them understand the consequences of an unintended pregnancy or a sexually transmitted disease and the dramatic impact these may have on the rest of their lives.

Other jurisdictions have found that comprehensive family planning and sexuality education programs are key factors in reducing unintended pregnancies and abortion rates, especially among teenagers.

For example, these kinds of programs contributed to a 23 per cent reduction in pregnancy rates and a 38 per cent reduction in the birth rate among Ontario adolescents over a 10-year period and have contributed to a reduction in the abortion rate among adolescents in that province. Compared to other provinces, Saskatchewan lacks programs and resources which directly address sexual health and family planning issues. Access to services is restricted in general in our province and is even more

difficult for adolescents, members of minority groups, and people living in rural or isolated communities.

Mr. Speaker, this government will work with the members of our community to take decisive action to address the problems of unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases and the social, economic and personal hardships these problems bring.

The budget, which my colleague, the Minister of Finance, introduced last week contains funding for the development and initiation of family planning programs to contribute to better reproductive health and to reduce unplanned pregnancies. As the first step in that process, my department is setting up a committee to provide direction to my government on the development of family planning programs for the province of Saskatchewan.

This committee will be made up of individuals with knowledge, expertise and interest in family planning issues. It will include teenagers, aboriginal women and immigrant women. We will also be seeking input from representatives of churches, teachers, school trustees, parents, community organizations and health professionals.

The committee will recommend ways in which we may best implement family planning services in Saskatchewan. It will also examine the broader economic and social issues which contribute to unintended pregnancies and bring its recommendations back to me.

My department's northern health services branch will also, in consultation with northern people, work on the development of family planning strategy which will best meet the needs of northern residents.

Mr. Speaker, this is just part of what's needed to deal with this problem. It's just the first step. This initiative shows how different parts of our society can and should come together to deal with a problem which affects us all and work together toward a common goal of reducing the number of unintended pregnancies. By reducing unintended pregnancies we also expect to bring about a reduction in the number of abortions obtained by Saskatchewan residents, a goal which all people in Saskatchewan share.

Mr. Speaker, we have also examined the question of de-insuring abortions. A number of legal experts from both within our Department of Justice and from outside the government have concluded that it would be illegal and unconstitutional for the Government of Saskatchewan to discontinue medicare funding for abortions in the province. Mr. Speaker, de-insuring abortions would contravene the Canada Health Act, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code and would be unconstitutional.

My caucus and cabinet colleagues and I have discussed this issue from a philosophical and a legal point of view thoroughly and at great length. We have decided that it is not legally possible for our government to de-insure abortions. It is also our intent to provide access to needed abortions in hospitals in Saskatchewan. We will therefore

provide balanced counselling to women who find themselves in this very difficult situation.

If, in consultation with her doctor, a woman chooses to have an abortion, we will provide access in a hospital and we will fund the abortion. We remain strongly opposed, however, to the establishment of free-standing abortion clinics in our province.

The issue of access to abortion is a symptom of the real problem -- unintended pregnancies. We have chosen, Mr. Speaker, to deal directly with the problem and not merely address the symptom. Our goal is to reduce the number of unintended pregnancies and to work toward reducing the number of abortions obtained by residents in Saskatchewan. The development of a strategy to develop accessible, responsible, and comprehensive family planning programs is the first step in achieving this goal. Thank you.

Ms. Haverstock: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would very much like to commend the minister for bringing forward this proposal by her government -- these undertakings. One of the things that I have been able to do in my past in direct result of the research I did for my doctoral dissertation was to look at this very issue, and I applaud all of the efforts that you've made.

The research has shown that increased knowledge about sexuality equals a more positive attitude, equals a delay in becoming sexually active, and when one does, they contracept. What this does, of course, is lead to a much healthier view of life overall of children being brought into our world and greater care of them.

I think that one of the things I'd like to point out to people here, and in fact even the words that were used and an example used -- that abortion is but a symptom of the problem -- is what I raised during the debate with the now Premier and the previous premier. It's something that we very much wanted to do as a party, was to put aside the differences between those who are pro-choice and pro-life and look at the one thing that we have all in common. And what it is that we all have in common is that we would prefer that there would be no need for abortion.

I applaud each and every one of these undertakings. I feel that everyone in this Assembly should be very grateful that this approach is being taken.

Mr. Neudorf: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to respond to the minister's statement. Unfortunately I will not be able to be quite as gracious as the previous speaker in commending the minister for this particular initiative.

Firstly, on the procedure, which was highly unorthodox, I might add, in terms of the length of the ministerial statement that is charting direction, but I will go along with that particular part, Mr. Speaker.

In reaction to some of the issues that she has said, I will be gracious, first of all, in also recognizing that there are many unwanted teen pregnancies, and I think that is a blight on our society. It is something that has been with

society, I suppose, for evermore and will continue to be there. It is a symptom of society.

But, Madam Minister, unwanted pregnancies are not only a symptom of society. We are talking about life, and we are talking about babies. We are talking about the real thing. And I would not want to simply categorize that -- a very, very important issue in our society -- as a symptom only. I recognize that teen-age pregnancies must be addressed in a very compassionate way.

And as minister of Social Services, I was very pleased to have been able to do something about the situation that many of these young, 13, 14, 15-year-old girls find themselves in. Yes, they become pregnant; yes, they become mothers; and yes, they are not fit at that stage to adapt to society. They must be given support. They must be given counselling.

And that is exactly what we were doing, for example, in Saskatoon in Walter Murray, Mount Royal; in Regina here as well, Mr. Speaker, with the day-care centres that were established to assist these young mothers so that they would be able to attend school, so that they would be able to complete their education, and indeed have at least a chance to become productive members in our society. And it's very significant and it's very important, Madam Minister. And from that aspect I commend you on your initiative and I do wish you Godspeed in being able to solve many of their problems.

However, Madam Minister, I want to take issue with some of the things that you're bringing up. For example, the committee that you are going to be establishing, we will be looking very closely at that. We will be looking at its composition, its actual composition when it is set up. And we will be looking at its cost, because we are concerned about the taxpayers having to pay for yet another committee that you're establishing. We are looking forward to results and we will, Madam Minister, hold you accountable for that.

I'm wondering, Madam Minister, is this an indication now that many of the counselling aspects that you're going to be establishing or that the committee is going to be recommending to be established . . . for example, teen aid. Is teen aid going to be emphasized? Is that going to become an integral part of this entire system that you are planning to establish to help young mothers and so on? Because teen aid is not only interested in birth control but rather emphasizing the ultimate healthy life-style for teenagers which is the emphasis of abstinence rather than just the healthy safe-sex type of model. And that is a concern that I would have.

Madam Minister, another concern I have about this pronouncement of yours is your abortion stand, where you are saying that you . . . and you say quite categorically, and I give you credit for taking a stand so that we know where we were at -- you say we will fund abortion, that is the ultimate goal that you are saying.

And yet, Madam Minister, as an open, honest, forthright government that is consulting and responding to people's wishes, I just remind you of the plebiscites that were given, the 65 per cent or give or take a few percentages of

people that said: yes, Madam Minister, yes government . . . pardon me, yes whoever forms the government, because it was part of the election process -- we want you to stop publicly funded abortions.

An Hon. Member: -- It can't be done

Mr. Neudorf: -- You say there that it cannot be done. You say there it would have contravened some of these. I say to you, Madam Minister, that's a cop-out. You will never know until you give it a try, and there is as much evidence that points in the other direction as there is evidence that points in this direction.

Madam Minister, I suggest to you that this is another example of where you are bowing to the wishes of outside forces that are superior to that of your government as we've seen evidence many, many times. So, Madam Minister, while there is some good in this, I have very severe reservations on other issues of that.

And I would just end, Mr. Speaker, by simply saying that we will be watching very, very carefully. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(1445)

The Speaker: -- Before we proceed to the next issue, I do want to make a comment on ministerial statements. I have noticed that the statement was a lengthy one. I recognize however the importance of the topic. But I do want to warn ministers that in the future when they make ministerial statements they must find a way of shortening the ministerial statements.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 4 -- An Act to amend The Wakamow Valley Authority Act

Hon. Ms. Carson: -- Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill to amend The Wakamow Valley Authority Act be introduced and read the first time.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

Bill No. 5 -- An Act to amend The Wascana Centre Act

Hon. Ms. Carson: -- Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill to amend The Wascana Centre Act be introduced and read the first time.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

Bill No. 6 -- An Act to amend The Meewasin Valley Authority Act

Hon. Ms. Carson: -- Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill to amend The Meewasin Valley Authority Act be introduced and read the first time.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

Bill No. 7 -- An Act to amend The Assessment Management Agency Act

Hon. Ms. Carson: -- Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill to amend The Assessment Management Agency Act be introduced and read the first time.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

Bill No. 8 -- An Act to amend The Municipal Revenue Sharing Act

Hon. Ms. Carson: -- Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill to amend The Municipal Revenue Sharing Act be introduced and read a first time.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

**MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE
(BUDGET DEBATE)**

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski that the Assembly resolve itself into the Committee of Finance, and the amendment thereto moved by Mr. Toth.

Mr. Koskie: -- Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to say at the outset that I am very pleased to enter the debate on the budget. You'll have to excuse my cold, but I want to indicate that recovery is imminent because I am being treated by one of the members of our caucus, the good doctor from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg.

I want also at this time, Mr. Speaker, to indicate what a pleasure it is to have joined with some 55 members of the New Democratic Party to form the NDP caucus and the Government of Saskatchewan. And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, before I get into the main comments, I want to extend a deep appreciation to my constituents in the Quill Lakes who did in fact have the wisdom again to choose the party that will represent them, and on five separate occasions I have represented the riding of Quill Lakes.

Mr. Speaker, before I get into some major comments in respect to the contents of the budget, what I'd like to do first of all is to pay a tribute to our Minister of Finance who has done an excellent job in presenting the budget which will help to rebuild Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: -- And I want also, Mr. Speaker, to outline some of the circumstances confronting the Minister of Finance and this government as it developed this budget. For almost 10 years the previous Tory administration literally destroyed this province of its wealth, its dignity, and its very future. As a consequence, the people of this

province must now pay for the sins of commission and omission of the Tory administration.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, what a legacy they leave behind. And I say, history will record that this was a distasteful time for the people of Saskatchewan. No better, I may say, than some 60 years ago when we had the last Tory government under the Anderson administration.

And what kind of a legacy did they leave this province, Mr. Speaker? Let's take a look again at the massiveness of the debt that they left to burden the people of this province. Mr. Speaker, we had some idea of the mismanagement, but in no way did we possibly foresee the magnitude of the mismanagement, waste, and indeed corruption.

Mr. Speaker, we did open the books with the Gass Commission. We also opened the books in respect to the Crown corporations. And we also had a special report of the auditor. And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the situation was far worse than anyone could have possibly anticipated.

Here we have a million people, less than a million people, and they have placed a burden of debt of \$14 billion on the backs of the people of Saskatchewan -- \$760 million just to pay the interest. And can you imagine the sacrifices that the people in future generations will have to make in order to get rid of that astronomical debt that was placed with the waste and mismanagement of the previous administration. The Philippines had their Marcos, in Saskatchewan we had a Tory administration, and the results are not much better.

But that's not all. During this time when they placed about a billion dollars of extra debt per year on average, this administration also embarked on a high taxation policy. And you'll recall that in respect to the income tax we had the highest income tax, when they left office, across Canada. They had placed on a flat tax of 2 per cent. They even went so far as to harmonize the E&H (education and health) tax with the federal GST (goods and services tax). And as you look across the board, every single fee schedule was increased 2 and 300 per cent. Debt increased, massive taxation on the backs of the people, and what is worse, services were cut. Think of it -- debt increased, taxes increased, and at the same time cutting services.

Dental program gutted, revenue sharing discontinued, highway equipment sold off -- and the list goes on. Just follow it, people of Saskatchewan. Debt increased massively, taxes increased, services were cut, and then assets have been given to their friends.

Let's take a look at some of the assets that were paying to provide services to the people of this province. And where are they? Gone. Sask Minerals, SaskCOMP -- gone. Saskoil . . .

An Hon. Member: -- Gone.

Mr. Koskie: -- Sask Potash . . .

An Hon. Member: -- Gone.

Mr. Koskie: -- And the list goes on and on.

An Hon. Member: -- Where did all the money go?

Mr. Koskie: -- Well I'll tell you. They were so anxious to fulfil and to rape this province, Mr. Speaker, that in the dying days of their operation they had the utter audacity to go forward and to sell off all the shares of the people of Saskatchewan in Cameco at a loss of \$120 million -- a loss to the people of this province.

Same thing happened in respect to potash. Over \$362 million they lost in the sales of the potash shares. Boy, were they representing the people of Saskatchewan. Well I think Chuck Childers thinks they're a great bunch, but I'll tell you, the people of Saskatchewan didn't get the benefits out of it.

But it doesn't stop there, Mr. Speaker. Think of this administration, the dastardly deeds they did to the people of this province -- debt, taxes, cut in services, assets disposed of. And then you go to what they were . . . had the audacity to ask questions in respect to patronage, if you can believe it.

I'll tell you, you go across this province and the horrible story of how half of the population, if not more -- actually more because there's only about 32 per cent at best in the province that are Tories . . . but every conceivable appointment to any government job, whether it was rural service centres, crop insurance manager, bin cops, summer jobs, civil servants, no matter where it was, legal work, advertising, every single thing was sent through and it had to be a Tory in order to get it. And that outfit stands up and wants to wonder when we hire an individual with the competence of a Jack Messer, and start to scream.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that that was a sad day for the people of Saskatchewan when young people across this province were denied summer jobs because they were hand-picked by Tory hacks. That's exactly what was happening. Every individual job was hand-picked. They contacted no one. The minister of Highways would send out into Watson or to Wynyard his hand-picked individuals.

I'll tell you there was no fairness with this government and the people of Saskatchewan knew there was no fairness and they kicked them out and they did a good job doing it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: -- Mr. Speaker, I don't want to spend a lot of time in respect to the auditor's report, but I have to draw a couple things to the attention. Because first of all they say we should have known.

Well I want to tell you that they wouldn't even supply the information to the Provincial Auditor, a representative of the Assembly here, of the people of Saskatchewan. They denied that which was legally binding on them to provide to the Provincial Auditor.

And we've had a report in this legislature never before in the history of any provincial government, a report by the Provincial Auditor saying that they denied to account for. And in fact he couldn't account for more than 50 cents on a dollar because they denied the information to the Provincial Auditor.

(1500)

But if we take a look at what the auditor says -- review not complete. He said:

We could not do our review at Westbridge Computer Corporation:

Information Systems Management Corporation (ISM), formerly Westbridge Computer Corporation, did not provide the requested information. ISM stated they could not provide "confidential information" to us. ISM's concern was that they are a publicly traded company and are answerable only to the shareholders. Those shareholders are entitled to receive consistent, timely and equal disclosures.

But at the time that they were denying it, who owned it? That's right.

For the years under review, the Government of Saskatchewan representing the people of Saskatchewan owned more than 50% of the . . . shares at Westbridge.

And they denied that information to them. That's one example.

And one can go on, Mr. Speaker, into the operation that they carried on in this province. Take a look at page 10 of the **Special Report by the Provincial Auditor**. And it says, "Payments to employees not working for employer organizations." And he goes on to say, ministerial assistants. Remember they used to have these ministerial assistants, had about four or five that they would report and then they had another four or five or more hidden off into the corporations. Ministerial assistants, listen to this, what the auditor says:

The following corporations reported that they hired 32 people at a cost of (almost \$2 million) to work at the offices of the ministers responsible for the corporations. These ministerial assistants were not hired according to *The Ministerial Assistant Employment Regulations (Act)*.

Generally, the law allows corporations to hire employees for the conduct of their business. But, Treasury Board's policies say ministerial assistants are not employees. Therefore, there is no authority for corporations to hire (them).

But they went ahead, and they buried their political hacks. And it's interesting:

Also, corporations did not know (the corporations that were paying for these services) the services these employees provided for the corporations.

Therefore, payments to these employees are not properly supported.

And the list goes on, Mr. Speaker. The auditor goes on to say, "The following organizations reported that they made payments of (\$3.4 million) to 79 employees not working for their organizations." And they list them.

While the organizations listed above (he goes on) incurred costs of (3.4 million) for the 79 . . . the following . . . received, at no direct cost, the services of 79 employees."

And guess what? The premier, Office of Executive Council, 49 people at a cost of 1.9 million, which he hid from the people of Saskatchewan, for the premier's office -- 49 people, hidden from the people of Saskatchewan.

And the list goes on and the story that the auditor indicates here demonstrates actually the government was prepared not to follow the law, but merely to hire their political hacks . . .

An Hon. Member: -- Cronies.

Mr. Koskie: -- Cronies, and give them positions in the government. And that's partly why we have a debt today.

But let's see what else they were doing, this great administration, this Tory administration.

An Hon. Member: -- Self-righteous bunch that they were.

Mr. Koskie: -- Yes. Really working for the people, weren't they?

Well, I don't want to read the entire auditor's report, but I'm going to read one more headline, Mr. Speaker, and this is on page 16: "Payments to advertising agencies for goods and services not received." Here they had a system set up, having agencies of government paying for advertising which the agency wasn't even getting. That's in fact true.

An Hon. Member: -- Where did that money go?

Mr. Koskie: -- Well I'll tell you where it went. I'll tell you how fair they were, too, in the allocation. It says:

Generally, the advertising expenditures reported below were initiated and approved for payment by the Office of the Executive Council (Premier's office). In these cases, the organizations that made the payments were unable to determine that specific services were received by the organizations.

And he lists where this money went: Department of Community Services, 9,314; Dome Advertising, Dome Media Buying Services Ltd. Take another one -- Department of Health, \$15,000; Roberts & Poole, Dome Advertising.

And the list goes on, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation, 162,000. Guess who got it?

Dome Advertising, Roberts & Poole, Dome Media Buying Services Ltd. And the auditor goes on to indicate there's payments, as I said, to advertising firms for goods and services not even received.

And this is why we have that mammoth debt that we're facing here today -- the mismanagement, the total mismanagement, of the members opposite. And I say to them that they should be ashamed to face the people of Saskatchewan for what they have left behind, the wreckage of this province, and for future generations.

They go on to say, Mr. Speaker, that the overall situation confronting Saskatchewan is not really . . . is compounded really by the actions of the federal Tory government in Ottawa.

And I say here that the people of Saskatchewan got rid of the Tories here in Saskatchewan and I say that the people of Canada will get rid of the Tory government federally when they're given the opportunity.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: -- Let's take a look at agriculture. And we had the former premier who was calling himself Mr. Agriculture. Well I'll tell you he didn't help Saskatchewan farmers, and I'm going to demonstrate how he didn't.

But as I'm saying, we've got a problem federally because we've got a Tory government, and they have absolutely no plan for agriculture. They gave a commitment to the people of Saskatchewan, and when they introduced the GRIP program, that there would be a third line of defence. And now the members opposite, the provincial Tories, are voting against the federal commitment of \$500 million as a third line defence. And they stood in this House and voted against it.

I want to say that we have a critical situation in agriculture. And I say this because what we have here is a federal government that is not committed to a planned way of assisting our farmers during these difficult times, because they are competing in a world market against American farmers that are subsidized by the federal treasury and against European farmers that are supported by the treasuries of the government of the European Community.

And I say to you that's where the problem is -- it rests with the federal Tories in Ottawa as well as it rests with the provincial Tories here.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: -- And what is happening, Mr. Speaker, is that the federal Tories have been down-loading something awful. They have been transferring what was their responsibility onto the backs of the producers and on the backs of the provincial governments.

I have statistics here indicating the impact of the federal off-loading. The federal off-loading for Saskatchewan '92-93 is estimated at over \$500 million -- \$500 million of off-loading. And let's take a look at how that comes about: established program financing, \$247.9 million

off-loaded; agricultural programs, 218 million; other programs, 51; for a total of \$517 million.

This is the problem that we're confronted with here in Saskatchewan. And I say to the farmers of Saskatchewan and indeed to the constituents of mine that this government here is going to Ottawa. We're going to demand payment; we're going to demand an agricultural policy that will protect our farmers. And I say that we're going to either defeat the next Tory government when they call it or we're going to get a program for the farmers that makes sense.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: -- The sad part, Mr. Speaker, is this -- not only have they no plan for agriculture, not only are they down-loading their contributions to programs, they've cut their share of crop insurance. They cancelled out the western grain stabilization program where they were putting in \$4 for every dollar for the farmer. Instead they put in a GRIP program where now they put in 41 per cent.

So there's no plan, there's down-loading, but they aren't finished yet. The Tories federally are saying they want to get those marketing boards that give some security to the farmers, milk producers, chicken and turkey producers. And also they are determined to change the method of payment in respect to transportation. And they spent several millions of dollars with a road show last winter trying to convince farmers here in Saskatchewan that the method of payment should be made to the farmers and not to the railroad, which is no other than a plan to get rid of any subsidization to transportation for the farmers.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that it would seem that there is no plan, either by the provincial Tories or the federal Tories -- that they're really just drifting, reading the polls.

Well I want to say, don't be mistaken, because they are dead on course federally and when they were in office provincially. Because they achieve a portion of their goals: privatization at any cost, whether it was good for the province or not; deregulation, oh yes, that's going to save us; free trade agreement, and now they're going to expand it over to include Mexico. And even the former premier of Alberta, Mr. Lougheed, indicated that he's nervous in respect to entering into the free trade agreement with Mexico as to what the consequences are going to be on Canada. And they're going ahead.

So they privatized, they deregulated, got the free trade agreement, and finally they're on their last mission and that was to nuke out universal social programs, safety net program, across Canada.

And they started. They tried it with the seniors until the seniors turned on them and stopped them in their tracks -- partly, because a part of it now, old-age security, is taxed back, surtax on it. And then they got to the family allowances, the Tories federally, and they said, oh we'll get off paying that family allowance to those rich bankers and executives of corporations, and we're going to give more to the needy. Well take a look at their plan, and what hypocrisy again. I'll tell you, if you're poor, you'd better not trust a Tory, because they'll never deliver.

They nuked the family allowance program and initially . . . families who are working, working poor will initially get extra money. But a year or two down the road there's no indexing, and as a consequence they fall behind. But what they did do, is they left out all of those that were unemployed, and those that were on social assistance they excluded. Now they really addressed poverty by getting rid of universal family allowance.

So I say they have an agenda and their agenda has been exposed. And I think if you ask the financial institutions they'll agree that the Tories have an agenda. And I think if you ask the multinational corporations, they'll agree. They'll say yes, they have a good agenda. Right.

I think if you ask Chuck Childers he'd say they have a wonderful plan; I just snared off the best potash in the world and run it off to the States and now I control it.

And you know what? Even George Bush would agree that these Tories have a plan.

You know as I speak here today, Mr. Speaker, some will say that I'm fighting the ideological battles of the past. That there really is a new politics undefined by principles and party affiliation, but governed by polls and slick advertising. Well I say to the adherents of the latter, that style is not substance, and leadership is not equated to reading polls.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1515)

Mr. Koskie: -- And I'll tell you, that's the type of government that we had for 10 years in this province -- style, slick advertising, and lots of polls.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that last Thursday we introduced our budget. And as the Minister of Finance indicated, a budget that was founded on fiscal responsibility, public accountability, fairness, compassion, economic reality, and I believe that makes sense. A budget fashioned to help rebuild Saskatchewan from the wreckage of the Tory mismanagement, waste, wrong priorities, and indeed corruption.

I want to say that this was indeed a tough budget. It affects all segments of society: labour, professional people, business people, farmers -- all are affected. But I say, we had no choice. The finances of the province was in crisis, and the only choice that we had were twofold: make the budget as fair as possible, and secondly, protect those who are most vulnerable.

I say, Mr. Speaker, we aim to achieve those objectives and I think we did. And I hope that the public will believe us when we tell them how difficult it is to make those tough decisions which really affect adversely, people around the province.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, it causes me a great deal of pain to see people lose their jobs. It causes me a great deal of pain to see programs cut that farmers previously depended on. But I say, we had no choice.

In fairness, I think, Mr. Speaker, that there really should be an exemption to all this for the people of Quill Lakes. And I say that because they never were a party to electing a Tory to this legislature.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: -- And I congratulate them, and I want to say, promise to continue to work with them to get out of this Tory mess that we've inherited with the least possible amount of hurt.

Mr. Speaker, some people have said we've gone too far. Some people say we didn't go far enough. Some people said we increased taxes too much, and some people will say we cut programs too much. Difficult choice, but overriding it was the concept of being fair and protecting the most vulnerable.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, the other day I listened to three economists, and the question that was asked was this: in view of the present interest rates -- they're fairly low -- what advice would you give a new home buyer? Should he take a short-term mortgage, a three-year mortgage, or a five-year mortgage?

Well, Mr. Speaker, three economists; one recommended a year-long mortgage or less, one said take the three-year mortgage, and the last one said take the five-year mortgage. So it's a matter of choice, Mr. Speaker. Well I guess the moral of the story is, don't ever elect an economist to be premier of Saskatchewan again.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: -- I want to turn just briefly to agriculture, Mr. Speaker. And Tories used to go around saying: NDP had no agricultural program. Well I want to remind the member opposite, I want to see your flagship that you after 10 years can raise and say, this is agriculture and it benefitted.

Let me tell you what we did until you came into office. We had a beef stabilization program that protected the beef producers and gave them a cost of living . . . a cost-of-production formula. We had a SHARP (Saskatchewan hog assured returns program) program for the hog producers of this province which gave them stability of cost of production. And what did we get? A watered-down Tory version of a tripartite beef stabilization and hog stabilization program that is virtually useless to the hog producer or the cattle producer.

We established SHARP, farmstart, farmlab, crop insurance. We worked, fought for, the two-price wheat system. We fought and got back the cash advance to the farmers. We fought for the Crow benefits; we fought for marketing boards. We are fighting for the method of payment that it continue to be made to the farmer.

What are the flagships of the Tory administration? I say they don't have one, Mr. Speaker. And the record shows as farmer after farmer went to the poll and supported New Democrats across this province because they had been hoodwinked long enough by the so-called premier of

agriculture.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Koskie: -- Mr. Speaker, I just want to say, Mr. Speaker, that few of us are given the opportunity to serve in this legislature, and fewer are given the honour to serve for five consecutive terms of office, as I have. And I say, Mr. Speaker -- call it experience, hindsight, or intuition -- I knew as soon as those Tories walked into this legislature that a mess was imminent. No doubt about it, there was trouble on the horizon immediately after the election.

And during the last number of years, many in our caucus have worked hard to expose the sins and omissions of the former premier and his colleagues. And we organized and we went on constituency blitzes and we organized to prevent privatization of SaskEnergy. We helped to work out a blueprint for the future and I say the people of this province deserve no less.

The people of Saskatchewan, as I say, responded on October 21, 1991 by electing 55 New Democratic members to the legislature. And we know that on assuming office that we were in serious problems, but never could we imagine the magnitude of the devastation that this great province had undergone under the previous administration. Unfortunately what they did to the people of the province reflects on all politicians. I say they gave politics a bad name, and the burden is one which they alone should carry.

But, Mr. Speaker, while our task is compounded by the mess left behind, I say to you, Mr. Speaker, our determination is strong. Our commitment to serve the interests of the people of Saskatchewan is even more strengthened.

Saskatchewan under the leadership of Tommy Douglas and Woodrow Lloyd blazed the trail to a new dawn of social progress and social justice here in this province with health care and medicare and the infrastructure that Tommy Douglas built throughout this province. And Saskatchewan under Allan Blakeney established an economic base that placed Saskatchewan for the first time as a "have" province with balanced budgets and social programs unequalled anywhere in North America.

And, Mr. Speaker, it is our determination that Saskatchewan under the leadership of the member from Riversdale, our Premier, we will in fact take the task of rebuilding Saskatchewan from the ashes of 10 disastrous Tory years. The people of Saskatchewan deserve no less, and I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people shall receive no less.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Carson: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise in this Assembly today to speak in support of our 1992-93 budget presented by the Minister of Finance last week.

First, however, because I have not spoken in this House before, I would like to take this opportunity to

congratulate you on your election as Speaker. I know that you are determined to restore the public's respect for this institution and their faith in our democratic process. Without question, you will succeed. I believe that during your tenure this Assembly will once again be a place to exchange meaningful ideas and serious ideas in a calm and rational manner.

Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of serving with a Premier and a caucus who are dedicated to restoring the fiscal integrity of our province and overcoming the overwhelming cynicism of the public. We may make mistakes, but they will be honest mistakes -- ones that we'll learn and grow from, not cover up.

I am confident that the history books will write that the NDP government of Roy Romanow took this province from the brink of bankruptcy . . .

The Speaker: -- Order, order, order. I must remind the minister, you do not use the names of individuals in this legislature. You may refer to them from their constituency.

Hon. Ms. Carson: -- . . . and made it once again a place of economic security and social equality.

Mr. Speaker, as a newcomer to this Chamber, I am constantly amazed and at times entertained by the members of the opposition. Truly I am astounded at their distorted sense of reality and their perverted sense of logic.

I have come to the conclusion, however, that they must be in a total state of denial. They are too ashamed to admit the truth. That truth being that the former government, through its greedy schemes and its silly dreams, destroyed the very foundations of our great province.

But perhaps, Mr. Speaker, they are more to be pitied than scorned. For who would want to admit to the legacy that they have left behind? Indeed it will be a very, very long time before the people of Saskatchewan forgive them for their negligence and excesses, for their corrupt and incompetent government. Now we must all pay the price. And today we start to rebuild.

The people in my constituency of Melfort are willing and eager to begin a new era. They are resilient and courageous and determined, and they know about hard work and thriftiness. They can turn challenge into opportunity and dreams into reality. And they know that security for tomorrow starts today.

This budget is our hope, our opportunity, and our security. And this budget is a hope for all residents of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this budget calls on all of us to make sacrifices. I know the tough choices that went into this budget. And as a former mayor and now as a Minister of Community Services, I feel very close to our municipalities and I've talked to most of the mayors since that budget. I know the challenge of doing more with less to maintain the local services that residents have come to expect and rely on.

(1530)

And over the last 10 years the economic viability of our villages, towns, and cities have greatly deteriorated while the Tory government played its silly games. The emphasis in resources that the former government placed and gave to big corporations has wasted huge sums of money -- money that would have been better spent on local government.

The Tories did nothing to enhance the quality and economic life of urban communities in Saskatchewan for 10 years. For example, if they would have given the \$305 million that went to Cargill to urban governments, the economic security of many of our communities would have been greatly enhanced.

Now we have no resources left. They have given away \$441 million in the sale of PCS (Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Inc.). They have wasted \$145 million in the Rafferty fiasco. At the same time, I know that local governments badly need money. The cuts to local governments are painful but necessary. We cannot continue to spend money that we just do not have.

SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association), at their last convention, requested that the provincial government get its financial house in order. Urban municipalities understand fiscal responsibility; our budget is one of fiscal responsibility.

The urban revenue-sharing program had to be cut by 15 per cent for 1992-93. Municipalities of the province will be challenged to find new ways of doing things to maintain local services. This will call for increasing co-operation between levels of government and intermunicipal co-operation. It will mean increased communication and co-operation among governments at the local level, like urban, rural, and school boards. These governments are interdependent and must foster a spirit of co-operation and partnership.

Mr. Speaker, in the hard choices we made, the Saskatchewan community builds program had to be suspended for 1992-93. Notwithstanding that suspension, I am very pleased that our government was able to make good the broken promises of the last government. We were able to make good the payments to communities who had already approved and completed their projects, thus easing the additional financial burden imposed upon them by the changes the Tories made. This pay-out actually totalled \$3 million more than the annual community builds program unconditional budget allocation.

So while the government is unable to provide new funds for this year, we were able to finish up on prior projects and the mess that was left behind by the last government. The legacy of nine years of mismanagement, irresponsible spending, misguided priorities, and political manipulation has left us with few choices, and those few choices are very hard choices to make.

To meet these challenges the provincial government and in this case municipalities will be severely tested. The

government values its partnership with the cities and towns and villages in Saskatchewan and I am in close contact with the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association and individual communities in the weeks ahead to find new ways of doing and co-operating on new projects.

The same holds true in other sectors under my jurisdiction. Urban park funding will be reduced by 5 per cent for Wascana Centre Authority, the Meewasin Valley Authority in Saskatoon, and the Chinook Parkway in Swift Current. The Wakamow Valley Authority in Moose Jaw will receive a small increase to help correct an historical inequality in their funding.

Provincial grants to libraries had to be reduced. There will be a 25 per cent reduction in Regina and Saskatoon libraries and a 5 per cent reduction in the eight regional libraries. Libraries will be challenged to find new ways of getting the job done with fewer resources. Here also we must look for greater co-operation with other libraries, with other levels of government, and with other people in the community. Again, these cuts are necessary here as they are in other areas of the department.

Mr. Speaker, in spite of funding cuts, we are still able to focus on new initiatives that are both timely and necessary. These new initiatives include additional funding for water and sewer projects in northern communities to deal with health problems. Our government has committed \$4 million in '92-93 to these projects in 16 communities in the North. This is four times as much as the last government allocated.

This morning I met with those communities and we had a very good and frank discussion about the needs of those communities in the North and they are very excited about this allocation and the prospect of finally, at long last, receiving the kind of services that most people in Saskatchewan have taken for granted. And yet they were operating at a third-world status for the last 10 years. They have a very, extremely limited, property tax base and a gross lack of economic activity. The Tory government did nothing to bring these communities to an acceptable level of basic services that are taken for granted everywhere else in the world.

A new rural and native housing program will focus on new alternatives such as self-build and log housing. This will be a major emphasis placed on providing new homes in northern Saskatchewan to reduce the terrible overcrowding and the situation in regards to the substandard housing units that are there now. Additional funding for rehabilitation of northern housing units will provide an additional \$500,000 for renovation and repair in the northern housing stock and this will lever 1.5 from the federal government.

As well, co-operation from the federal government has allowed us to eliminate duplication of services and create operating efficiencies. The Tory administration for the past nine years opted out of the federal rural and native housing program. This caused a decrease in the maintenance of the provincial rural and native housing units and less dollars were expected to go the same distance. We are proud that we have renegotiated that

program and now, under our new initiatives, we'll be able to allocate more resources to northern people.

We have allocated \$150,000 to a healthy housing project to allow senior citizens to remain independent in their own residence by facilitating an integrated service package for them.

Redirected money to enhance intermunicipal co-operation will fund pilot projects investigating and implementing means of expanding co-operation and sharing among local governments and boards. In 1992-93, \$500,000 will be made available for pilot projects.

Our government clearly will not pursue restraint in a single-minded fashion. These initiatives show our commitment to pursue restraint, but in a fair and progressive manner. New approaches, innovation, partnerships -- that's a new era in Saskatchewan.

On other budget initiatives, there has been a 15 per cent increase in funding that supports special transit systems for the physically challenged. This translates to \$283,400 extra for money for approximately 70 communities. It will assist in addressing the backlog of requests for replacement vehicles and communities planning to offer services for the first time.

New initiatives in fire prevention and training are also part of this new budget. The fire-fighting training and support program will put \$250,000 into communities to expand and revitalize their fire prevention training programs and to reduce mortality rates and property losses. A public awareness program also will be introduced.

Community Services is taking on the responsibilities for sports, culture, and recreation. These programs fit with the delivery of services at both the provincial level and the local level. Co-operation and elimination of duplicating services and the creation of operating efficiencies will be the key to the success of this integration. I look forward to working with the sports and culture and recreation groups and associations in the province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to speak about the environment. This budget carries a strong message of environmental responsibility. This government has demonstrated its firm commitment to a healthy and safe Saskatchewan environment.

In maintaining the budget level for the Department of Environment and Public Safety, I believe that this budget recognizes that our entire economic future and stability rests on sustaining and improving our environment. Our major environmental initiatives will be continued and new ones will be launched.

Mr. Speaker, many of our environmental activities will continue to be supported by the environmental protection fund. This fund is being carefully applied to important environmental protected projects. Among these initiatives are the major waste minimization and management initiatives, employment opportunities for

students in the summer, water quality protection initiatives, environmental education information programs, and public information programs.

Also there will be an environmental technology development and corporate environmental management program. We clearly understand that a healthy environment is essential for a sustained future.

The Conservative government repeatedly sacrificed environmental activities in its budget and policy decisions over the past 10 years. This era of irresponsibility is at an end. A glaring example of the Tory lack of co-ordination and foresight is seen in the way they handled the chemical waste collection program. They did the collection of waste but they failed to plan safe storage of these wastes. Their commitment to the environment was superficial at best. The result of course was a near disastrous fire at Grand Coulee in December.

As Minister of Environment and Public Safety I carry a provincial mandate for protecting the environment, but that department alone cannot create a healthy environment. If we want to achieve adequate, immediate action to protect our environment and to pursue sustainable development, then we must pool resources of all and from all levels of Saskatchewan society -- from the kindergarten class-room to the executive board room and everyone in between. It is through partnership, co-operation, and shared action that we will achieve a healthy, sustained environment.

We are strongly committed to openness, to consultation, to public involvement, and to working in close partnerships with all sectors of the province. Every one of our initiatives will be developed and implemented based on consultation, partnership, and public involvement. This year for the first time we will see an environmental charter of rights and responsibilities. This charter will guarantee the public's right to participate in environmental decisions and will protect those individuals who report environmental accidents, incidents, and practices, something the former government circumvented and avoided wherever possible, and whenever possible.

In 1992 and '93 we'll initiate stronger legislation governing the environmental assessment and review process. This is necessary. We have only to look at the fiasco the Conservatives made of the Rafferty-Alameda project. The political agenda overrode the environmental agenda. We must ensure that the environment is protected.

A white paper will be released for public discussion, and it will propose the establishment of an independent environmental assessment commission to administer a more open and effective assessment process for all major projects in Saskatchewan.

The Speech from the Throne committed this government to sustainable development. Very soon we'll be receiving from the Round Table on Environment and Economy the conservation strategy for sustainable development in Saskatchewan. We anticipate that this document will be a springboard to develop new policy initiatives and launch

new activities to better protect our environment.

This year we will examine the ongoing role and direction of the round table and other groups that advise the government on sustainable development and environmental protection and enhancement. We are developing more permanent long-term advisory vehicles through which the government can keep in close touch with the needs of the stakeholders and the people of Saskatchewan.

We will introduce changes to upgrade standards and regulations that protect our environment. For instance, last month we amended regulations to improve the storage of hazardous materials and waste dangerous goods.

We'll change provisions to The Environmental Management and Protection Act to bring us closer to equivalency to the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. We will be giving more teeth to our Ozone-depleting Substances Control Act and The Clean Air Act by adding control order and injunctive provisions. There will be a major expansion of the SARCAN recycling system as part of our provincial waste minimization strategy.

Mr. Speaker, fiscal and environmental responsibility go hand in hand. And I believe the people of Saskatchewan want full accounting of environmental costs. They want to see environmental protection costs distributed in a manner that reflects the cause of environmental problems.

For that reason I believe in the polluter-pay principle. Clearly those who pollute the environment should be responsible for the cost of cleaning it up. This is both fair and sensible. We will therefore be looking at effective and innovative cost recovery initiatives in the months ahead. In the Environment and Public Safety department there are already some excellent examples of how this can be done equitably and fairly without placing unfair stress on organizations or disadvantaging the industries.

Saskatchewan is fortunate. Compared to many jurisdictions, our environment is still relatively clean. We will be able to achieve all our goals. I call on everyone who depends on the environment -- that means everyone in the province -- to join us in a commitment to make our environment the healthiest and safest in the world.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to turn from my role as Minister of Environment and Public Safety to my role as minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Transportation Company. This company was virtually looted under the Conservative government of the last nine years. They stood by and watched it happen. Unable to privatize this transportation utility and unwilling to have it continue its proud and historic service, they chose to ignore it.

The result -- fiscal irresponsibility, callous treatment of career employees, an accumulated operating deficit of \$35.8 million, and a capital debt of \$18.4 million as of October 31, 1991.

(1545)

In only five months the following initiatives have been taken to overcome this disaster. We have appointed a new board of directors to STC (Saskatchewan Transportation Company). We have reinstated regular board meetings. The company reorganization has taken place to focus on revenue and expense centres; accountability through the structure of implementation of performance planning; and improvements in revenue tracking, customer billing, and financial statements.

The previous administration let customer billing and financial statements fall over a hundred days behind. The Tories' solution to this mismanagement was to hire more staff and purchase a \$1.6 million computer. We have abandoned the computer purchase and with effective management, principled -- and reduced -- staff, conscientious employees have brought the billing process up to 30 days and we are continuing to improve that process.

Our other initiatives include plans to . . . are under way to have communities define their passenger and express needs to STC and thereby achieve a consensus as to route adjustments. Passenger programs are being developed. These include student pass programs, the family program, improvements to senior programs, the medical users' pass, and the business and civil servant travel pass.

Internal efficiencies as well as employee efficiencies are under way. These programs are fundamental to creating a healthy work environment within that corporation. STC will establish a focus of direction and financial accountability that the corporation has not seen in the last 10 years.

The changes made in STC are good common sense combined with good business practices, each of which were a commodity sadly lacking under the Progressive Conservative administration.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to state it again that as Minister of Community Services, and Environment and Public Safety, this government is committed to open, honest, and fair government. I am adamant that we must all work together co-operatively to move into a brighter, fiscally responsible, and positive future.

We must now act to overcome the legacy that has been left behind by the former Tory government and to create a province where our children will be proud to call home. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knezacek: -- Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is my second opportunity to stand before this Assembly and give a speech. The first time was a new experience and somewhat overwhelming. This time is to rise and stand firmly in support of the budget speech.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am proud to be a part of the team that knows where it's going, proud to be a part of the team that knows what it stands for -- fiscal responsibility, public accountability, fairness, and compassion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we know precisely what we're going to do for the next eight years or more -- rebuild Saskatchewan together.

We stand at a very critical point in time in our destiny. The previous administration added \$10 billion to the public debt in just 10 years. Interest costs alone to service this massive debt will be 760 million this year. We cannot, and will not, allow this to continue. Eight years or more of a committed, dedicated, and caring New Democratic government will do this province a world of good after the last nine and a half years of terrible Tories.

We have seized the reins of irresponsible fiscal spending and taken decisive action. Our budget speaks for itself. It will reduce the deficit to 517 million, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We have quite obviously established a clear downward trend after 10 years of spiralling deficit spending; established a clear downward trend after 10 years of graft, corruption, greed, sweetheart deals that cost us dearly, and financial mismanagement so rampant it spread like wildfire -- spread like the vicious and oftentimes fatal disease, cancer.

Because of the Tory cancer, this province is in a lot of trouble. There's no other way to put it but to tell the people the plain and simple truth. And that truth is that the Tory government ran us into the ground so badly that it will be some time before we see the light of day. And if that sounds scary, Mr. Deputy Speaker, perhaps it should, because we need to drive home this message time and time again.

The Tories' most famous line uttered by a boisterous and self-satisfied premier was, and I quote: Saskatchewan has so much going for it that you can afford to mismanage it and still break even. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, mismanage it they did, and those words will now haunt us for years to come.

Yet even in the darkness, there's light. Spending restraints will start at the top. That has already been demonstrated clearly by cabinet ministers taking a 5 per cent salary cut, by government members with extra duties having their allowances reduced or removed, by the 25 per cent reduction of communication allowances for MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly).

Even further, operating expenditures will decrease by 3 per cent this year. Out-of-scope salaries have been frozen. Advertising and communications budgets in government departments will be cut by 29 per cent.

While some of these measures may sound scary, I must get back once again to the reason for these measures -- 10 years of mismanagement by the Tories.

Let me give you some examples of this mismanagement: \$230,000 for buying and furnishing a new Regina condominium for the Lieutenant Governor; 9 million to celebrate Saskatchewan's 85th birthday in 1990 and promote the PC Party in what could have been an election year; \$146,440 to cover additional salaries for four extra cabinet ministers that the former premier added

to his cabinet; 86,295 to cover additional salaries for the cost of 11 PC MLAs that were appointed as legislative secretaries; \$1,524,600 to pay additional staff, office and travel expenses for the four extra ministers and 11 legislative secretaries; \$1,343,495 for an eight-month period for advertising for SaskTel paid to Roberts & Poole, and we all know what happened to them when the Tory patronage came to a screaming halt; \$212,750 for a research grant to Supercart for the development of a plastic shopping cart which the company never produced; \$485,988 paid to S.W. Warburg Consultants for a study on the privatization of the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation.

I could go on, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I think the point is evident. The waste, the unrestrained spending, the misrepresentations, all spread slowly and insidiously throughout government like a creeping, festering disease. A disease that started quietly and without much notice, perhaps with a few pains here and there, perhaps with some signs of sickness, perhaps with a few people raising questions about things going on around them, and even perhaps with a few people getting a little bit worried that things didn't seem quite right.

But the frightening thing was that no one was really overly concerned because they kept getting soothing words -- reassurances from the Tories that what they were doing was in the best interests of the people and the province. After all, who would know better than they did?

Those people who were quite concerned and raised an alarm -- and I compare them to people smart enough to see the warning signs of sickness and go to the doctor -- were silenced, often fired; or worse, they were told they were imagining things. And when you're told over and over again that you're imagining things, you come to believe that just might be the case.

And so we have the scene, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the downfall of a once proud province, the seeds of disease sown, seeds seeking fertile ground to grow in, flourish, and feed on.

For that is how it all began -- quietly. And what followed was 10 years of a Tory cancer ravaging our province and our people.

We knew what was happening. We saw it coming. And we knew that when we came to power we could excise that cancer and treat the sickness with compassion, treat the sickness that had gone out of control, consuming things in its way; a sickness that also closely resembled madness. And the madness continued, particularly in certain sectors, but particularly in the financial sector.

While the PCs were in power, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they overspent their budget every year -- every year for 10 years. If I tended to my cheque book that way, I would have been bankrupt long ago. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the deficits of the previous administration were nothing but deferred taxes, and now the bill is due and payable.

But the frightening point here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that on average, for every dollar that the Tories collected, they spent \$1.18. And that does not include any of the Tory

mismanagement in the Crown corporations. I'm only talking about the operational side.

And what did that gleeful spending spree cost us, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan? -- 8.8 billion. A provincial bill of \$8.8 billion, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That is totally out of line with the concept of fiscal responsibility. In fact, totally out of line with the concept of responsibility period.

If we were to pay back this debt in 10 years, for every dollar of revenue received we could only spend 71 cents; 29 cents from every dollar collected would go towards debt repayment. This of course assuming that we have a constant revenue figure when in reality provincial revenues have been dropping.

Our provincial revenue is 4.2 billion. A 10-year repayment plan would require that 1.2 billion or 29 per cent be paid to deficit reduction, and that would leave 3 billion for all government expenditures. By contrast, in 1991, 4.4 billion was spent on government programs and services. In any event, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a 10-year repayment plan would require a 31 per cent reduction in services based on a 1991 program level -- a 31 per cent reduction.

What on earth were the Tories thinking when they drove this province and its people to the edge? Or were they thinking? I would have to say they weren't. Perhaps that's because they too became part of that disease eating away at our province. They became a part of a larger organism, a greedy, voracious organism that destroyed anything in its path, that brought pain and suffering to untold hundreds of people in all walks of life -- our seniors, our nurses, our educators, our farmers.

The Tory disease touched us all in ways that we have not yet even begun to understand. That is just like the spread of a deadly sickness. We don't know how it affects us in the quiet unseen ways until it gets discovered too late to do anything about it, until it has taken its toll -- its toll on individuals and on the province.

What a depressing scenario, Mr. Deputy Speaker. A disease running rampant and unchecked. A disease that might have had no cure if it hadn't have been for October 21. October 21 was the first day of recovery, a start on the road to remission from the cancerous growth suffocating Saskatchewan, a first things first common sense approach to financial management that began to finally make some sense.

(1600)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is what we have accomplished in part since October 21. On November 13 the Minister of Finance announced that the true deficit, operating deficit was not 265 million but 960 million. We took immediate measures to reduce this to 888 million.

On November 19 the financial review commission, the Gass Commission, was established to open the books and recommend how to keep them open. On December 16 the Minister of Finance announced a revised deficit forecast of 852 million based on a further 36 million in

reduced government expenditures. On December 16 the Gass Commission pointed out that the 250 million dividend that the Tories said would be paid into general funds was simply not there and never was.

And that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was just the tip of the iceberg -- the commission's report of 189 interesting pages filled with damning facts and figures that dug the Tories a hole so deep they may never see the light of day ever again.

Other findings, just to refresh the memory of the opposition, include the following. Several large projects had been undertaken without documenting fully and clearly understood business and public policy objectives. The financial implications arising from certain transactions had not been fully disclosed to the public, nor had they been recognized properly in the province's financial records.

One hundred fifty-five and a half million dollars spent on Rafferty-Alameda dams and a cost overrun of 112.6 million. A \$121 million loss on the sale of Cameco shares. A province in serious peril of losing its ability to borrow money if the debt is not brought under control.

The timing of the sale of the province's shares in the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan was contrary to the advice provided by the Crown Management Board's external advisors. The timing of the issue resulted in a loss to the province. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Gass Commission was unable to find any documentation to support the government's reasons for overriding the recommendations of its advisors.

I think I need not go any further with the list of things Mr. Gass discovered. It's more than obvious that the books of this province were in an utter mess. We realized what a desperate situation we were in immediately and took decisive action to cut government waste.

We closed the premier's office in Prince Albert at a cost saving of \$150 a year. We now mail SaskPower and SaskEnergy bills in the same envelope for a cost savings of \$725,000 a year. Spending cuts on items like government supplies, acquisitions, advertising, and travel save \$28 million this year. We have the smallest cabinet this province has seen in 20 years, and that is saving the province more than \$100,000 a month in salaries, expenses, staff, and office costs. We closed the trade offices in Hong Kong, Zürich, and Minneapolis, for a savings of \$2 million a year.

Mr. Speaker, these are things we know, things we can be proud of, things that have shown the voters of this province that we are deadly serious about trying to stop the cancer that has been eating away at our resources, our people, and our financial base -- deadly serious about getting down to business and making a difference. And I believe that that was made even more evident in the budget speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

This spring is a time for renewal, a time for rebuilding Saskatchewan together, for working together today for tomorrow. This is a time when we look at the budget as our blueprint, a road map to where we're going to go in

the future, a beginning of the treatment needed to eradicate the terrible Tory cancer from our systems.

Mr. Speaker, the budget has shown us that if we work together, we can and will make a difference, much like an ancient Chinese saying: Even the highest towers are built from the ground up. We have to find the opportunities and create a feeling of security; create an atmosphere that gives people back the hope that was extinguished by the Tory government.

The key to rebuilding Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is no secret. It lies in people working together, people taking responsibility for the solutions to the mess we're in. People helping people, and people creating a vision for the next decade -- a vision that will allow us to stand tall and proud to face whatever the world throws at us. And I truly believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we have started down that road to recovery. And I believe that anyone who doubts that should take a good hard look at what is in the budget.

The budget, as I mentioned earlier, is the start of the treatment that will once and for all purge the Tories out of our system like an effective medicine should.

Mr. Speaker, we have a whole lot of things to look forward to in the next decade -- improvements in the health care system, the wellness model, improvements in GRIP, the start of a workable solution to the farm debt crisis, new economic development, a greater recognition of how precious our environment is. Truly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are many exciting things in store for this province.

It will be a busy time of year for all of us -- politicians, civil servants, farmers, seniors, children. But busy is the key to getting to where we want to be. Just as Benjamin Franklin once said: if you want something done, ask a busy person.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion I would like to express my full support for the budget speech. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take this opportunity to, Mr. Deputy Speaker, say a few words about what we've experienced in the last few days since the budget.

I can say to the members opposite I just returned from Moose Jaw where we attended the funeral of a family friend, and had the opportunity to talk to a nurse that had just been fired. She put two children through university and she just received her walking papers today. And she said, isn't it odd that after all this pain, that there's still a \$517 million deficit this year.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm going to take the next few minutes and I'm going to outline, Mr. Speaker, why this budget is a sham and in fact the deficit this year is bigger than 7 out of the last 10 years in Saskatchewan -- bigger, Mr. Speaker.

And secondly, I'm going to point out that this whole

process is a betrayal, of deceit. And the pain that's being inflicted on Saskatchewan people, whether it's farmers or nurses or young people or seniors is absolutely unnecessary. And on top of that they're saying, you mean you did all this and still you have a \$500 million deficit?

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to point out in some detail that people are asking why they have to go through this pain and where was all this information that the NDP are using, in the last campaign.

Now I can't say that these people were misleading the public; I can't use the L-word, Mr. Speaker. But it's deceitful not to tell the truth. You can betray the trust of people. You could say, no more tax increases, and then you can increase taxes. It's called falsehood. It's called misrepresentation. It is called being unfair. And they do this time after time after time in this House on the back and on the name and on the history of Tommy Douglas. This is what Tommy would have done.

Well I'm going to point out, Mr. Speaker, that they have just increased the deficit by \$517 million which, Mr. Speaker, is greater than the deficit was in '82 or '83 or '84 or '85 or '86 or '88 or '89 or 1990, Mr. Speaker. And after all this pain we've got a bigger deficit than all those years. Year after year after year they said no, that's not the right thing to do. They'd have a fancier way or a better way to do it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I want the public to know that after all these taxes -- and I'm going to go through them -- and all the lay-offs and all the pain and all the broken promises and nothing for farmers and no cost of production and the bigger tax increases so we're the largest taxed place in the country, that this year there's still a \$517 million deficit. They didn't get the job done at all.

The deficit in 1982 was 227; in 1983 it was 331; in 1984 it was 379; and in 1985 it was 584; in 1986 it was 1.235 billion; in '87 it was 568; and in '88 it was 328; 377 in '89; and 358 in 1990. And they're higher than seven out of eight of those, Mr. Speaker. And they said they're here to do the job.

I also want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that the last time this Minister of Finance had an opportunity to bring in a budget he said, and I quote:

I am pleased to say that we will balance the budget for the coming year as well -- another balanced budget, Mr. Speaker
...

This was in March 18, 1982.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, we go on and look at the results. And this was shortly after that in July of 1982, economic and planning position of the province of Saskatchewan. More recent *Estimates* indicate that if the March budget of '82 had been passed and implemented, the province would have experienced a combined deficit for '82-83 of close to \$200 million.

This Minister of Finance has brought in two deficits, one in '82 and one in '92, and the combined deficit of both of them is almost three quarters of a billion dollars. And he's

supposed to be in charge? How can you sit here and say that this is the right thing to do when in the last two budgets that you've had anything to do with, you've accumulated three-quarters of a billion dollars in debt? The deficit this year in the NDP's new budget, with all of these taxes, is \$517 million -- over a half a billion dollars.

Now what does this remind you of, Mr. Speaker? Any other jurisdiction come to mind? Anybody else think that this might have been the case in any other jurisdiction, like perhaps Bob Rae's government? What do you find with the new NDP administration in Ontario? The very same thing -- increased taxes, increased fees, charge people more, lay them off, be miserable to every sector you can find, from the business community to farmers to everybody else, and on top of that bring in billions and billions and billions and billions of deficit.

The NDP in Ontario is the laughing-stock politically of the entire country. They're a one-term administration, Mr. Speaker. Everybody in Ontario knows it and everybody in Saskatchewan knows it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: -- And, Mr. Speaker, do you know what? This is a one-term wonder here, because in their first move, their very first move to help fix things they come in with over half a billion dollar deficit. Well, Mr. Speaker, in 1990 our deficit was 365. We forecasted and we even did better than that. And last year it was 265. And this year these people are \$500 million in the hole.

Mr. Speaker, I just want the public of Saskatchewan and the people across the country to know, here is another NDP administration that said, no I won't raise taxes; no I will not shy away from my responsibilities for seniors or for health care; I will take care of farmers, give them cost of production; I will help people on reserves; I will help people in education; I will make sure that rural municipalities are protected and their tax load goes down; and I will protect urban municipalities and create economic wealth and balance the budget.

And, Mr. Speaker, they campaigned on that as if it was magic. And what we get today after the budget, Mr. Speaker, is a betrayal, is a falsehood, is deceit. They've done exactly the opposite. And what really bothers the nurse in Moose Jaw, Mr. Speaker, is while she's fired and her family hurts and she voted NDP, was that they still have a \$500 million deficit on top of all of this.

(1615)

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan might have some time of day for the NDP administration if they said, all right, we're going to balance the budget. We're going to be able to do this. We're not going to run a deficit. We have some fidelity and we're going to be there.

But to listen to all this rhetoric on the back of Tommy Douglas -- fire people, hurt farmers, renege, cancel contracts, deceive them, and then have the biggest deficit we've seen seven out of the last eight years -- they say, we were fooled; we were misled. The whole campaign, Mr. Speaker, the whole campaign was one of deceit.

Mr. Speaker, I've talked to people across the province who've been fired. I've talked to farmers who've lost their farms; I've looked at 1,200 more foreclosure notices now. We've talked to businesses that are leaving. We've talked to families that can't take the 10 per cent income tax, 30 per cent increases in utility rates. We've talked to people who are diabetic, that it's going to cost them hundreds and hundreds of dollars more. We looked at the prescription drug plan that was sound and now is up to \$380 deductible.

And these people are all saying, why didn't they tell us what they really had in mind last fall? Where was their courage? What kind of a cowardly outfit is this, come in with all of this stuff and still have a \$500 million deficit?

What people are asking me, Mr. Speaker, is simply this. Do you think the NDP might just come up with their missing brochure -- the one they failed or didn't have the courage to present to the public last fall? Where is it? Where is the truth? Where are the facts? Where is what they really intended to do?

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, some of the people across the province have built one. They put together the missing brochure. This is what should have been presented to the people last fall. Because you know what, Mr. Speaker, the NDP wouldn't have been in power; they wouldn't have got elected. And these people across here in this legislature know that their days are numbered as sure as we're standing here right now. They couldn't get elected on what they've just done and on top of that add to the deficit.

What's their *raison d'être*? They're doing this on behalf of Tommy Douglas -- laying off these people? Do you know what they're saying in Moose Jaw, Mr. Speaker? They're saying, you know the difference between the NDP and Fair Share? Do you know the difference? With Fair Share you get to keep your job. You at least get to keep your job and the families are protected and they're looked after.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: -- With the NDP, no. The unions knocked doors, they campaigned, and what happened? You fired them. You cut the civil service by 400. Mr. Speaker, I want to go through what some people are calling the missing brochure, what the NDP failed to have the courage to tell the public. The NDP promised to do this.

Now imagine, Mr. Speaker, if the NDP had put this in a brochure something like this, it's called: the New Democratic plan for 1991-92. This is the plan: tax the sick, increase the prescription drug plan deductible from 125 and 150 to 375. Cancel the Saskatchewan Pension Plan and cancel the insurance plan associated with GRIP.

So charge people for cancer visits, charge them for chiropractic services, raise their deductible. When they go for eye examinations, charge them for that. So that you've essentially got a hold and said we're going to tax the sick, we the NDP. And that's the first part of our platform.

No. 2, we promise to raise utility rates up 30 per cent. Can

you imagine getting elected with that? It's the old Saskatchewan family of Crown corporations. They didn't like the idea that well, maybe we could have harmonization. We'd have had a choice to go buy a hamburger and pay 7 cents.

No, that was unfair. I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll make senior citizens and low incomers pay 30 per cent on the utilities. And if you don't pay your telephone bill or pay your power bill, they yank it off and cut it out. And they know about that.

And they said in their brochure, to tell the truth, we're going to raise utilities on the poor because we don't want to give them a choice. Farmers that are going broke? We'll raise their utilities. Senior citizens? We'll raise your utilities.

Cut the senior citizens' heritage program. Well how do you like that? Campaign and knock doors in Nutana or Saskatoon, anywhere, and say to the folks: we're just going to cut the senior citizens' support, raise your utilities, raise your taxes, cut the senior citizens' heritage program. And for senior women, I'll tell you what we'll do, we'll just scrap the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. Why didn't you tell them?

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to go through this list of the hidden brochure because the people of Saskatchewan are talking about it all over the province.

Close schools and hospitals and stop needed projects. Did they campaign on that? Did you hear about that in towns and villages and places where these people were elected by default?

And then, Mr. Speaker, did they campaign on saying, well, we'll really raise taxes. What we'll really do if we win in the NDP is we'll raise income tax by 10 per cent and we'll raise sales tax from 7 to 8 -- which is a 16 per cent increase -- and we'll raise fees and we'll raise capital tax and we'll raise gasoline tax. And we will make sure that farmers pay more and rural municipalities pay more and SUMA pays more and everybody pays more. That's part of our plan. That's the brochure to vote NDP.

You betrayed the people. People in the country are calling this missing brochure sheer hypocrisy. How can you sit there and say Tommy Douglas made you do it? What kind of an outfit have we got in this legislature, Mr. Speaker?

And the next thing they do is say well, I'll tell you, for tens of thousands of farmers that come out here to see the man from Riversdale, he would promise that he would gut GRIP and scrap it.

Take the predictability away, take the forecast ability away, so bankers don't know how to deal with it, the public doesn't know how to deal with it, credit unions don't know how to deal with it, and farmers are without money and without the cost of production. And no money from Ottawa. How's that so far? That's the first five points on the real NDP brochure.

These people, Mr. Speaker . . . it's really difficult to know

how honourable people could stand up and say this is what Tommy Douglas is all about. This is what we would do for the people of Saskatchewan. And on top of that, come in with a \$517 million deficit. You've been snookered by the bureaucrats. You know better than that, every single one of you. You have been run. Every one of you that is a rookie in this legislature, you ought to go home and you want to ask yourself, who's running this outfit?

And you know that I'm right. Every single one of you think this is absolutely pathetic. It is pathetic. A huge, huge deficit and you're taxing people and cutting people and hurting farmers and hurting seniors. All in the name of what? A \$500 million deficit in a brochure you'd fail to come up with? You wouldn't have even consciously thought about doing this if anybody had asked you in the last campaign.

Six: You would have had in your brochure, we'll have nothing to do with an energy agreement with AECL (Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd.). You would have told the truth and said, by George, we're just agin it. And all those thousands and tens of thousands of jobs that people were waiting for, people in Saskatoon were saying, boy, we'd like to vote NDP because they'll deliver. They'd say, well, I guess maybe I might not, because if they tell the truth they're going to cancel this. And that would be in the brochure.

And we can look at all the energy options, look at the environmental concerns and examine everything else, but you would have to tell them, stop doing that.

Seven: In the real brochure the NDP forgot to put out, they would say, we'd stop money coming from Ottawa. We wouldn't harmonize, we wouldn't get money for energy, and we wouldn't get money from agriculture. We'll get them so angry in Ottawa, we'll just fight with them so much, that they won't put another dime into this province.

And isn't that the fact? And they're so proud of it. They can stand here with their feathers all ruffled and say, those boys in Ottawa, aren't they awful? And do you know what? You missed \$200 million here, you missed \$400 million there. You don't get another \$200 million in GRIP, you don't get agriculture payments, and if you're going to do co-generation you're not going to get the money.

Mr. Speaker, can you imagine people in your riding reading the real brochure of what the NDP would do and then go on to say, we would stop all share and bond offerings? Do you remember, Mr. Speaker, the NDP walked out for 19 days because we're going to offer shares in SaskEnergy? Imagine that sinful thing. We were going to let the people invest in SaskEnergy. Imagine that. Wasn't that just awful?

And the NDP opposition went out in a tirade and said, oh, this is terrible. It was \$200 million for the coffers of Saskatchewan so you could have a natural gas plan and a rural distribution system for people. And these folks . . . when communist China is opening up to share offerings, the NDP in Saskatchewan shuts them down. Can you

believe that?

And they'd have to put that in their brochure: we're really against share offerings because the public shouldn't be allowed to invest in a country like Canada.

No. 8 -- no. 9, pardon me -- we'll just make sure that all the construction contracts that we have, Mr. Speaker, in this brochure will go to union only. Did you hear about that during the campaign? Well, the Attorney General just announced it after he was elected. He said, well everything in Saskatchewan will be union only. Now that should have been in the brochure so the business community and farmers and seniors would know about it.

No. 10, Mr. Speaker, what they would really say is: we will so use special warrants. Do you remember how they criticized us for special warrants? They said you should never do it, it's immoral. The legal people say don't do special warrants, it doesn't work. Well they'd have to put in their brochure, Mr. Speaker, that special warrants is something that they would do time and time again.

The hypocrisy; \$360 million in special warrants and they said never do it. Vote NDP and it'll never happen. What a bunch. They do this in the name of Tommy Douglas? If Tommy Douglas says I won't use special warrants, Tommy Douglas wouldn't use special warrants. If Tommy Douglas says I'm not going to tax the sick, he wouldn't tax the sick. If Tommy Douglas says I'll give you the cost of production, he'd give you the cost of production. If Tommy Douglas said, I'd balance the budget, he'd balance the budget.

These people sit in the legislature and they laugh and they seem to revel in this betrayal of the public trust. Because this brochure that I'm going through here, the unpublished, real NDP brochure, is all over Saskatchewan, and believe me, I'm going to make sure it's all over Saskatchewan.

No. 12, there will be no help for rural and urban municipalities. They will cut their share of revenue by up to 30 per cent and cancel the rural gas distribution program. Now wasn't that a nice thing to put in a brochure.

No. 13 -- and this is a good one, this is a good one, Mr. Speaker. No. 13, they'd have to say they will practise all kinds of patronage -- all kinds of patronage. They'd have to put it in their brochure. It says: the NDP will have patronage appointments over and over and over and over. And even in the throne speech, Mr. Speaker, we will put, if we're elected, at least 500 patronage positions have been filled.

Now do you think the folks would have voted for you if you'd put that in a brochure? Mr. Speaker, they said . . . they'd have to say finally that they would fire 400 civil servants, and put that in a brochure. Now how would you like to knock doors in Regina South or in Saskatoon or in Moose Jaw or Estevan or Weyburn and said: what we're really going to do is fire 400 people.

And the last point, Mr. Speaker, in the brochure they'd say: after we did all of this -- and they'd list them all in the

brochure -- after we did all of these things the final result will be a \$517 million deficit in our first budget.

Mr. Speaker, they can laugh and they don't want to pay attention, and they can go out and see constituents. I think that they should go visit the nurses today and see how they're laughing. Go talk to real people. Go talk to diabetics and seniors and farmers.

Mr. Speaker, the real people are going to remember what these folks said and what they campaigned on the door. They'll remember that they have taxed them like they've never seen taxes before, and on top of that now have a bigger deficit than we've seen before. And in the last two deficits of that Minister of Finance, he's got three-quarters of a billion dollars chalked up already. And he's put people through such pain.

Mr. Speaker, this administration, this brand-new administration, didn't have the courage to tell the people what they'd really do. And now when they are in power they're doing exactly what they said they wouldn't do. And the people of Saskatchewan will never, ever, ever forget that kind of falsehood, that kind of deceit, and that kind of misrepresentation, that kind of hypocrisy. And the really difficult part for the public is they stand in here one at a time and said: and that's the way Tommy Douglas would have done it for the people.

(1630)

Well, a lot of us had family that knew Tommy Douglas. And a lot of us even met Tommy Douglas and talked with him and worked with him and visited with him; gave him awards and recognized him. He wouldn't . . . Mr. Speaker, he would be so ashamed of what we see here in this legislature in this budget -- absolutely ashamed of what these people are doing.

An Hon. Member: -- He'd be very proud. We're cleaning up your mess.

Mr. Devine: -- The member from Regina Elphinstone chirps from his seat, Mr. Speaker, and he says Tommy Douglas would be proud of this. Can you believe that? Proud of it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Devine: -- Tommy Douglas would be proud of a \$517 million deficit. Your first shot at it is a half a billion dollars in the hole. Can you imagine that? And you're here to clean it up? You're here to clean it up.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I go back and look at the budget address -- I go back and look at the budget address. And the falsehood and the deceit in the first pages of this document are enough to make people crawl away from politics and politicians.

They didn't have any thought at all, Mr. Speaker, of being honest with the public and saying: you know, we could implement some of these policies so that in fact we can meet the targets. And they didn't do it at all. They backed off and they hid. They loaded up everything they could think of, Mr. Speaker, and packed it up and loaded it up

and then they came in with this hollow document -- the hollow document that people said didn't make any sense at all. And on top of that end up with hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars in debt. And they're there to fix it.

I point out one more time, Mr. Speaker -- because some of the members of the legislature on the other side of the floor here have just come in to listen to it, because they hadn't heard it before -- the deficit this year is \$517 million, forecasted. The NDP administration has a deficit this year of \$517 million.

The last time the Minister of Finance put out a deficit in 1982, it was over \$200 million in deficit, 200 million. So his last two deficits are \$700 million plus. And they think they're here to fix it. And his \$500 million deficit is bigger than every deficit that we encountered from '82 to '85, right up from '88 to 1991. And they think that they have a plan.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to talk about the fact that these people had choices. These people had choices. They could have treated people with respect. The lady that I talked to today in Moose Jaw also mentioned the fact that some of her friends had participated in the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. And if you look at the headlines in the papers, you'll find, Mr. Speaker, that the public is appalled at what the NDP in the name of Tommy Douglas, have done to the Pension Plan.

Killing pension is a backward step, it says. Women are the losers with the NDP killing the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. Forty-four thousand women have lost the right to retire in economic dignity with some independence.

The Minister of Health, who's the minister responsible for women, has to look at those women in the eye day after day after day and say, well really we had to have a \$500 million deficit and raise all these taxes. But what I really got to tell you is, while the very, very, very, very wealthy get free health care, I have to take your pension if you're a single parent, if you're a house-maker on a farm, if you're a senior citizen that doesn't have any money. Forty-four thousand women in this province have lost the right, the democratic right, to retire in economic dignity. And they just pulled it out.

Mr. Speaker, can you listen to those people chirp on the other side when they finally, finally realize that what they've done is absolutely wrong and deceitful and unfair to women, to farmers. Mr. Speaker, isn't it interesting that they can't stand the heat when the truth comes out?

They didn't tell the rest of their rookie MLAs. They didn't tell them, Mr. Speaker. The bureaucracy is running . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You bet I enjoy this; you bet I enjoy telling the truth to the people of Saskatchewan. It's a cinch that you didn't. You didn't, and you didn't have the courage to tell the truth.

The Speaker: -- Order. Order. Order. Let the member have his say in the legislature.

Mr. Devine: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I point out to the hon. members: 44,000 Saskatchewan women who

counted on a pension at retirement have lost it. And you can't find anybody who sticks up for the NDP on that policy move. Why would they pick on the poor? That's the reason you're CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation); that's the reason you're NDP. Help farmers; help low income; help people with health problems; help people on social services; help people who are working in the public sector as nurses.

Why do you pick on them? Why do you let these bureaucrats and two or three cabinet ministers run your whole outfit? The people of Saskatchewan can't believe what you're doing.

I'm telling you, I've been in this House and in politics long enough to tell you you've made a serious, serious political mistake, when 44,000 women are going to come one by one, ten by ten, and by the hundreds to this legislature and say, where is the heart and soul of the CCF gone? That's what they're going to say. You betrayed us; you let us down. We pay high taxes, our drug bills have gone up, you charge us for cancer research or even visits, and farmers have been betrayed. They've lost fortunes -- hundreds of millions of dollars.

And these people, from the roots of the CCF with supposedly compassion, are responsible for this.

Well do you know what, Mr. Speaker? This little flag here I have on my lapel, it says: Don't blame me; I didn't vote NDP.

The Speaker: -- Order, order. The member, if he is not aware, is not allowed to refer to anything that another member or he himself is wearing, and I would ask him to refrain from doing so.

Mr. Devine: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that.

Mr. Speaker, all over Saskatchewan we saw the sticker in the last campaign about the PST (provincial sales tax). The NDP wore a button called: I'm PST. Okay? And now people are saying, do you know what? That sales tax, provincial sales tax, has been increased by the NDP -- increased. And they said they wouldn't do that. They said they'd never do that. But they increased it 16 per cent from seven to eight. And then on top of that they had income tax, and on top of that gas tax. And they said that button was so hollow, such a sham, so deceitful, so dishonest.

They're calling it the big L-word, Mr. Speaker. Out there all over, they said, uh, uh, they don't tell the truth. They're going to see bumper stickers that say, they're deceitful; it's false; don't listen to them again. Why would anybody ever listen to them again about a campaign platform or a promise? Why? You couldn't dare.

Because I can find farmers and nurses and business people and seniors and public employees who say, I voted NDP; I thought they were going to stick up for me. And they betrayed them. Forty-four thousand seniors and women of all descriptions, low income people particularly, have lost their pension plan, and there is no one defending you. No one. And rightfully so.

And 50,000 farmers have lost their ability to take their contracts for insurance to the bank to protect their farm. And do you know what happened, Mr. Speaker? You'd be aware of this. Farmers looked at GRIP in 1990-91, '91-92, and they said, I can forecast my income and I can take that forecast for the next four years and I can rent some land, I can buy a combine, I can do some things. And that's what they did. They went out on the basis of that national and provincial program and they made big investments, and they made contracts with their neighbours, and they bought some farms, and they rented some equipment.

And then along comes the NDP, which they campaigned and said, we'll make GRIP even better. We'll give you the cost of production. We'll make it even better for you, and we'll get more money from Ottawa. Well that was what they campaigned on. And then the truth is, Mr. Speaker, they gutted it. And the farmers have hung the Minister of Agriculture in effigy outside this legislature. And they come out by the thousands now and say, you didn't tell the truth. And the Minister of Agriculture says, but we deem it to be okay. And he's thinking about passing legislation here retroactively to say, well we really just did it before March 15.

Well, Mr. Speaker, can you imagine? These people have lost their right to take that contract to the bank. How do they get back in their contracts, their legal contracts, with their neighbours, with the farm machinery dealer, for others? Because they went to the bank on the basis of crop insurance. And you've changed it. And you didn't tell them about it, let alone campaign about it.

You just now say, well I deemed to have done it. It's retroactively okay. It's one thing to retroactively fire people in the public service because you think they're Tories -- and you say patronage doesn't matter to you -- but to retroactively change 40 or 50,000 contracts is not going to happen, Mr. Speaker, because the people of this province won't let it happen. That is shameful. Retroactive legislation for 40,000 farm families, 44,000 women who've lost their pension.

I just say again, Mr. Speaker, I say to the rookie MLAs that are here that hadn't heard it before: you were deceived. You had campaign managers knocking doors for you and you had candidates knocking doors for you. And do you know what? You were not told the truth. And they went around and around and they said, vote NDP and you'll get heart and compassion and fairness and openness and honesty. And do you know what we got? We got farmers going broke, and they don't care.

And do you know what? We ask questions in the legislature, Mr. Speaker. And as soon as we ask the question they get up and they go the bravado. Well, well, well, there's a deficit, so we have to be evil and miserable, and we have to cut, and we have to do this because there's a deficit. Well what a lame duck excuse, because they've got a bigger deficit in the last three years -- \$517 million deficit this year.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome the Minister of Agriculture in from Rosetown.

The Speaker: -- Order. I think the member knows full

well that that's not acceptable to refer to the presence or the absence of a member in the legislature. I ask him to refrain.

Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, it's always a pleasure to be in the company of the Minister of Agriculture, and I recognize your ruling.

I would say to the Minister of Agriculture, tell the farmers that have made contracts and bought machinery and settled with banks and settled with the credit union and have tried to get themselves in order financially, despite his freeze during a time when there's been 1,200 foreclosure notices, the Minister of Agriculture, he should go to them and say, I'm here to help.

But he doesn't do that. He says, I'm here to hurt you because there's going to be a deficit this year. In fact the NDP has \$517 million deficit so I'm here to hurt you even more because the NDP deficit's bigger than last year's deficit, bigger than the year before's deficit, and seven of the last nine deficits. Isn't that one heck of an excuse to put pain on farmers?

Mr. Speaker, this budget will be the absolute ruin politically, let alone economically, of the NDP whole philosophy in their heart and their soul and their *raison d'être*. They don't even remember what the CCF was all about. If they can let two or three cabinet ministers and the bureaucracy stick it to them like this and run . . . Your caucus meetings must be something absolutely marvellous, eh? You all sit there on your hands and say, oh well it's okay. Just tax and tax and cut and hurt and tax and tax and cut and it'll be fine.

And they laugh. They laugh at the pain, Mr. Speaker. Watch them. It's too bad the cameras couldn't look at them laughing at the pain of 44,000 women who've lost their pension; laughing at the pain in agriculture; laughing at the pain of 400 civil servants who've been fired. What about their families? What about their families?

Mr. Speaker, the NDP must have some really, really fascinating caucus meetings if they're going to go through this and say, oh we're really doing the right thing. This is really right on the money. Boy, I'm proud to be a CCFer doing this stuff.

(1645)

Mr. Speaker, gas tax for farmers, prorated to the size of your farm, like the old land bank days. Money up front. Then it's capped. Everybody says, well we've got to limit farm size, in the NDP. Just as long as it's only one-quarter section smaller than the Minister of Agriculture's we'll be all right. The old socialist trick. Well we got it here in gas tax, prorated to the size of your farm. How do you like that? And you're going to try to compete with Americans and Germans and Australians world-wide?

Livestock cash advance. What happened to it? What happened to the FeedGAP (feed grain adjustment program)? What happened to the livestock industry?

Oh well, I got to tell you, this year the NDP will have a

\$500 million deficit; therefore we'll just make you uncompetitive. We won't compete with Alberta. Well if you're going to have a \$500 million deficit, compete with somebody.

What positive thing can you say over the budget of 1990? 1990 we had a \$365 million deficit. You're in this year with a \$500 million deficit and cut the heart and soul out of agriculture, let alone oil patch, industry, uranium, nuclear, all of that.

The FeedGAP. We're going to see the livestock industry and packing plants . . . And they're trying to do well -- Moose Jaw, Saskatoon. Ten per cent income tax increase and then cut the heart and soul out of them in an international market.

And then on top of that, if you look at farmers they're going to pay more for insurance, their crop insurance, the GRIP goes way up and the coverage goes way down. And isn't it going to be fun? And then you talk to those that designed it. They said, well you're right; that's the case. And do you know what they say? Well it's going to be market responsive and we're going to reduce the moral hazard.

Do you know what moral hazards are going on out there when people are going broke and they're losing their farms? Can you imagine the pain and the suffering with no security when you had it before? You have no idea what moral hazard is.

And those that designed it, whether it's Professor Furtan and others, will tell me the moral hazard is there with any government program and it's not eliminated with these changes. And the real moral hazard, these people are worse off under the NDP and they're broke, and they need help and they're going to do what they have to do to survive.

You want to see moral hazard. I'll tell you, the NFU (National Farmers Union) isn't proud of you guys. And the NFU supported the CCF. The NFU thinks you are hypocrites, fools.

An Hon. Member: -- Where's the cost of production?

Mr. Devine: -- Where's the compassion, let alone the cost of production? Where's the understanding? Why do you let these bureaucrats tell you that you have to wreck everything?

SaskPower rates are up; SaskTel rates up; gas rates are up; school taxes are up; RM (rural municipality) taxes are up; lease fees are up; breeding fees in community pastures are up. All of these things because you're there to help them?

It's unbelievable, Mr. Speaker, what these people have got themselves into. When if they'd have even dared campaign in front of thousands of people in the Agridome and say this is what we're really going to do, they'd have just backhanded you, Mr. Minister of Agriculture, right out the door, just like they did here a couple of months ago. And you know it.

Where's your integrity? Where's your idea of how you're going to make it work? And you can't say, Mr. Minister, but the federal government has to have all the solutions. The federal government has put more money into the province of Saskatchewan in the last few years than in the history of the province. And you know that.

Transfer payments are up. Money is up; \$13 billion we brought into the province of Saskatchewan just for agriculture alone. And now they say, well I guess there's no need for more help because the Government of Saskatchewan has cut all help for farmers. What kind of a signal is that? Oh, we don't stick up for our farmers; we won't let them compete with Alberta.

It's sinful to have a moral hazard in a government program. You don't think there's moral hazards in government programs or government, period, under NDP with patronage and the cuts, verbal agreements. Verbal agreements aren't worth the paper they're written on, and every lawyer knows that. What a lamed-up excuse for that kind of activity.

Mr. Speaker, I want to just . . . I want to summarize. The Minister of Finance might think he's fooled his caucus members. He might. Because he can say on the first page of the budget that the deficit last year would be 265, but that's not true.

And he maybe can fool them for a while. But the public knows that we were even under our target the year before. And you add harmonization to that, Mr. Speaker, and you know you've got a couple of hundred million dollars. But he didn't implement that. He said, I'll just stack this way up. And then he says, well I'll take . . . I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll add on some high, high values for losses in privatization because we'll put in a book value of something. And then the market value will be something else.

And I just want to spend one little minute on this for anybody that cares to listen because . . .

An Hon. Member: -- No permanent impairment.

Mr. Devine: -- Exactly. Anybody that cares to listen. If you take something that you have bought or created and you put it on the market-place, you can imagine what the NDP will do. They'll say, well if the stock price goes up, you sold it too cheap. If the stock price goes down, you didn't know what you were doing. You can't win with the NDP because they don't believe in public investment. And if you put it on the market and it goes up, then all of your shares go up and there is no permanent cost, no permanent impairment of putting those shares on the market.

And when you look at Saskoil go up, you look at potash go up, you look at Cameco go up, those shares as they go up increase the value that the government owns in the shares. So don't be fooled by this book value stuff -- and particularly if it was put in in the wrong value. Because I've seen you guys complain every way. If it goes up, it's wrong; if it goes down, you're wrong. Do you want to breathe in or breathe out?

It's a little bit like trade. You didn't know. You were just against it. You're just against it.

That's the motto. I'm against public investment. I'm against private enterprise. I'm against farmers. I'm against pension legislation. I'm against people who want to have some entrepreneurial spirit. So the Minister of Finance stacked all that up, didn't implement harmonization. He said, oh, oh, last year there was a deficit.

Now the real sin in this, Mr. Speaker, the real sin is simply this: when the Minister of Finance falsifies that debt in one year, adds all these things that he can stack up, doesn't implement the harmonization, the rating institutions say, oh, oh. Oh, oh, what has he done here? He's increased the debt this year therefore we're going to have to drop his credit rating and up go the interest rates that people have to pay in the province of Saskatchewan.

And every government official across Canada knows that that's exactly what this man did. And he didn't care because he was so driven politically it didn't bother him at all if the people of Saskatchewan had to pay higher interest rates.

And that is the absolute truth because he could've met the target of 265 if he wanted to. But he did nothing. He did worse than nothing -- he even cost the province more because he just stacked it up. Then he comes in this year with a \$500 million deficit plus all these taxes and the credit rating's lower than it's ever been -- all for political purposes. And the irony of this -- the irony of it for anybody that's been in politics for any particular time -- is that they did this on the soul and the heart and the memory and the history of Tommy Douglas.

That is just sad, to say the least, for anybody that has any genuine respect for the man that was premier in this province for 15 to 20 years. To say we're doing this because Tommy would have did it, he would have done it just like that.

Mr. Speaker, in democracy we know that truth is extremely important. Not that large a percentage of people around the world live with the freedom of democracy. Truth is important. To not be truthful in a campaign or in this legislature is serious, serious business -- to give false information. I looked up the big L-word in the dictionary, Mr. Speaker. I can't say it in . . . well I guess I could say the word, the word lie. I'm not calling anybody that, but the word lie.

The Speaker: -- Order. I think the member knows . . . I have listened very carefully and on a number of occasions I think I could have called the member, and I let it go. To say that somebody falsifies in this legislature is getting very close. And to call people fools in this legislature is very close to being unparliamentary. And I think the Leader of the Opposition . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'll throw somebody else out if he keeps on interrupting.

I think the member knows that you cannot do indirectly what you can't do directly. And therefore you can't use the word lie here even indirectly. And I think the member, if he doesn't know it, I'm sure he'll abide by that ruling.

Mr. Devine: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I understand completely. I can't use the word, but I'm trying to find, in expressing the frustration of the public, what in the world went on last fall and what's happened now. And they're saying things like: I didn't think they would do this. It's not . . . it's false information. They feel like they've been deceived -- cheated. They think it's offensive that nobody told them this was what was going to happen. They find it disgusting. They think that it's . . . some say it's sinful. It's painful. To say the least, it's painful to go through what the public is going through today having believed in the CCF and the NDP. It's miserable, the misery is there.

And to see it happening over and over and over again with people in every walk of life -- I can't think of a group they've left out. People call it treason. People feel: I feel like I've been betrayed. Now I can maybe not use those words, but I'll tell you, you go to people who were laid off today or you go to people who were hurt or you go to people who have lost their pension, and it's a break of faith. It's pitiful, pathetic, weak, cowardly. And you could go on.

You find the words to justify to your wife and your family when you go home at night and say: is this why you got elected? Is this what it's about? So you could have a \$500 million deficit this year and cause all this pain? And you'll say to your husband or you say to your wife: oh, yeah, that's the plan, and that's why we had to fire these people and cancel the pension plan and charge them more for health and hurt farmers and scare out business and raise income tax. We had to do this because it's really the right thing.

And your wife or your husband will say: but why didn't you tell the public that? Why didn't you tell them that you were going to do things like that? And you'll say: well, they said there was a \$265 million deficit. Your wife would say: did you believe that deficit? And you'd probably say: well, no, probably it was higher. Well she'd say: well how could you then promise to take the taxes off? How can you sit across the table? You've deceived them.

We've had plebiscites in this province where people spoke up in democracy, and that's very important -- democracy. And your wife would say, didn't the people speak to us and say, I want a pro-life stance in this province? Didn't they say that? And your wife would say, why don't you honour that? And you say, well we don't believe in democracy; the people don't really count. Is that what you say? Is that how you get away with it?

And people will say, I want to see balanced budget legislation. And they voted for that. And you come in with a \$500 million deficit. And your wife or your husband would say, is that what you meant? Why didn't you tell them?

And people want to vote on the Constitution. And the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan today said: well, Mr. Prime Minister, we don't have to vote on the Constitution. Democracy in Saskatchewan doesn't matter; we'll deem it to be democratic.

Well you go tell your wife and your mom and your husband and your friends just how democratic the New Democratic Party is. It's undemocratic as we've seen in the history of this country. You've cancelled contracts retroactively; changed it for farmers.

But the real thing is, you can't look at yourself in the mirror. And you shouldn't be able to look at your wife and your husband and your family and your sons and daughters and say, well really we were just going to do this but we didn't want to tell them because we wouldn't get elected. And they say, is that what you're all about? Is that it?

An Hon. Member: -- They know what happened.

Mr. Devine: -- Well I'm telling them what happens. The member chirps up. She says, well you know what happened. You've got a \$500 million deficit, that's what happened. You're worse than previous administrations -- 500 million.

You go tell them. You go tell them, Mr. Speaker. You go tell them. You tell your families that you have deceived the public and you've treated them this way. And actually it was the plan all the time. And you got elected on the big L-word. The big L-word got you elected.

The Speaker: -- I think on that note, it being 5 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.

The Assembly adjourned at 5 p.m.