

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

March 10, 1981

## EVENING SESSION

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE (continued)

**MR. PREBBLE:** — Mr. Speaker, before we adjourned at 5 p.m. I was making reference to some of the initiatives that I thought should be seriously looked at in the Department of Urban Affairs, and also pointing out the very significant increase that has been given to urban transit, within the funding for that department, for which I wanted to congratulate the Minister of Urban Affairs.

I wanted to touch on one other area in that regard, the importance, to my constituency in Saskatoon-Sutherland, and to the people in Saskatoon as a whole of the Meewasin Valley Authority.

The MVA (Meewasin Valley Authority) has been under considerable attack in the past year. Much of that attack has been unjustified in my view. There certainly were improvements that were required in the operation of the Meewasin Valley Authority. I have disagreed with the authority myself on some occasions with respect to its approval of the Saskatoon chemical plant expansion, and its position on the location of a uranium refinery.

But, Mr. Speaker, the objectives of the Meewasin Valley Authority — concentrating on the protection of the river bank, preventing undesirable high-rise development along the river bank, preserving the natural habitat along the river bank outside of Saskatoon — in my view, are objectives which are not only to the benefit of people in Saskatoon and those who live along the river bank, but are objectives that are of concern to the province as a whole.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that that is why it's not an easy decision, in my view, despite the voice of the people in Corman Park, which has been a pretty clear voice with respect to the fact that they don't want to be part of the MVA. The reason that issue is not an easy one to resolve is that the river bank is a provincial resource. And it's a provincial resource that has been under attack from people who live along the river, many of whom are of good intent, but some of whom — most notably I want to point out Wally Hamm — are land speculators. If we were to look at the real reason why some of those people are raising serious questions about the MVA, I believe that one of the reasons may well be their interest in profit from selling land along the river, without that land being properly controlled.

In closing my remarks this evening, I want to speak on a matter that, I suppose, members on this side of the House, and members opposite would be surprised if I did not touch upon in my remarks; that, of course, is the whole issue of uranium development and the continued position of our government on that issue. I don't want to repeat remarks that I made earlier in the House on this matter, but I want to raise an issue that has become clearer in the last year as a result of work that the churches in Saskatchewan have done in researching this issue.

The question that is of central importance here is to begin to look more closely at who,

in fact, is proposing to mine uranium in northern Saskatchewan. Who, in fact, are the private uranium mining companies that are exploring for, and developing uranium in the North, and who, in many cases, have joint ventures with the Government of Saskatchewan on uranium mining developments, and I want to look at these companies more closely because I think these companies reflect an argument that has been made again and again by those who oppose the industry — that there is a direct connection between those who mine uranium and those who are involved in the nuclear weapons industry.

I am going to just comment on the record of a few of the companies that are proposing to develop uranium in the North. We already have Gulf Minerals operating, Mr. Speaker. They have a uranium mine and mill operation at Rabbit Lake and they are proposing another one for Collins Bay. If you look at Gulf Minerals and their activities, for instance, in New Mexico, you find that Gulf is the company that is exploring for uranium and drilling and developing uranium deposits in the sacred mountains of the Navaho Indians, very much to the opposition of the Navaho, I might say, Mr. Speaker.

If you look at the next proponents for uranium mining, Canadian Occidental petroleum, and its proposal for development at McLean Lake, if you look at who owns Canadian Occidental Petroleum you'd find that the majority shares are held by the Hooker Chemical Company, which left us the Love Canal legacy at Niagara Falls Mr. Speaker, and is responsible for dumping thousands and thousands of tons of toxic chemicals at that location.

If you look at the proponents that come next — Esso, with its proposed development at Midwest Lake — we are referring to one of the major multinational oil companies that has been under attack recently for ripping off the ordinary Canadian with excessive profits on its sales of oil.

If we look at some of the other proponents exploring and developing uranium in northern Saskatchewan, we see E&B Exploration Ltd. which has 26 joint ventures with the Government of Saskatchewan and has been directly involved in sales of uranium to South Korea — South Korea, of course, being a military dictatorship, South Korea being committed to developing nuclear weapons ever since 1975; South Korea very much believed, at this point, by most in the scientific community to have obtained nuclear weapons.

If we look at some of the other companies which are exploring for uranium in northern Saskatchewan and which have a number of various exploration projects under way, we see, for instance, Union Carbide which is known to be one of the major companies in the uranium enrichment business in the United States. Union Carbide was responsible for training the South African technicians who worked at the Union Carbide enrichment facilities. Oak Ridge, for several months and in some cases several years and as a result of the training that Union Carbide provided those officials, the South Africans were able to develop an enrichment plant in South Africa which was responsible for supplying bomb grade ore which was used in the recent nuclear tests conducted by the South Africans and the Israelis in 1980.

If we look at another company, Mr. Speaker, Wyoming Minerals, we find that Wyoming Minerals is directly connected to Westinghouse. Westinghouse, of course has been directly involved in the production of nuclear weapons for many years. It has been working on the development of the Trident missile system which, I am sure, all members on this side of the House at least oppose. It has been directly responsible for

the sale of a nuclear reactor to the Philippines; that reactor had 200 safety defects; it was located on, and is being constructed on the site of a 1971 tidal wave, over an earthquake fault and near five volcanoes, one of which was active in the 1960s. Obviously the risks of a major nuclear accident in that kind of location are of serious concern. Likewise, Westinghouse has been involved again in the sale of nuclear reactors to the South Koreans, who have been known to be interested in, and in fact have used uranium and nuclear technology for the development of weapons.

So, Mr. Speaker, my point is that, first of all, I think it's inappropriate for Saskatchewan to have these companies as partners in their joint venture operations. Secondly, I think it is inappropriate in the first place for the Government of Saskatchewan to be allowing these companies, given the inappropriate records that they have, to be operating in northern Saskatchewan, or in any part of Saskatchewan at all. But in addition to that, Mr. Speaker, I think it's clear that the same companies that are involved in mining uranium for so-called peaceful purposes are also directly connected to the nuclear weapons industry. If they do buy Saskatchewan uranium for energy purposes, they are also operating in many other parts of the world, so that they will simply substitute our uranium, use that for energy purposes, and use uranium from other countries for weapons purposes. This is another example, Mr. Speaker, of the link between uranium mining and nuclear weapons. I'm convinced that there is no question about that link any more. Most of the churches in Saskatchewan are convinced that there is no question about that link any more, and it's simply one more reason, above all the others that I've given in this House on previous occasions, why Saskatchewan should be declaring a moratorium on further expansion of the uranium industry.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that it is therefore inappropriate for the Government of Saskatchewan to be providing another \$126 million or \$136 million for uranium exploration and development in Saskatchewan this year, and I once again urge the Government of Saskatchewan to look seriously at declaring a moratorium.

Now, having said that, Mr. Speaker, I think that, despite my reservations about this area of the budget and about some of the others that I've indicated earlier, there is no question on the whole — after all, one's support for a budget or for a government or a political party is based on its total program — that when you look at the total program of this government and its total budget, it is one that is truly worthy of support. It is one that is providing a major expansion in social programs. I made reference earlier, Mr. Speaker, to how pleased I am with the new initiatives that are being taken in energy conservation and that are being taken in developing the ethanol plant, how pleased I am with the major initiatives in day care (which I hope will be followed with a government program to provide direct operating grants to the day care centres), how much I support the initiatives that are being taken with respect to lowering nursing home fees and expanding the benefits under the nursing home program, how pleased I am with the preventive health package that has been presented in this budget, and the new chronic care facility that has been presented in this budget, and the new chronic care facility that is being made available and constructed in Saskatoon, and will very much benefit my constituents. I think there is no question about the good intent of the Government of Saskatchewan with respect to the way it's planning to spend its resource revenues, even those gained from uranium.

I might just point out, in fact, that the revenues from uranium are very limited this year. They are only projected to be in the vicinity of approximately \$26 million, I believe, in contrast to the \$600 million from oil, and the \$294 million from potash. It's a clear example that we don't need uranium in order to develop progressive social programs.

The proposed social programs are indeed progressive, and it's because of those programs and the initiatives that are also being proposed in our energy package that I will be delighted, Mr. Speaker, to support strongly the budget that's before us today. Thank you.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, let me begin by joining others in extending my congratulations to my colleague, the Hon. Ed Tchorzewski, the Minister of Finance for carrying on the tradition of NDP governments by presenting to the people of Saskatchewan another progressive and excellent budget. It's a budget that is well-received by the people of Saskatchewan. It's a budget that completes, in a period of less than two and one-half years, the five-year election program promises made by the New Democratic Party in the fall of 1978. And, Mr. Speaker, it's a budget that is applauded by business, labor, civic elected officials, our farmers, educators and the list goes on.

Mr. Speaker, let us look at some of the newspaper headline stories after the budget was presented. They tell the reaction at a glance. And let me quote: "Business, Labor Representatives Please with the Budget." "Health Care Given a Shot in the Arm." "One Billion Dollars Capital Spending to Spur on 4,000 Jobs." "Aid for Bus System to Jump 160 Per Cent." "Water Assistance Up 50 Per Cent." "Northern Saskatchewan Gets Extended Job Training Programs." "Day Care Spending to Double: Family Income Plan Also Up."

Mr. Speaker, these are pretty positive headlines. And here are the reactions of some businessmen. Let me quote. "There is no question the government could fight an election with this budget," said Lorne Humphrey, president of the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce. "They've angered no one with this budget," he continued.

Terry Ennis, manager of the Saskatchewan Construction Association used the word 'sensational' in reacting to the construction job creating programs. And he went on to say:

Any time a government gives a grant, for instance, for business improvements in a town, it obviously does not hurt our industry.

Mr. Speaker, Gerry Edwards, president of the Regina Chamber of Commerce, put it this way:

It's a basic budget, planning for a reasonable year ahead.

And I agree. These are positive comments, Mr. Speaker, from people who are not known to be flaming socialists or New Democratic Party supporters.

Nadine Hunt, president of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labor, said she was 'pleasantly surprised.'

Mr. Speaker, the job of a sensitive government is to try to know and to understand people's needs and people's wants, to try in some way to feel the pulse of the people it represents, to assess what are the priorities of the vast majority of people and then to use its resources, authority and intelligence to distribute the public revenues fairly and to develop a plan to use some of the current revenues to build a better future. Perhaps,

Mr. Speaker, that is what this budget does — distributes our current resources fairly to the people and builds for a better future, a good life now and even a brighter tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, this may not be a perfect budget, but no Minister of Finance has ever introduced one. But this is a good budget, Mr. Speaker. Today, I want to elaborate more fully on some of the announcements made last Thursday coming under my ministry, urban affairs and housing and the urban native package. Before doing that I want to record my congratulations to several members of this legislature, Mr. Speaker. Since I did not take part in the throne speech debate and thus missed the opportunity to congratulate the newly elected members during the by-election last fall, I wish to do so now: Jack Chapman for Estevan, Neil Hardy for Kelsey-Tisdale, David Miner for The Battlefords.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — I congratulated all of you on your election last November. If I had any advice to offer you gentlemen, it would be this: reject the sometimes poor performance of all members; note and observe the good contributions and performances and learn from them. Work hard; be humble; be yourself. Respect this place and defend the parliamentary system; it may not be perfect but a better one has not yet been devised. Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate Bob Long and Dwain Lingenfelter who have been appointed to cabinet and who have taken on the tough jobs of Ministers of Highway and Transportation, and Social Services. I wish you well. In the short three months since you assumed your responsibilities you have demonstrated that you will stand up to the challenge of those responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, it is only 20 months since the separate Department of Urban Affairs was created and I was assigned the responsibility of heading up and giving leadership to that new department. I can report that we have put together an excellent staff; we have reorganized the department as a result of a split. However, the reorganization is still going on. We have established fairly good communications with the 495 villages, towns, and cities that we are trying to serve. We have an on-going dialogue with SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) — well, at times we differ. I believe there is a healthy relationship and respect for each other's views.

We have undertaken a number of initiatives. The one that excites me most is the renewal and revitalization of downtown areas of our Saskatchewan communities, our cities, our towns and villages. Mr. Speaker, the main street development program is a partnership arrangement between the communities and the departments of industry and commerce and urban affairs. Its purpose is to upgrade and improve main street shopping areas with landscaping, street lighting, parking and sidewalk pavement projects. We provide grants of up to 50 per cent of cost of store-front renovations, up to an established maximum. To date, Mr. Speaker, over 150 communities have participated in the main street program. For 1981-82, \$400,000 is provided in the urban affairs budget and \$900,000 in the budget of the Department of Industry and Commerce to continue with this program. That's a total of \$1,3 million, largely to be spent on our towns and villages. Further examples of this program and our commitment are exemplified in the major downtown office and commercial complexes.

In both the cities of Weyburn and Regina, provincial office buildings were used as catalysts for commercial redevelopment projects in key downtown locations.

Over the past year and a half the province's commitment has been extended to include downtown revitalization projects, partnerships with the cities of Prince Albert and Swift Current. Gateway North Place in the hart of Prince Albert is under construction on land assembled by the municipality with financial assistance from the province. In January of this year, Mayor Cliff Wright and I announced that the province and the city of Saskatoon had agreed to a similar partnership arrangement to guide the implementation of the south downtown revitalization project in that city. The concept is a keystone of the major plan for Meewasin Valley Authority.

In this budget, Mr. Speaker, we are providing \$972,000 by way of loans pursuant to agreements we entered into with these cities to help their downtown revitalization. Continuing population growth in our urban centres, coupled with an ever-increasing cost of energy, make it imperative to ensure that areas for re-creation and leisure are located close to home. We are, therefore, helping large communities with urban park development. Those most recent example of this type of initiative is the Wakamow Valley Authority in Moose Jaw. During this session my colleague, the Minister of Labor, the hon. Gordon Snyder, will be introducing legislation to establish this new authority. In this budget we are providing \$162,000 as the province's share of operating and capital costs.

Mr. Speaker, this year's budget also includes \$821,000 as the province's share of the annual operating cost of the Meewasin Valley Authority in Saskatoon. Mr. Speaker, we also budgeted \$50,000 being one-half of our contribution towards the cost of preparing land management study for the Little Red River Park area in Prince Albert.

Mr. Speaker, housing is a very important component of the urban fabric, and one which our government takes very seriously. Our record speaks for itself. The co-operative housing program was introduced in 1974. The purpose of this program is to provide decent housing for families who live in our urban centres. Since '74, over 1,000 units have been built for families in communities both large and small. Families who build their own homes by joining and forming a co-operative group realize significant costs savings through bulk purchasing of materials and help provided by the housing corporation. Perhaps more importantly, Mr. Speaker, they learn to work together, to achieve their common goal of obtaining decent and quality housing for themselves and for their children. Without our housing assistance, few of these families who are currently enjoying pride of ownership could have possibly achieved that goal.

Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan, as of now, we have approximately 70,000 farmers. All of us in this province have long enjoyed the fruits of our farmers' labors in creating our current stable and prosperous economy. Mr. Speaker, I was raised on a farm. I still have relatives on the farm, and I have many friends who are still farming. Therefore, it seem only just and fair that our farmers be granted equal opportunity to acquire the same good quality housing that our urban residents presently enjoy. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce today the introduction of a farm housing program. This program will fulfil yet another commitment made by the government to the people of Saskatchewan during the last election. The program is based on the co-operative housing building program. However, we recognize the different kinds of housing requirements of farm families that set them apart from urban dwellers. Therefore, where it is practical, there are significant variations from the co-operative housing building program. They are as follow, Mr. Speaker.

First, because farmers in many cases I've isolated from other families, they will not be required to form a co-operative to build their own home under the program.

Secondly, under the farm housing program, farmers may offer security for their loan through a promissory note or a second mortgage. This means that farmers who already have loans on their farm for purchases of land or equipment, as most farmers do, will still be able to take advantage of this new program.

Mr. Speaker, farmers pay their bills. Farmers are a good investment and they are a good security for us. Due to the unique cash flow situation of farm incomes, applicants will have their own choice of payment period. They can either pay monthly, semimonthly, or on an annual basis. The standard loan amount will be \$47,000, but this may be increased by as much as \$5,000, depending on the services farmers require, such as wells, septic tanks or extension of power lines. Loan repayment will be subsidized when necessary, up to \$1,800 a year, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — This is in addition to an interest rate which, like the co-op program, will be set at the low end of the market. Mr. Speaker, like the co-op program, the farm housing program will be 100 per cent provincially funded. You know, Mr. Speaker, I had hoped that the federal government would have agreed to cost share this program, but after three years of intensive negotiations, both with the Tory government in Ottawa and with the Liberal government in Ottawa, we were unable to reach agreement on a program under CMHC (Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation). The fact is that neither the Tories in Ottawa nor the Liberals in Ottawa like our farmers. They distrust our farmers, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — Our eligibility requirements state that the applicant must live on the farm for more than nine months of every year and also must derive his principal income from the farm operation. This will ensure that assistance is directed to full-time family farmers, not to part-time hobby farmers.

Through the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation's staff, applicants will receive both technical and administrative assistance with the design, cost estimating and construction of the house. Farm families will also have the option of building through a general contractor. For the 1981 fiscal year, we have budgeted for 100 units to be build under the farm housing program.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, in 1979, we as a government examined the specific needs of our disabled citizens. We concluded there was a need to provide housing accommodation that is adapted to their special housing needs.

Under our public housing program, the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation constructed a special apartment complex in Regina. It is know as Huston Heights, located on Sangster Boulevard. It was completed in the summer of 1979. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I invite members of the legislature, from both sides of the House to visit this facility. They will find very attractive accommodations and this may be a good and a rewarding experience. This was the first such accommodation in Saskatchewan designed to provide independent living for the disabled.

We realize that an apartment complex is only one type of housing solution for these citizens. Many disabled people would prefer to remain in their own homes. Unfortunately, private dwellings in most cases, are not built to encompass the critical housing adjustment necessary to adequately house the disabled.

Well, 1981 has been declared Year of the Disabled by the United Nations; therefore, I am happy to announce a home repair program this year for our disabled, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — This program will provide financial assistance to modify homes occupied by disabled persons, thereby increasing the independence and mobility of the disabled family member. The assistance provided will be in addition to the residential rehabilitation program. We will also raise the maximum eligibility income level for these applicants applying under the residential rehabilitation program from \$12,000 to \$16,500. Mr. Speaker, parents with a disabled child will also be eligible. The final details of the program are still being worked out, but we will be making a detailed announcement of them within the next few days.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation's new infill housing program was stated last year in Regina to complement our downtown revitalization programs. The intent of the infill program is to help revitalize older inner city neighborhoods, encouraging current families to remain and other families to move back to these areas. The program, in co-operation with participating municipalities, banks land in older inner city neighborhoods by acquiring units that have been deteriorating beyond repair and replacing them with new accommodation. Other better quality houses will be renovated.

To encourage participation from the private sector in this program, we sponsored an architectural competition. Architects from across the province and from other provinces submitted proposals to us demonstrating their ideas and concepts of sensitive infill redevelopment. Final judging of the five finalists will be completed on March 31.

Mr. Speaker, I am very excited about the very innovative plans that have been submitted. They will help to meet our objective to maintain the character of the existing neighborhood. The Regina infill housing program was started as a pilot project. We are now examining and working on the details of extending the program to other centres, both large and small, Mr. Speaker. I believe that infill housing will contribute to any increased level of housing activity in Saskatchewan in 1981 and in the future.

I am sure that most members are aware that the federal high interest rate policies of both the Liberals and the Tories, together with the unavailability of the capital cost allowance, caused a substantial drop in house starts in Saskatchewan last year, as it did right across the country. Housing starts during the year totalled 6,250, down from 11,700 in 1979. While I regret the decline, on a per capita basis of houses built, Saskatchewan did better than most provinces.

In spite of the lack of action by the federal government to encourage construction activity, our government was able to prevent an even large decline by assisting over 1,600 housing starts, or 26 per cent of the total provincial starts. I think we can be justly proud of our record, especially when you consider that federal funding was reduced sharply this last year. In spite of the funding restrictions, we were able to produce



almost 800 new public housing units and almost 450 new non-profit housing units for low and moderate income families and senior citizens. Additional units were also provided through the rural housing program and the urban native public housing program.

It is the government's intention, Mr. Speaker, to continue a high level of production of housing units for the people of Saskatchewan in 1981 through both existing programs and the new programs that I have just announced. In the current budget for housing, \$100 million is provided. That's a lot of money that will be provided by this government for housing in the coming year.

We are hoping that the federal government will modify its policy regarding interest rates and assistance for social housing programs in 1981 in order to create even higher levels of housing activities in this coming year.

I recently met with other provincial housing ministers in Newfoundland, and we jointly urged that the federal government agree to meet with us as soon as possible to discuss needed federal action in the field of housing.

Mr. Speaker, I turn now to responsibilities which are new to Saskatchewan urban affairs. I want first of all to discuss provincial funding for municipal and handicapped transit services. It has become apparent, with recent urban and energy-related developments in Saskatchewan, as elsewhere, that transit will assume a higher role in future development of our urban communities. Accordingly, the government assigned urban affairs the task of reviewing provincial transit policies and programs. The department was asked to determine what changes were necessary to meet the needs of municipal transit services in the 1980s. The revised program being introduced in this budget is the result of that review.

My colleague, the Minister of Finance, announced the first of two stages of increased financial assistance for transit for 1981, a total of \$3.9 million will be made available to our urban communities for municipal and for handicapped transit. That is a lot of money, Mr. Speaker, and it's a major increase in the current budget. Provincial support for the acquisition of transit vehicles, for transit related construction, for operation of transit systems and for demonstrations of new ideas and transit studies is included in the program. I will highlight each of them in turn.

With respect to assistance for transit vehicles, the province will continue to provide a 50 per cent share of the cost of purchasing buses for the four largest transit system that is in Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw and Prince Albert. However, we recognize the more limited resources of smaller centres and the greater impact expensive vehicle purchases have on smaller communities. Therefore provincial assistance for vehicles for smaller centres is being increased in this budget to 75 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

As well, we have extended assistance for vehicles to include not just new and replacement purchases, but complete refurbishment or overhaul, and the addition of accessories to improve efficiency and comfort of passengers. Refurbishment or overhauls of existing transit vehicles acknowledges that the price of a new, full-sized bus has increased beyond \$120,000 each. Therefore it may well be more economical to conserve and rebuild vehicles already in service. Mr. Speaker, we have extended funding to cover acquisitions of vans for municipal transit services in smaller cities and towns.

For all the municipalities with transit service, there will be available a basic annual service grant calculated on a per capita basis to assist with the cost of providing this service. For most transit operations in Saskatchewan, this grant will provide substantially increased assistance. It will amount to \$3 per capita for the cities of Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw and Prince Albert, and \$2 per capita to all other communities. In particular, it means potentially much greater provincial support for transit in communities such as Moose Jaw, Yorkton, Swift Current, Weyburn, Prince Albert, The Battlefords and smaller centres, helping to finance present services or offering the opportunity to make improvements.

An annual incentive grant will be available for the province's four largest transit systems, those are in Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw and P.A. This grant will be calculated on a formula, taking into account both the number of passengers carried by the transit system and the deficit which it incurred. The incentive grant formula will enable these transit systems to earn additional provincial assistance either by increasing ridership, or by making their transit operation more efficient and more cost-effective. The formula will, therefore, be a direct measure of performance and efficiency and will provide a very firm incentive. In other words, Mr. Speaker, the more efficient the service they operate, the more money they will get.

The last component of assistance for transit is for demonstrations of new ideas and for more transit studies, which may be required. The province will continue to provide 75 per cent for demonstration projects. However, much depends, Mr. Speaker, on the municipalities doing their part. Providing transit services is, after all, a municipal responsibility. Their operational decisions will determine the degree to which the objectives of this program are achieved, and whether transit plays the role it should in the future.

Mr. Speaker, this government respects and supports local autonomy. The transit program is consistent with this position because, while we offer incentives, the key planning and local financial decisions rest with the municipalities.

The provision of adequate sewer and water facilities for our urban municipalities is a continuing high priority with this government. Over the year, the municipal water assistance board has provided a total of over \$18 million to almost 500 communities for these essential services. However, increasing demands are being placed on the municipal water assistance board program because of population growth, increasing per capita consumption, higher expectations for water quality, higher environmental standards and the need to replace obsolete and inefficient systems.

We had hoped that the federal government would live up to its responsibility in this important area of infrastructure by continuing the community services contribution program, or CSCP as it is commonly known. In 1980, \$2 million of CSCP funds were allocated to the municipal water and sewer projects. However, as part of putting its house in order, at the expense of the provinces, the federal government has terminated the community services program.

It is disheartening, Mr. Speaker, to see the lack of support on the part of the Government of Canada. Our government cannot stand by and see an inordinate financial burden placed on our municipalities for basic services, such as water and sewer. Hence, in 1981, the MWAB (municipal water assistance board), will be provided with a 50 per cent increase over its 1980 appropriation. This \$3 million will be made

available to help ensure that our towns and villages are able to avail themselves of these basic urban services, in spite of federal lack of concern.

We are also looking further into the future. During 1981 we will be carrying on a comprehensive study and analysis to determine the water and sewer needs in the province over the next decade.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to turn to the financial support we provide to our urban municipalities. In 1971, when the Blakeney government took office, operating grants to urban municipalities totalled a mere \$974,000 — less than \$1 million. In 1981-82, revenue sharing alone will provide \$53.9 million — from less than \$1 million to almost 54 million in 10 years. Mr. Speaker, that's performance. We promised and we delivered.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — These substantial funds are provided as a guaranteed source of income to municipalities. Revenue sharing is not a program that can be cut by the provincial government. Therefore, it is what its name says it is, a program whereby we share our revenue with municipalities by setting up a pool of money that is increased each year according to an escalator based on the major economic growth indicators. This year the escalator is 10.2 per cent, and the pool has increased from \$48.9 million to \$53.9 million. Since the introduction of revenue sharing in the fiscal year '78-'79, operating grants to urban municipalities have increased, Mr. Speaker, by 130 per cent. That is 130 per cent over four years and by any measure indicates our commitment to local government. Revenue sharing is our major program of assistance to cities, towns, and villages. It is an excellent program that provides municipal governments with an additional revenue source, one that reflects the economic well-being of the province. It also encourages strong and autonomous local government by providing more than 95 per cent of this money on an unconditional basis. Now in this way communities can set their own budget priorities and spend the moneys as they wish with no strings attached.

Mr. Speaker, in addition we have a number of capital grant programs that provide substantial funds to urban municipalities. In 1981 we have budgeted \$43.6 million in 12 different programs, up over 18 per cent from last year. This, Mr. Speaker, compares to \$2.6 million 1971. Yes, \$2.6 million when this government took office and \$43.6 million this year. The community capital fund alone will provide \$18 million or 50 per cent more than we did last year.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the cumulative figures are staggering. In the last year of the so-called free enterprise government in Saskatchewan, the province provided a mere \$3.6 million in operating and capital support to its cities, towns and villages. In '81-'82 we are providing \$97.5 million, Mr. Speaker. Those figures demonstrate our commitment to urban government in Saskatchewan. They also demonstrate our commitment to the property tax payer in our communities. Through these programs and through the provision of an additional \$74 million in property tax rebates to individual taxpayers this year, we estimate that the average property tax bill will be reduced by \$496. Mr. Speaker, that's taking the revenue sharing and the capital grants together and adding to that the rebates that we provide, which results in every taxpayer, on the average, having his property taxes reduced in this province by \$496. This is an impressive figure.

There is no doubt that direct grants to municipalities and rebates to the individual taxpayer help to keep property taxes down and are of great assistance to our communities. They also help our municipal councils plan for a healthy financial future. Opposition members may feel that I am a biased observer.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I have here in my hand a municipal rating analysis for the city of Saskatoon. This is not an analysis by the Department of Urban Affairs or by the Department of Finance. This is an analysis by the Canadian Bond Rating Service Ltd. of 1600 Dorchester Boulevard W., Montreal, not an institution known to be biased toward the New Democratic Party or New Democratic governments. Mr. Speaker, let me quote a couple of paragraphs from this document. It says, and I quote:

City officials have established a sound and efficient record in the managements of their financial responsibilities.

The city has evidenced an enviable current budget record. Only once, in the past five years, has it incurred a deficit. This deficit occurred in 1975 and amounted to only 1 per cent of the total expenditures. The municipal tax rate was increased by 10.6 per cent in 1980 following three consecutive years of no increases whatsoever.

Overall, the average property owner in Saskatoon pays less provincial and municipal taxes and utility costs than a taxpayer in Toronto.

In good old Tory Ontario, the people pay more in provincial taxes, more in municipal taxes, and more in utilities, Mr. Speaker. This is what is stated by the Canadian Bond Rating Service Ltd.

Let me carry on, Mr. Speaker:

The total bill debt burden is low, and has actually been decreasing in recent years.

Direct debt as a per cent taxable assessment is only 5.4 per cent. Since taxable assessment is below market value, when this assessment is equalized, the direct debt will be less than 1 per cent on a market value concept. Total debt charges comprise 4 per cent of total expenditures and 15 per cent of total tax revenue. The city finances the major part of its capital expenditures internally. In the next five years debentures will finance only 18 per cent of total forecast capital expenditures.

There you have it, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Saskatoon City Council and its administration deserve much credit, but they could not have done it without our support, Mr. Speaker. Lower taxes in Saskatchewan — note, lower taxes in Saskatoon — provincial taxes, municipal taxes, and utilities than in Tory Toronto. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that Mr. Rousseau will appreciate it. I would like him to read some truths instead of some fabrications.

It is a low debt burden that has been decreasing in recent years. That is the impact, Mr. Speaker, of our revenue-sharing program. That is the impact, Mr. Speaker, of our community capital program. Gross debt as a per capita of taxable reassessment dropped from 18.1 per cent in 1975 to 12.8 per cent in 1979. That was a decrease of almost 29 per cent. I could quote more figures, but I think I've made my point. Saskatoon's rating is

double A high. While American cities are going bankrupt, our cities financial health is double A high. That is what this government has done and continues to do in this budget for our cities, towns, and villages . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, I do, yes I do.

Mr. Speaker, 1980 was a great year for the province. The Celebrate Saskatchewan activities indicated the vibrant health of our towns and villages. They proved again the validity of our concept of the Saskatchewan option. We believe that people should have a choice, and if they choose to live outside of our cities and larger towns, they should have more or less the same amenities as the people who live in our larger urban centres.

This is not a new concept, Mr. Speaker. It's a philosophy that has served as the basis for a rural and improved highway and grid road system under the Douglas administration. It is the philosophy that served as the basis for the community college system developed by this government, and the examples go on; union hospitals, regional libraries, home care, intermunicipal ambulance service, and the fibre optics network. Mr. Speaker, no other province supports its town and villages like Saskatchewan does.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — Take a look at our neighbors to the east and the west of us. The majority of Albertans live in Edmonton and Calgary. The majority of Manitobans live in Winnipeg. But in Saskatchewan, we have an option. The majority of our people do not live in Regina and Saskatoon. Our towns and villages remain viable. They remain good places to live. This budget continues the high level of support for our smaller communities, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — The main street development business improvement district program is continuing to fund \$1.3 million of help to the smaller communities. The budget for a municipal water assistance program is being increased by 50 per cent to \$3 million. The Department of Highways will administer phase two of its successful operation, the Open Roads program. Mr. Speaker, this is really a program to help our smaller communities to help our villages and our hamlets. One million dollars is being budgeted in the Department of Highways for that program. The six special planning area commissions in the Qu'Appelle Valley will receive additional financial support to allow 41 rural and small urban municipalities to co-operatively develop and administer developmental control policies in the valley.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps the best way to indicate the support that the Blakeney government has provided to small towns and villages over the past decade is to look at the revenue sources available to these municipalities. In 1971, property taxes accounted for two-thirds of municipal revenues. In 1979, however, property taxes accounted for only 43 per cent. Why? The answer, Mr. Speaker, is provincial government transfers to municipalities. These transfers include revenue sharing, the capital grants and grants in lieu of taxes, and special payments made by Crown corporations. Mr. Speaker, in 1971, these transfers totalled a mere \$1.8 million — less than 10 per cent of town and village revenue. In 1979, the \$1.8 million went up to \$19 million and now provides 32 per cent of their revenues. That, Mr. Speaker, is an impressive record, proof of our commitment to small-town Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, later on in the session, legislation will be introduced for establishment of a Saskatchewan Assessment Authority as a separate agency to serve both rural municipalities and our urban communities. The cities of Regina and Saskatoon will continue to do their own assessment of properties, and municipalities will not be required to contribute financially. In other words, the province will foot the bill.

The assessment authority will report to a cabinet minister. However, it is intended that the minister be other than the Minister of Urban Affairs or Minister of Rural Affairs or Minister of Education. In this way, we hope to promote the independent nature of the assessment authority and ensure equality of assessment, rural, urban and educational concerns. It is intended that the present Saskatchewan Assessment Commission, which is really the appeal agency, be converted to a Saskatchewan Assessment Appeal Board. There will be a 10 per cent staff increase and 18 per cent budget increase up to \$3.7 million. All of this is designed to strengthen the assessment functions. SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association), SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) and SSTA (Saskatchewan School Trustees Association) will be represented on the advisory board of the assessment authority.

Mr. Speaker, in January we mailed a copy of the final report of the urban law review committee to all members of the legislature. This report is now being studied and analysed by departmental officials, as well as by SUMA in individual local governments. We do not propose to act on the committee's recommendations during this session of the legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a few moments to discuss what I believe is the greatest challenge facing the people of Saskatchewan — that of bringing about real economic and social equality for people of Indian ancestry. Some of you will have heard me identify these issues before, all of you will hear me speak on them again. I am encouraged, Mr. Speaker, by many of the efforts our government is making and by the support received in providing opportunities for native people to help themselves. We're extending and expanding our programs this year. Certain new initiatives were announced in the budget speech last Thursday. Let me caution you — changes come slow. Perhaps if the hon. member would listen he may perhaps learn and be able to appreciate some of the things that we are doing and perhaps be also able to appreciate some of the problems our native citizens are facing, because I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this problem is not one-sided. It's a problem facing old people.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order! I wonder if some of the members could pay a little more attention to the decorum of this Chamber, or at least the decorum that we should be observing.

I'm continually being interrupted by the member who is the worst offender. I would ask members to pay attention to the decorum of this Chamber. Allow the other members to speak. When their opportunity comes, I'll protect them, and allow them to speak as well. But I can't do it for one side and not for the other side.

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, the situation will not magically improve over night for our native people. But the longer I work in this area of native development, the more committed I become, the more I realize and become convinced that we must be committed at all levels. We need commitment from people of all walks of life to understand and to help. We must develop complementary programs. In other words, Mr. Speaker, we will not succeed in employment without ensuring that education systems are in place. Educational opportunities depend on housing and other support programs. If we break any of the links, we throw everything into jeopardy. This is why we chose to use the vehicle of the urban native package, Mr. Speaker,. This is why we use a special cabinet committee to help develop and co-ordinate programs which are delivered by a variety of government departments and agencies.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to describe some of the components that make up the package and indicate the scale of increase over the last year. Some of my colleagues will outline the initiatives of their individual departments in much more detail. What I propose to do is to give you an overview of the urban native package for the coming year. Let me begin with education — an investment in the future. We're doubling our commitment from \$1.9 million last year to \$3.8 million for 1981-82.

You will recall that last year we initiated a native urban teacher education program with a class of 15 teachers in Regina, as well as 15 in Saskatoon. Next September, the program will be extended to Prince Albert. The Saskatoon and Regina operations will take in a new year class and they will go into the second year for their present students. This will require, Mr. Speaker, a 145 per cent increase in our funding for next year.

Another area of expansion is the community school program. We will be moving from funding 10 community schools last year to funding a total of 14 schools next fall in the cities of Prince Albert, Saskatoon and Regina. This has been a very successful program because it represents a united effort, Mr. Speaker, of the province, the school boards, the teachers and the parents. It is part of our government's philosophy of buck sharing, not buck passing, and it brings about identifications with the school system rather than alienation from it.

Another program slated for expansion in two Prince Albert schools is the nutrition program. It is already operating in Saskatoon and Regina.

This year the Department of Continuing Education will increase the job training and employment budget to \$2 million. This program has a range of components, including recruitment, training and job placement. They are negotiating for the delivery of many of these services by native organizations. This year they had a target of placing 100 native trainees in the private sector and Crown corporations. The target for 1981 is set at 200 trainees and permanent placements.

In support services, Mr. Speaker, for native people we are anticipating expansion in several key areas.

One significant area is day care, which is particularly important as a support service to native women, who are seeking educational and employment opportunities.

Perhaps even more important is the addition of staff within the community services branch of the Department of Social Services, who will assess program delivery by non-government native agencies and look at further alternatives for native people to

develop and deliver their own programs.

The native court-worker system of paraprofessional workers will expand to Punnichy, to Maple Creek, and five part-time workers will be funded to operate in northern Saskatchewan.

The Department of Health will hire a native health development officer to establish links between the department and native people with the intention of improving the delivery of health programs.

With the ongoing migration of native people to the cities, we are especially anxious to make the transition, Mr. Speaker, as easy as possible. We are determined that neighborhood relations should not be strained by the new balance. To aid in this transition, the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation is seeking to expand tenant counselling services in the cities of Regina, Prince Albert and North Battleford. It is our intention that the services be contracted to native organizations rather than carried out by government personnel. And certainly the provision of more and better housing is a must.

Mr. Speaker, let me now move to native economic development. native organizations recognize that ultimately the keystone of escaping from poverty, from prejudice and dependence is economic self-sufficiency. They have devoted a great deal of time, planning and energy to developing economic strategies, and it is essential that we respond to them. Steps are being taken with the Department of Industry and Commerce to increase the level of existing services to both Indian and native people.

The department will also provide \$610,000 for economic development fieldworkers who are under the director of the area directors of AMNSIS (Association of Metis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan). This year, I am pleased to report that the Department of co-operation and Co-operative Development is donating its efforts to the native package. Three native co-operative development workers will explain opportunities and assist in developing co-operative enterprises with native groups in Regina and Saskatoon.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to comment on the economic development foundation. While it is premature to announce the capitalization or administration of this program. I can say a few words on its history and on its intent. We have for some time now been aware of, and supporting, the efforts of native organizations to develop a comprehensive economic development strategy. Their planning is almost finished, and we are anxious to be able to explore a variety of joint ventures.

Mr. Speaker, I hope these measures will be appreciated and supported by all members of the legislature. I is my hope that in the next few months we will come up with a mutually acceptable policy administrative and capitalization structure, a structure that is workable, sound and will allow for experimentation.

When you consider the urban native package in its totality, you will see a series of initiatives that seek to change the system. They're measures which, for native people, can change a system from dependency to self-sufficiency. I'm not saying that our institutions are all wrong or that they generally don't serve us well, but they don't serve native people very well, and we have to challenge the system to ensure that they do.

Mr. Speaker, sometimes I wish we could allocate more money to these programs than



we have announced, but I am also aware that our institutions have the capacity to absorb only so much change in a given period of time, and that they can productively use only a certain amount of money and resources. That is why I am repeating what I said when I began to talk on this particular subject. We won't solve all the problems in 1981, but we expect to reduce them, and we will be back here again, promoting more and greater initiatives in the future.

Mr. Speaker, might I also say that the problems our people of Indian ancestry are facing will not be solved by government alone. It will require the good will and commitment from every organization, institution and individual. It will require commitment from employers and labor, from teachers and farmers and churches, professionals, universities — yes, everyone. Only then, only with that commitment, will we be able to make a change, a change which will provide our native people with an equality of opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few moments to talk about Regina, and what this budget means to the capital city. Now 1981 will be another special year for Regina. There will be a lot of construction completed. This will mean opening of new facilities to serve our citizens. We will also have many new construction starts, or planning of new projects, and when completed they will make Regina an even better place to live. Regina will be the beneficiary of numerous increased provincial grants which will help to keep property taxes down.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Will you improve the water?

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — I have already talked about it; too bad you weren't here. You should have stayed around and you would have been able to hear what we propose to do. You are not going to hear it; I don't propose to repeat it again. Stay in the House, and then you might be able to learn something.

Mr. Speaker, let me first of all look at health. It is a topic close to the hearts of most people, particularly those who have the misfortune to become sick. In the next few weeks, phase one and phase two of the Regina General Hospital regeneration will be made available and will open for use. I understand, Mr. Speaker, that the new energy centre will also open this spring. The total hospital regeneration, when completed will cost in the neighborhood of \$75 million. This spring we will be putting on stream 166 new beds. In addition the new dietary pharmacy, stores, and laboratory facilities will also open. As a result of the province assuming ownership and thus the capital costs of the Regina General Hospital, the city of Regina will save some \$30 million, Mr. Speaker,. That is equivalent to a mill rate saving of 10 mills over the next 20 years.

Mr. Speaker, I know the people of Regina, and for that matter of all Saskatchewan, are pleased to hear the announcement that a rehabilitation facility will be built in Regina to . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — . . . serve people injured on the job in industrial accidents, traffic accidents or on the farm, including those who may have the misfortune of having a stroke, heart attack or other condition. Mr. Speaker, I have advocated the construction of such a facility for a number of years; we now have the money to do it. In my opinion, after the new and renovated Pasqua Hospital opens (incidentally, phases

one and two will open in the spring of 1982), the cost of that facility and regeneration is somewhere in the order of \$55 million, and here again, at the provincial expense. When all other health facilities projects, now under construction, planned and committed, are completed in the new few short years, including such equipment as the CAT scanner in the Plains Health Centre, and the new linear accelerator in the Blair Memorial Cancer Clinic, Regina will be able to take pride in having among the best health facilities and equipment on the North America continent.

Mr. Speaker, I feel just a little bit proud that we have advanced so far in such a short period of time. I had the good fortune of being minister of health in the first four years of the Blakeney government. I was also privileged to help out in some of these starts that are now coming to fruition. As I said, after they are completed, Regina will be able to take pride in having some of the best facilities and equipment on the North America continent. As we know, we do have many qualified medical doctors, nurses and other health professionals who serve us well in this city. incidentally, Mr. Speaker, the new budget will provide \$80 million for operating costs in the four Regina hospitals. That's almost equal to the total amount spent by all hospitals in the province 10 years ago. Make a comparison. Ten years ago, all the hospitals in the province spent a little over \$80 million; now, in this city, the four hospitals will be spending \$80 million.

The city of Regina will also receive a 14 per cent increase to operate its city health department. Health services have always been a priority with the CCF and NDP governments. This budget is keeping up with that tradition, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. SMISHEK:** — In the next few weeks we will be opening four new housing projects in Regina — a total of 323 public housing units will come on stream for senior citizens and person with low and moderate incomes. These are all highrises or multi-family projects. I want also to announce today that in the next few weeks we shall be ready to go to tender with four large projects, near or in the downtown core area, which will provide 407 units of housing. Some of these will be built to serve our senior citizens, others for low- and moderate-income wage earners. Construction will start in a major way this year in the Cathedral and Albert-Scott area with the so-called infill housing program.

Our land assembly program, through the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation is working well. For example, 343 lots were developed last last fall in the southeast sector and all except 76 have been sold. These lots, completely developed, are sold for an average of \$16,500.

Lots are also available in the northwest sector of this city.

The city of Regina, like all urban communities in Saskatchewan, will be the recipient of our generous municipal grants program. here is an indication of what Regina will receive: revenue sharing over \$12.5 million; community capital fund, just about \$3 million; urban assistance, \$3.5 million; transit, over \$1 million; water pollution control \$200,000; the NIP (neighbourhood improvement program) final payment, \$150,000; and other capital grants, \$290,000.

In the case of school grants, the public system will receive \$24 million, and the separate system \$13.6 million. These generous grants, Mr. Speaker, will help to keep property taxes down in the city of Regina.

Mr. Speaker, the budget speech announced other projects for Regina — a new archives building and a new courthouse. What this means is new facilities and improved services for our people. It also means jobs during the period of construction. In Wascana Centre, two new buildings are under construction — the marina support structure and Wascana Place, the authority's headquarters. While these are not large projects, they all add up to the development of our cities and improve the services for our people. These are expected to open later this year.

Mr. Speaker, the biggest project under construction in this city is the Cornwall Centre. It is expected that the Saskatchewan Telecommunications Building will be officially opened early this fall; however, at the rate construction is proceeding, it may be earlier. Phase one of the retail and commercial complex and a 1,000 car parkade for Cornwall Centre are expected to be completed and open for business late this summer. Again, construction is proceeding very well.

The second phase of the program, which is providing 450 spaces of car parking, the Sears department store, and 154 units of housing is just about ready to start major construction.

Mr. Speaker, Cornwall Centre is an excellent development. It brings into the core of our capital city, new and modern office and commercial retail and department store facilities. We have taken some criticism for undertaking this project from members of the opposition and some of the media writers. Cornwall Centre, when completed and open for business, will be the envy, Mr. Speaker, of every city which compares in size to the city of Regina. It will save and strengthen the downtown core of Regina. It will give character and beauty to our city. It is economically sound. It will improve the quality of life in the city of Regina. Mr. Speaker, I am glad that I have been able to play a part in this very important development in this city.

I will oppose the amendment; I will support the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KATZMAN:** — Mr. Speaker, before I join in the debate, I would suggest to all members, when they have a chance, that they read the rules of this House, especially rule 309 which refers to reading speeches verbatim in the House. It is interesting to note that even though those are the rules . . .

Mr. Speaker, the budget did not address the areas of the pocketbook, the areas that every citizen of this province is concerned with. All it seems to address is how you fellows are going to take more money out of their pocket by more ways and different schemes. Even though you suggest there is a reduction in your budget, it is interesting to note that the actual income you are suggesting is higher in all cases.

The Minister of Education said we should have a little spirit of optimism. I agree with him. But the budget you just brought down doesn't give any. There is no incentive for the future. There is no incentive to create capital, which creates additional tax growth, which creates the growth of this province.

It would be a little more interesting if some of you fellows on that side would spend some time learning what it's like to earn some capital and cause some capital to be grown, beside a government job. I've been in that position. You should all maybe take a

lesson from the minister who used to be a car dealer. At least he knows what it's like to create wealth and then spread it around so everybody has a chance. The only thing you guys know about is how to tax the wealth of those who know how to make it and try go pass it around. Equal distribution — that should be your name — of misery, not of wealth, and not of the better times.

Before I get going Mr. Speaker, I would just like to comment. A while ago I informed the Minister of Labor that I would be bringing in some bills this year. There are two of them. One of them will be changes to The Trade Union Act. The other will be changes to The Labor Standard Act.

It is about time that the minister and the government on that side decide if they are in the business of making rules for unions or not making rules for unions, making rules for management or not making rules for management, and make sure that everyone is protected equally and has the same rights. These two bills to which I refer will cover these situations, and I will be announcing them in due course.

Mr. Speaker, as you noticed, the Minister of Labor brought in a bottle of, I think it was, Brut, to cover the smell that permeates his government. I realize that he's concerned with the smell that the budget is causing them to have.

We talk of all the major profits that the government has made in the Crown corporations. What are the other they other than hidden taxation? That's why our government collects additional funds.

Mr. Speaker, I noticed that the minister who just spoke, from a prepared text I might add, indicated that they're going to contract out some services. The members on this side for years, have been trying to find out how they could contract their services and what qualifications people have to have to get these contracts. It's the first time that you guys on that side have told us what the qualifications are going to be. That's why as the minister responsible for DNS says, "There are no qualifications to get the money." That's what he said from his chair. Let's put it on the record. Maybe there is a qualification that you are not willing to admit — it's called being a party supporter of the NDP.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KATZMAN:** — As the Minister of Labor said in this House (and I love to repeat this statement), when I asked him how much he gets from each union member through the Saskatchewan Labor Federation (and I suggested it was 15 cents), he said, "No Ralph, you're wrong, it's 25 cents." So we are back to the old statement that he who pays the piper calls the tune. When the Minister of Labor is asked to dance and your government is asked to dance, you ask, "What tune?" So you know, if you are supposed to waltz or jive.

Mr. Speaker, what we needed in this budget was a plan for the future to give jobs to our children as they come of age not, as has been the past under your government, send them to Alberta or somewhere else to earn a living. And they do come home, for homecomings and things like that. They don't come home to live and raise their families as we do.

Mr. Speaker, our senior citizens, who came to the province, broke the soil and made this province what it is today, need assistance as the pocketbook issues start to take their meagre incomes. I agree partly with the Minister of Labor. In a press release he

made the other day he seemed to indicate that pensions must be brought into line. The question is the method. He suggests Canadian pensions for everybody, and this, and this, and that different program. He's famous for quoting (I believe his line is) a compulsory pension for everybody that the Government of Saskatchewan will run, but Mr. Minister, that is not always the best program, something run by your government, especially your department. Your department, I have discovered, has become involved in a little bit of a rip-off. Yes, Mr. Member, a little bit of a rip-off. The Department of Labor, and if he looks into his department . . . yes, that may be the problem, he's been sitting too close to DNS (Department of Northern Saskatchewan).

Mr. Minister, there is documentation (and we will bring it up at the right time and we will table it at the right time), that your department charges for things and doesn't perform — a bit of a rip-off, just terrible. And as I say, when we get into detailed areas of the budget we will bring it forward so that we can discuss it. You should shudder, Mr. Minister, because your department is doing the rip-off.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Urban Affairs makes reference to the cities and the rural communities. He makes no reference to how the communities surrounding the major cities are concerned that they are being dictated to by the provincial government, and the city in the centre is telling them what they can do with their land and what they cannot do, and how they must plan the area of growth around.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister for Urban Affairs says, "Put your case out." Mr. Minister, when your estimates come out, that's when we'll take the time to go point by point into what you are doing that's improper. This debate is covered by a time length. All members wish to speak and therefore I do not want to get into all these situations because I could spend the next four days (which is all we have left) doing it.

Mr. Speaker, one of the topics that I like to talk about, and the Attorney General likes to talk about, is MVA (Meewasin Valley Authority). There was a vote, I understand, awhile ago — 1,400 votes cast; 1,200 people against the Attorney General's wishes and 200 in favor. As the editorial said in the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix, the Attorney General should listen to the wishes of the people and I suggest that to him.

We have another issue which concerns us in my constituency and it is a chemical plant in Saskatoon, which, I believe the government now owns. It seems they have two sets of rules. The Minister of the Environment stood on his feet the other day and guaranteed this House that if a refinery were to go anywhere in this province, there would be an environment hearing. He was guaranteeing that to the members, yet he waived an environment hearing on the addition to the chemical plants. Are there two sets of rules? I wonder. One for everybody else . . . Oh, I'm glad to hear the minister responsible for government services and tourism say there are three rules: one for the government, one for its friends and one for the guys who aren't on its side.

Mr. Speaker, during the budget speech we noted again that the government is going to be making additional funds on gasoline tax. As you know, they have this tax which keeps going up and nobody know it goes up because they don't have to bring a bill into the House to do it, like they used to. "That's pretty sneaky," as the Minister of Education says. I agree with him; it is sneaky but that's the way you guys operate all the time — sneaky.

Your taxation will go up at the time, but you will blame it on those fellows in Ottawa. You

blame everything on the fellows in Ottawa.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Who do they blame Sask Tel rates on?

**MR. KATZMAN:** — But how can you blame Sask Tel rates on Ottawa? How can you blame SGI rates on the people in Ottawa? How about Sask Power? That's another one. Oh, that one you will blame on the Government of Alberta. Once again the Minister of Labor is letting out his normal smell. But consider the source and that he has rotted in this place for so long. We need the spray.

Mr. Speaker, I don't plan to take too long on this budget.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KATZMAN:** — As you are aware, I take a very lengthy time in committee of the whole. And I'm just warning you that I will take the time that I usually do and ask questions for as long as I wish and until I get the answers that I want.

We see an agricultural program. But I look at it and wonder what's in it. Mr. Speaker, they indicate in the budget an ethanol project. Now, who recommended that? Who did most of the work before he became involved in politics? I suggest that it would be the present Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, Mr. Devine. May I suggest another person who has been involved? The member for Rosetown-Elrose, Mr. Swan. They are the fellows who had the insight to look at it. They are the fellows who had the insight to push it and it took their pushing to get you guys off of your derrieres and finally do something about it.

You know it was interesting during the minister's speech when he made reference to a transit system for small communities and towns. If I can get the minister's attention, Mr. Smishek, may I suggest that some of the small communities are presently looking at a commuter service to the cities when the people are basically better off in the communities. May I suggest to you that I was at a meeting a few weeks ago where there was some discussion by members of a council on starting a small transit system to bus the people to the city where a lot of them work, and to bring them home. And why did they discuss it? Because your government got into a rip-off situation again. They raised the STC (Saskatchewan Transportation Company) rates 119 per cent in one jump. So they have to look at a transit system of their own to get the people there. That's why they have to look at it. Once again you people are in rip-off situations.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Why don't they set up their own like they did in Wishart?

**MR. KATZMAN:** — That's what I just finished saying if you would listen. But as usual you guys on that side haven't learned to listen, you just yap, yap, yap.

Mr. Speaker, I know there are many more people who want in this debate. And, as I said earlier, I will have lots of time during committee of finance to discuss each and every suggestion that is here, and suggest to you fellows how to improve the situation.

What I'm waiting to hear, though, is when the Minister of Telephones get up and tell us all about his system's new invention, which they've worked on for a year or more, and how they're going to make multiparty lines into private lines. That system has been around but they're going to announce it when it's time for an election. That won't come now. We're going to hear the new system, you know; there are other things that are

around. We all know about it.

Tonight we hear the minister responsible for SMDC (Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation) talking about what you're doing in B.C. We've known about that since January 5. He said that you'll be opening an office shortly. Guys, you opened that office on January 1. You have two people working in that office, one male and one secretary. You buy all your equipment up at the co-op store. That's where your charge account is. Don't tell us something we don't know. Tell the people. You've been hiding it. I can tell you all about it. I could have told you months ago. Secretive government! You opened the office — no announcement — but today somebody found out and you announced it. Well, you can't hide everything fellows. We've know about that for months.

Mr. Speaker, it is time that we put incentive into making this province grow, giving those a chance they want to invest their life savings here, a chance to make this province flourish. We don't always need big government to do it for us. We are capable if doing it ourselves, but give us a chance. Make the rules fair so that we can get in and put our capital into this province so we can be proud of it. It doesn't always have to be the government. That's not the only way to do things. You know, it's terrible to admit it, Mr. Speaker, but there's more incentive to invest the people of Saskatchewan's money in the United States, in Alberta and other provinces than to invest it in our own province. What's the reason for that? It's you birds. That's the reason for that, because you don't know how to plan so that people can create wealth and have everybody want to invest their money in this province. The only people that come here are the guys with lots of money who can't find any other place to put it because you won't let anybody invest it here.

Mr. Speaker, I've got a lot more to say about this budget. I intend to say it during the committee of the whole, where we will review the estimates. I think the members and the ministers on the other side realize that I always take my time and I want answers, so rather than spend three days getting an answer, be prepared to give us the answers when we start, and we might all get home and put our crops in for once.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot support the motion, but I definitely agree with the amendment.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ALLEN:** — It is a pleasure for me to rise and participate in this budget debate. I want to tell the hon. members of the House that I was elected first in 1975 (an interesting historical fact) and that every year I have had the honor and the pleasure to get up and support the various budgets of this NDP government, but never, never, Mr. Speaker, has the task been easier than it is this year. This budget speaks to itself. It's a budget that meets the social and economic needs of the people of Saskatchewan. While reducing taxes, initiating new programs and expanding already existing programs, still it's a balanced budget. And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the people I have the honor to represent appreciate balanced budgets and a government that lives within its means. They tell me that if we had a government in Ottawa that operated financially the way the Government of Saskatchewan does, this country would be in a heck of a lot better shape economically than it is today.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ALLEN:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, this budget contains a number of provisions that will

be welcomed by the people of the province. Time doesn't permit me to outline them all, but there are a few that are of particular benefit and interest to the people in my constituency. Mr. Speaker, Regina Rosemont constituency has a large number of young families. This number is growing every day with the booming economy of this city. New houses are being built every day. New young families are moving into the Regina Rosemont constituency.

Most of these young families, Mr. Speaker, have school-aged children. When I meet with the parents of these children, whether it is at the school, at the rink, maybe at church or just having coffee with the neighbors, there is one thing that they all agree on: they really like the children's dental plan.

Now I recall, Mr. Speaker, when the program was brought in, I am sure other members do as well. The members opposite said that this program simply wouldn't work. They said that our children would be getting inferior dental care. They said we would drive all the dentists out of Saskatchewan. Not only that, they called the children's dental program, Mr. Speaker, in the words of the hon. member for Thunder Creek, "an unnecessary frill." Do you know what else they said? They said that if they were elected they would do away with the children's dental plan. They also said, by the way, that they would do away with the prescription drug program. They said they would do away with the SAIL (Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living) program. Why? Because they are all unnecessary frills.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I can tell the members opposite that the young families in my constituency don't consider the dental plan an unnecessary frill. They appreciate the plan and they appreciate our government for instituting a plan like this for their children.

I would like to thank the Minister of Finance for extending the program for ages 4 to 15 inclusive and also for the tremendous 32 per cent increase in the funding for the program.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of things that have been good for Regina in this budget. There is a \$600,000 grant for additions to the Allan Blair Memorial Clinic. There is an additional \$1 million in operating grants for the Regina General Hospital. There is \$15 million, Mr. Speaker, for the Regina hospitals regeneration program and of course this announcement of a rehabilitation centre in Regina is particularly welcome. All of us in Regina know that the Wascana facility has been overcrowded for many years, and this particular facility is as the member for Souris-Cannington said, long overdue. Mr. Speaker, I can say, I think, without any fear of contradiction, that the citizens in the city of Regina are well in their health care needs. And this 16 per cent increase, Mr. Speaker, in the funding for our hospital plan will mean that our hospitals should have even better service for the people of Regina in 1981-82.

I also want to thank the minister for the tremendous increase in day care. Day care is a big issue in my constituency, Mr. Speaker. There are many young families, many single parent families, Mr. Speaker, who need good day care services. This 101 per cent increase will make Saskatchewan a leader in day care. I'd also like to thank the government for the 160 per cent increase in transit grants, Mr. Speaker, for the city of Regina. Many of the people in my constituency travel to work on the bus, and they appreciate, in their pocketbooks, this tremendous increase to our transit system.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I said some good things about this budget, but I would be remiss if I



didn't try to rebut a few of the arguments made by the members opposite. It appears to me that the opposition is in a state of shock. Mr. Speaker, these guys are scared to death that the Premier might call an election. Here they are — leaderless, aimless, rudderless. I can't understand how they operate. They have an issue going. Oh, a tremendous issue — I'm sitting there wondering how the minister's going to get off the hook, and all of a sudden somebody jumps up and asks a question completely off the topic. And I'm sitting there myself wanting to ask the next question. They don't seem to be able to put it together.

You know, we backbenchers over here don't have much else to do in question period, but sit here and perceive what's going on. And I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, what I perceive. I sit here and I notice, for example, the member for Arm River, a good hard working member who spends a lot of time on the phone — a good member. This member will get an issue and a question. He'll get up and ask the minister a question. But what do you know? Does he get to follow through on the question — the thing that he's worked so hard on? Out of the blue, from his law office downtown, Mr. Speaker, another member asks the supplementary, runs out to meet the press and gets all the publicity. I see the member for Arm River with a long face. Mr. Speaker, I'd have a long face if one of my members did that to me. Now, I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member for Qu'Appelle did a lot of things for the Liberal Party. He worked them into oblivion, and he's doing the same thing for you guys, and I'm delighted.

Mr. Speaker, I don't want to go on in this political vein too much longer, other than to say that I think the opposition is a disgrace. I think it's disorganized. I think the opposition lacks discipline. You can't form a government unless you have some discipline and the reason you don't have any discipline is because you don't have any leadership. I can see it in your faces. You can't try to hide it, but I know you have lost confidence in the leader of your party. And the reason you have lost confidence is because you know you can't win with that leader. Your leader can't win for you. Heck, your leader can't win for himself?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ALLEN:** — Imagine, Mr. Speaker! The leader gets one of his best members, a good friend of us all, Bob Larter of Estevan, a good guy . . . everyone in Estevan loved the guy. This was one of the safest Tory seats in the province. Now, the Leader of the Conservative Party managed to blow one of the largest majorities and suffered a humiliating defeat at the polls. And what does he do now? He blames it on the Liberals! Here's a guy (get this) running ads on television of himself and Chantal stomping around in a summer fallow field in a three-piece suit, a chiffon dress, high heels, and he says that the Liberals bet him. Unbelievable! He says to the people of Estevan (in a three-piece suite and his wife in high heels in a summer fallow field), "Vote for me. I'm one of you." But guess what, Mr. Speaker? This guy wasn't satisfied to be humiliated once. No. He has now gone to court to turn over the election so he can be humiliated again.

We've done a little poll in Estevan constituency, you guys might be interested to know. Do you know what it said in the poll? In a two-way fight, our member Jack Chapman would get 63 per cent of the vote if the election were held today. True, the Conservative leader might be able to turn it, around, but I would get Chantal to sell the shoes, for sure.

So, Mr. Speaker, here is the situation — opposite members are worried sick about their leadership, and this government brings in this tremendous budget. Everyone

loves the budget. Tell me, Mr. Speaker, when was the last time you heard the president of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labor and the president of a chamber of commerce agree on anything. When was the last time? Well, they agree on one thing now, Mr. Speaker; they love the budget of the New Democratic Party government.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ALLEN:** — So, Mr. Speaker, I would be sick, too. I'd be sick if I were sitting on the opposite benches today. I would be worried sick that the Premier would call an election.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words, particularly about the remarks of the hon. member for Regina South, my good friend, the finance critic of the PCs. Well, the kindest thing I can say about your remarks is that they were interesting, very interesting. I found your annunciation of your party's policy to sell the Saskatchewan government's share in Ipsco particularly interesting. Well, I can tell the hon. member that the workers at Ipsco find that policy interesting as well. In fact, I had a call from a guy last night, you'll be interested to know, who is very concerned. He was calling me to inquire as to the mental health of the member for Regina South.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — There's no doubt about that, Paul.

**MR. ALLEN:** — I told my constituent that I was concerned as well and that I would do everything I could to see that you're all right — say a few prayers, whatever I could do. But, Mr. Speaker, this is a serious question; this is a serious policy. Imagine selling Ipsco shares. I suggest the member for Regina South call the Alberta government, for the Alberta government owns as many shares in Ipsco as we do. Do you know what they will tell you? They'll tell you the same as my constituent, "You are crazy." And what about this ideas of a utilities review board? I hear this over and over again, utility review board. Well, Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I know you heard me on "Provincial Affairs," but I've a few facts to back up those political statements I made at that time. I make the statements, then I look for the facts. Thank goodness I do have some facts.

Mr. Speaker, I think if we are talking about the utility review board, we should look at the idea very seriously. And we should look at provinces that have instituted these kinds of boards. I refer member to the province of British Columbia and the province of Ontario. You aren't going to believe this, Mr. Speaker. You aren't going to believe this, but in the period 1970 to 1978, the retained earnings of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation increased by 70 per cent — a fair amount. It sounds like a lot. Compare that to what they were in Ontario — 1042 per cent, to what they were in B.C. — 929 per cent. And he wants a utility review board to help the consumers of power in the province of Saskatchewan.

What about Alberta? Now these guys, for even argument, say, "Look to Alberta." Well I've been looking to Alberta lately, and all I see are problems if we institute those kinds of policies and those kinds of programs.

Let's look at Alberta. Let's look at rate increases in Alberta. I will give you three centres and you can take centres in Saskatchewan to make comparisons. There were great increased in Edmonton, 83.5 per cent, 1973 to 1979; Calgary 95.7 per cent; Grand Prairie, 127 per cent.

Do you know what else it does in Alberta, this great utility review board? Well, it allows interim increases. In other words, you can raise the prices whatever you like, and then you can come back and justify them later. Well, I can tell you the record of rolling back prices hasn't been great in the province of Alberta. Let me give you one example. Alberta Power operates in the northern and central part of Alberta, and it asked for and instituted an increase of 19.7 per cent in December 1980; in February of this year another 22 per cent, in June of this year, 35 per cent. Do you know what the chamber of commerce has done in St. Paul, Alberta? It passed a resolution demanding that the provincial government nationalize Alberta Power.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ALLEN:** — That, Mr. Speaker, is the record of the utility review boards in Canada. Now, do you really think we need that kind of operation in Saskatchewan? A costly bureaucracy to do nothing, to allow things to happen the way they have in other provinces? I think not.

Mr. Speaker, before I take my seat I do want to say a few words about health, because I noted in the paper, and was concerned to hear, that the hon. member for Nipawin has said that the health care system in the United States is better than ours, and, what's more, it's cheaper than ours. Now, Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure a short while ago, of spending some time in the U.S. and talking at some meetings about health care and medical care. And I learned as much as I passed out.

I just want to relate some of the facts that I learned. The member for Nipawin says that it is cheaper. In Canada we spend 7.2 per cent of our gross national produce on health care. In the United States, they spend 9 per cent. And what about administrative costs? We are always taking about free enterprise efficiency in Saskatchewan, we pay less than 1 per cent of our health dollar for administration of the Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan. We pay about 4 per cent for MCIC (medical care insurance commission). The average works out to less than 2 per cent for total administrative cost. You know what the average is in the U.S.? It's 18.6 per cent. So, Mr. Speaker, it's not more costly or less costly, but we have to ask the question, "Is it more effective for the people?" And I can tell you, it's not.

In the U.S. in 1978 there were 38 million people who absolutely had no coverage whatsoever under medicare. I was looking at the newspaper back in October of this year and it had a little article (I don't know how many of the members saw it, but it was a shocking and, in a way, a sad article) and I'll just read you a little bit of it:

Eleven year old Morgan Rowe, who lost his left arm and much of the use of his right arm in an accident, spent five years selling bottles and newspapers to raise money. Now with a little help from some stranger, he has paid off his \$30,000 medical bill.

"I thought I'd be grown before I paid it off," said the boy as he handed South Georgia Medical Centre \$17,713.22 in a cheque.

Rowe was injured when he fell off a tractor at his father's fence company here, was dragged under the machine . . .

This little boy went out, collected beer cans, bottles, everything else, worked like a dog

to raise \$30,000 to pay for his medical treatment, and I say thank God that we in Canada and our children wouldn't be put in that kind of a situation.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ALLEN:** — And the member for Nipawin says that the coverage in the United States is more effective. Even medicare and medicaid down there (they have medicare and medicaid, one for old age pensioners . . . and the other for indigent people) . . . don't cover you. They don't over you fully, and if you talk to old people down there, the people who can afford it have to buy additional coverage in order to have a decent insurance system. And what's more, Mr. Speaker, the premiums are very, very high in the U.S., and they are particularly high if you are sick, if you've got any problems. If you had a child, for example, who was born with some genetic problem, something that would require tremendous amount of care over the years (kidney disease or something like that), it's likely you couldn't get any coverage at all to start with, or if you could, the cost would be so astronomical that most families simply couldn't afford to pay the premiums. And if you are sick in the hospital, the longer you're sick, the less your coverage. So if you are in there for a long period of time and very ill, it costs you more and more and more out of your own hip pocket the longer you're there.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, this free enterprise medicine that the member for Nipawin espouses, and I've heard other Conservatives espouse, is tremendously wasteful. Let me give you an example. When I was down in the States, I had an opportunity to speak at a meeting in Minot, North Dakota. We started chatting about services, etc. Now in Minot they have three hospitals. This is a little town about the size of Moose Jaw — whoops, nice town the size of Moose Jaw. They've got three hospitals and every one of those hospitals has a CAT scanner. You know the big controversy we had about CAT scanners. They put all this money into three CAT scanners. Why? Because the hospital compete for business. They are competing for business all the time and I'm certainly not going to a hospital that doesn't have a CAT scanner. So what does this mean? It means that these CAT scanners have to be paid for and the costs are astronomical and the costs to the consumer of health in the States are very high.

I think, Mr. Speaker, when you compare this system with ours, nobody will want to join the U.S.A. simply to get better health care.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words just in closing about an aspect of health care in Saskatchewan, nursing home care. I was glad to see in the budget, Mr. Speaker, that there is going to be an increase in the subsidies for people who live in our nursing homes. I believe that we have punished people in the past, and we continue to punish people because they are old and sick. I believe that all the health care costs of people in nursing homes should be covered and the residents should pay an equal amount for their board and room regardless of their level of care. Now, why can't we do that?

Mr. Speaker, there are three reasons why we can't do this according to the bureaucrats. First, everyone will want to go into a nursing home. Second, the government shouldn't be the last-dollar insurer — it costs too much money. Third, the kids will only get all the money in the end anyway.

Now, I want to deal with these arguments, Mr. Speaker, because I figure all three of them, while having a modicum of truth, are not worth sacrificing the general principle of covering the health care costs of these elderly people.

The first one is that everyone will want to be in a nursing home. Well, Mr. Speaker, I have one of the largest nursing home in North American in my constituency. I spend a lot of time, and my wife also, at Pioneer Village visiting with these elderly people. I can tell you that if they had a choice they would not be in that nursing home.

Now, one of the problems we've had, I believe, is that the public servants have told us, when we are bringing in a home care program, that there is going to be serious difficulty with instituting it if we cut down the costs in the nursing homes. I think that is an argument that has to be taken seriously and might have a fair amount of validity. I still believe, Mr. Speaker, that if we institute a good home care program to give people that alternative to living in a nursing home, they will live in their own homes 99 out of 100 times.

The second arguments is that the government shouldn't be the last-dollar insurer. This is a serious argument as well, because nursing home care is tremendously expensive. I also know, Mr. Speaker, if we took the same attitude in hospitals as we do in nursing homes, we would have the same problem. I believe the principle that we use for hospitalization should not be extended to nursing homes as well.

The final argument is that the kids will get all the money anyway, and why shouldn't these people pay their way? I use the example of my friend Walter Smishek and me. Walter's dad gets ill and has to go to a nursing home. He has \$100,000. He sold the farm and has \$100,000 in the bank. He spends 10 years languishing away in this nursing home. All the money is gone and Walter receives nothing. I'm fortunate. My old dad just kicks off; he just dies; he doesn't get sick for a long period of time. My dad dies and isn't sick and I get the \$100,000.

What have we done? We've penalized Walter's dad and Walter. Why? Because he was sick. And I don't think that's right, Mr. Speaker, and I've never thought it was right. In 1975, when I was elected, I promised that I would work toward trying to get to a system where all the health care costs would be covered. I'm delighted, Mr. Speaker, to hear that there are going to be increases this year in subsidies in our nursing homes. But I'm not satisfied, and I will not be satisfied, Mr. Speaker, until every single person in Saskatchewan who is sick will not be charged because they are sick. Now, Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on. There are a tremendous number of things that were said, particularly by the member for Regina South, that I would like to rebut. However, I understand some of my colleagues would like to do so as well, so I'll close by saying, Mr. Speaker, I'm absolutely delighted to support the motion. I will, of course, not support the amendment.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is always a pleasure to enter into the debates in the legislature, and no less a pleasure to enter into this debate — the reply to the budget. I want to make two things clear before I get into the few remarks that I have tonight. There are two things that I know for sure, Mr. Speaker. Maybe they are the only two things that I know, and that should bring a round of applause. But it hasn't tonight and I suppose they are more tired than I thought. They always look tired over there. But, Mr. Speaker, I want to make these two things clear.

I know that the media sitting up there gets as tired as we do of hearing these argument going back and forth — pro-enterprise, pro-socialism. And I should suggest, Mr. Speaker, that it's about time that a refreshing attitude was thrown into the debate. I, Mr.

Speaker, respect the members opposite and their viewpoints. I don't agree with them, but I do respect them.

The other thing, Mr. Speaker, that I want to make very clear is that the members opposite, in all probability, are going to be as bored listening to me tonight as I am of listening to them.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — No, we're not because we're not leaving yet.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Well, that's good, because that will be an improvement to my view of the opposite benches, Mr. Speaker. Unlike other replies to the throne speech and the budget, my comments this evening are going to be brief. I have other matters that I have an interest in. And I may have some surprises for you down the road, but that will be for you to see when they arrive.

I want to just start out to make a few comments in reply to the member for Regina Rosemont. He felt it incumbent to comment on the words of wisdom that were emanating from this side of the House. And as I noticed the member speaking, I noticed he has this big button on his lapel, and I was sitting there wondering what it said. I'm informed it says, "Eat Grits." Well, I can agree with that. It likely does read "Eat Grits," even though it might be a little difficult for them to eat them in bed. Mr. Speaker, if I can just return to that little button, that lapel pin reminded me of one that I was going to buy for the hon. member, and it read "World's Greatest Bullshitter."

But anyway, Mr. Speaker, I had some great respect for that member and decided to leave it on the shelf. But after hearing his replies tonight, I really should have bought it. And then, Mr. Speaker, I got to thinking that my wife was going to buy one for me, too. So maybe I had better keep it down tonight for the pleasure of the whole Assembly. So for that, Mr. Speaker, I am.

The member for Regina Rosemont claims that we're afraid the Premier will call an election. Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to assure all members of the government that we are not afraid that the Premier will call an election, particularly in light of his comments, "We will be getting the election back on track; we will not be having an election in this province until 1983." So if you do go before 1983, I suppose it's going to make a liar out of the Premier. Not, Mr. Speaker, that that will likely bother the members opposite, but nonetheless, I don't fear an election, and I'm sure that none of the members on this side of the house fear an election.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the member spouts the same rhetoric that we hear from that side of the House about divide and conquer. That member and that government, Mr. Speaker, should know all about divide and conquer. Why, his own Premier was successful in dividing the federal ND Party and leaving poor Ed alone in Ottawa while that famous gang of four was able to join chairman Al here in Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the member says that this opposition is weak and is a party that has lost faith in its leader. I want to assure the members of the House and assure the government opposite that we have faith in our leaders, both provincially and federally even with the 66 per cent. That's two out of three, and I tell, you, Mr. Speaker, that's far higher than lonely Ed in Ottawa would get at this point in time.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have not quite finished responding to the member for Regina

Rosemont. He made a rather interesting speech tonight and I was most amused by it. he has started, along with other members of the government, those personal attacks on the leader of our party, and I'm very familiar with the personal attacks that this government makes on the leader of any party who may have the courage to stand up to them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, he talks personally about Grant Devine's image on television and how pretty his wife is. I suppose the greatest frustration this member for Regina Rosemont has is that he's not dancing through the grass with someone as pretty as the wife of the leader of this party. That's what his frustration is. You know, he was really watching that lady. Yes, she caught his eye. Now I would just conclude on the member for Regina Rosemont by saying, you should resolve yourself to being the Mickey Mouse of the front row puppet show.

Now then, Mr. Speaker, we're down to my introductory remarks. What I wanted to do at the outset, Mr. Speaker, was to congratulate the Minister of Finance for introducing the budget speech and giving the members of this Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan the course of direction that this government intends to take at least over the next short while. I can never expect it to be on any long-range basis, in light of its every changing positions on the issues that face the people of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate (I'm sorry to see he's not in the House, but I'm sure the members here will convey the message) the member for Regina South for his most superb reply to the budget. And I am saying this very honestly, and I know that if a few members on that side of the House are sincere, they will know that that member for Regina South made the best speech in this Assembly he has ever made since he was elected. And I tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the members of this House, and in particular the backbenchers of the government who rarely get an opportunity to make that kind of a speech with that kind of quality of presentation, need to recognize that and take a lesson from it. I sincerely want to express, and I think I can, on behalf of the members from that side of the House, congratulations on that tremendous presentation by the member for Regina South.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I move into the very limited content of the budget, I want to talk about this government's ability to eat up the future economic potential of the people of Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, let me suggest that the manner and the audacity by which they approach the potential, and destroy the potential, should put them into a position where they would be most appropriately referred to as "Jaws III" of Saskatchewan. Now, I want to just key on those issues. The basic economic potential that exists here in the province of Saskatchewan is not, Mr. Speaker, being recognized because of the policies of this government.

I want to address myself to the area of inflation as being a primary concern of the opposition. This government, in light of the myth it laid out there (I would like to think it was a fact) that there is an economic boom, that tremendous resources are available, has in no way used those tremendous resources for the reduction, in any way, of the inflationary impact on the people of Saskatchewan. I suppose they believe that the 2 per cent reduction in personal income tax in some way is a factor, but I don't.

Unemployment — the government continually speaks of its very low unemployment record. And, Mr. Speaker, they only have to take a look at their population. It is by and large the same now in Saskatchewan as it was in 1936. The unemployment figures in Saskatchewan are nothing to brag about, and yet, Mr. Speaker, in the Minister of

Finance's report on the budget, as he delivered it on budget day, he made the statement that young people were coming back to Saskatchewan, that there were jobs here in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I challenge any member on that side of the house to find a job for the people, just in my constituency, that are under 25 years of age and cannot find a job. I challenge you! Because, Mr. Speaker, if they accept that challenge and are successful, I will concede, because I will have served my purpose and that is to have represented my constituents and found them jobs which they are asking for. They are not receiving those jobs. yet the Minister of Finance says there are young people returning to Saskatchewan to take on jobs that are here and waiting for young people. And, Mr. Speaker, that is not true. The only time we had any great influx of people to this province was last year in the Celebrate Saskatchewan year. And I recall a meeting at the Saskatchewan Centre of the Arts when the former premier, Tommy Douglas, was up ranting and raving at the Centre of the Arts about what a wonderful year it was, the wonderful program the government has laid out, and how many people were able to come home to visit Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, isn't it obvious they had to have left home in the first place before they could come home to visit?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — So this government's own previous premier made the very point that we've been making. People have been leaving this province for years. If you use the national figures as opposed to provincial figures on population growth, you will find the national population has more than doubled since 1936 and ours is the same. We in effect have lost a million people in that period who should be here. Our population, Mr. Speaker, should be at least two million and that is not the case, so again we have another myth. It leaves the question again, where is the economic boom that is so often spoken about?

Now, Mr. Speaker, it's been referred to in this House, throughout Saskatchewan, and in different reports by different business leaders in this country, that this province is a sleeping giant, and I don't really disagree with that. But what I do say, is that this government will not awaken that giant as long as it is in office.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — In fact, at the rate they are going, there can be no question that we will be nothing less than the Rip Van Winkle of the 20th century. I have looked at the budget and spoken with our finance critic and I don't see . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . One member says it doesn't mean a thing that I speak with our finance critic. It certainly means on thing. One thing came through very loud and clear to me, not just from speaking to him, but from looking at the facts that he showed me in the budget. Where does this government get its money? Seventy per cent comes from the pockets of the people of Saskatchewan. Where does it get it? From its supposedly number one industry — at least they think it is. I call it agriculture.

Resources — that's what they're pumping money into these days. How much did they get from that? They got 24 per cent. How many times do you hear them speaking of the people of Saskatchewan and of the great things they're doing? Not very often, notwithstanding they get in the neighborhood of three times as much of their revenue from the people of Saskatchewan as from their resources.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there is a new argument, about a year old, developing between the government and us as opposition, and that is the argument over Crown corporations.



We look at the Crown corporations and justifiably criticize them, as we did SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance), as we did the unnecessary profits being made by Sask Power and Sask Tel on the backs of people who are on fixed incomes. Legitimate criticisms, and what is the government's defence? It's in a word, almost, "Oh yes, the Tories want to dismantle the Crown corporations." I tell you that argument was washed today and I'm not going to reflect on any of those other old arguments that you've used. I'm not even going to mention them because you people with your blinkers on seeing only one way and hearing nothing, know what I'm talking about. The Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan supports Crown corporations, both commercial corporations and the utility corporations in this province. But, Mr. Speaker, we support them in a context that will serve the interests of the people of Saskatchewan as they were set out initially.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to say to this government, not critically but in a curious way, that I don't understand why the government hasn't been picked up by the media in this sense. You people are a party of programs . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You say, "Hear, hear, good programs." Do you hear that? Now, let's stop for a moment and ask ourselves the question: why is this party and this government a party of programs? Why is it? Do you know? I ask myself that because I was trying to get my head around your mentality, and it wasn't very easy, Mr. Speaker, because it's pretty difficult to get hold of nothing.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — You're right unless it's in an aerosol can.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Now, let's look at it. The member for Yorkton wants to get into the debate. he likes to be in the thick of things, and the problem is that he's been in the things too long now because he's getting awfully thick.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'll come back to the member for Yorkton. I have something for you. I have something for everyone. I'm almost like you people — Santa Claus 365 days of the year.

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, the members of this Assembly and the media why this party is a party of programs. Here comes the simple answer to that. In Saskatchewan there used to be a thing called a tax base and it used to look like a triangle. And even the member for Yorkton can understand three sides to a triangle. That tax base, Mr. Speaker, used to look like that. It used to look like that when we were back to the basic principles of government under the parliamentary system that we know today, where governments were an administrative body, a regulatory body, and they served, Mr. Speaker, to tax the profits of individuals through income tax — a simple thing called income tax. yes, I don't mind income tax, but on a broadly based tax. Because that, Mr. Speaker, would tax many very little.

But your policies of wanting control have narrowed that tax base (something like the member for Yorkton — very narrow) to the point where there are very few people we can tax. And the Minister of Finance is shaking his head, but he can't argue. I challenge the Minister of Finance to come back into this debate through one of his back-row members and to refute what I'm saying, because we do have a reduced tax base in the province of Saskatchewan.

There are fewer and fewer people paying more and more taxes. Now then, when that

happens and the government no longer has a tax base, then it must generate wealth itself. Now, since it doesn't have any new ideas in terms of generating new wealth, it only has one recourse and that is to take a look around and to say, "Those making money? We don't have a tax base left. Who's making money? Sell all the potash." And they snap down to the potash. Now they say, "Those multinationals are making money. Let's get into bed with them." Arm in arm they go. Yes, Mr. Speaker, that's the truth, arm in arm with the multinationals.

Now, let's take a look even further. Now they're looking at the oil. Now they're going to get into the oil, and they're going to try to suck everyone else into getting into the oil, too. Get the wheat pool into that, and all the co-operatives. Now that's going to be their decision, whether they do or they don't.

But Mr. Speaker, the point I'm trying to make here is that this government run out of an effective tax base by which it can govern the people of Saskatchewan and allow a system whereby people can, in fact, provide programs for themselves. So now, you see very simply, Mr. Speaker, that it has gone into the business of generating wealth themselves, not through new wealth-oriented sources but through those that already exist. And how do they do that? Yes, that's right, you know. It is pretty difficult to keep it on a base that isn't going over their heads.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — That's right.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — As for the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster, I have a very difficult time getting any thing over his head.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have talked to a lot of people and I am not an economist. But I see what the governments are doing. So, this is what the NDP is doing in Saskatchewan. Now, what is the federal Liberal Party doing? What is it doing? It is now Canadianizing, well not really; it's nationalizing the oil industry in this country under the guise of Canadianization. But in effect what it is doing is the same thing the provincial government is doing and that is getting into the resource and wealth centres that already exist because it has lost its tax base as well. There is no difference. Three years ago when I said there was no difference between a Liberal and New Democrat, 9 out of 10 people laughed and said, "You have to be kidding." Now maybe about 10 or 15 years ago that might have been true; it was a joke. But, Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter now is that the Liberals and the NDP are identical. As a matter of fact, I really believe the Premier himself would be very happy if he could get away with being as left as the Prime Minister of Canada. So there is clearly no difference. Our policy, as stated by our finance critic, is to change the province of Saskatchewan in such a way that we can broaden that tax base and take us as a government out of the business of interfering with people's lives, and to let people go on with the business of running their own lives.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Right.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, I just want to take a few minutes more. I have almost completed the things I want to talk about. There are a few things here that I would like to touch on and I am going to touch on them later: in-home care and nursing care homes, hospitals. You know I noticed some of the speakers tonight were talking about the tremendous amount of money that was invested in the Saskatoon and Regina hospitals. And you know that is true. I looked at our own, the Moosomin Union Hospital, and I tell you now, Mr. Speaker, that I am going to be taking more about this in the

future. The Moosomin Union Hospital did more operations 20 years ago than it does today. There is a centralization for operations in the centres of Regina and Saskatoon, in particular. That is an issue.

Now I don't have to say that the Minister of Finance's 2 per cent tax cut is not what the people of Saskatchewan are taking about. I went home on the weekend and I didn't hear a word about it. They are not excited about that budget at all.

The farm cost reduction program — you eliminated that. That does give me an indication, Mr. Speaker, that maybe they are going to the polls because I recall the last time they removed that. It was the Minister of Agriculture, the member for Saltcoats at that time. I remember asking him to please put it back on because it was the wrong time and the farmers needed that rebate. "Oh no!" he says, "I can't do that." And we had an election in 1978. He put it back on with the election of 1978. Those are the facts. Now they have taken it off. So, if they are on target in accordance with the last time they took the farm cost reduction program off, that should give us an election approximately in the fall of 1981. That might be a close speculation, if we base it on the farm cost reduction program.

Speaking of the member for Saltcoats, he promised a potash mine out there in his riding in 1975. They didn't get one after that election. He promised it again in 1978 and they still don't have one. I understand there is some confusion as to whether they are going to put it in Bredenbury or in Churchbridge. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my constituents I would like to suggest that we resolve their little dilemma. We will just put it in my riding as an ideal place for it, in around Kipling or Kennedy or Langbank. No problem there, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'll just conclude — take all of one minute more. And I say this, on highways you have a 12 per cent increase that will only accommodate inflation. In fact, I doubt if it will, by the time your contracts come due on your road construction projects, it will likely be in excess of 12 per cent and you'll be in a shortfall, Mr. Minister of Highways.

Lastly, on the constitution. The Attorney General has stated their position has always been the same. And he's right, because it hasn't change at all, even though a motion passed through this House. This government, Mr. Speaker, still does not have a clearly defined position on the constitution, as much as it says it has, or as many ads it may say it runs, it is still playing the game of riding the fence. We have always had a clearly defined position on the constitution and that is to oppose, and strongly oppose, Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister, the federal Liberals and subsequently, central Canada on that constitutional resolution.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that's all I have to say this evening. It was hardly enough to get me warmed up and I wish I had another hour, but I will be voting for the amendment and against the main motion. Thank you very much.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PONIATOWSKI:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to take part in this budget debate once again. Once again our government has introduced an excellent budget.

In reviewing my election promises to the people of Saskatoon Eastview, I'm pleased to

say that, with the current budget, all of the commitments have been met. These promises have been met, not only in the area of strong leadership and economic management, job creation, and services for Saskatchewan people, but also in the commitment to develop and use our resources for the benefit of the people of this province, ensuring a great future for all of us in Saskatchewan.

I want to also commend the Minister of Finance for putting together a very strong and viable budget, a budget that is the direct result of the wise management of resource revenues which now allows us to make greater strides in social programs for all of Saskatchewan citizens. In particular — and I want to stress this — I want to commend the Minister of Finance for introducing a balanced budget. In this respect, we have a very good record of past performance. Since 1971, we have followed a policy of long-term fiscal planning to reflect the cyclical nature of the province's economy.

During the past two years, due to the wise decisions on resource policy, the creation and development of our Crown corporations and the establishment of the heritage fund, we have entered a phase of higher revenue growth and participation in the resource sector.

As a result of all these initiatives and leadership, we have been able to balance the budget for the past two years — and I think that is a tremendous accomplishment.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PONIATOWSKI:** — Mr. Speaker, one of the things emphasized in Saskatchewan is on efficient use of financial and human resources in the public sector. This has its roots in our province's less prosperous past. Although the Saskatchewan economy is stronger than ever before, our government remains committed to providing full value to the taxpayer while keeping the overall level of government operating expenses in balance with revenues and the economic cycles. With Premier Blakeney's leadership, we again have been able to prove that it is possible to maintain social goals, to put people first and to strive to create a province where all can enjoy the rewards of our resources.

Mr. Speaker, this is in very sharp contrast to the federal scene and most of the provincial governments in Canada. I ask you when was the last time the federal government introduced a balanced budget? Well, to answer that you'd have to have a fairly long memory, or one would have to refer to one's notes. Also, it is important to note how many provinces provide the excellent social programs that we now take for granted in this province — programs in health and education, more specifically programs like our dental care program, aids for the handicapped and the list goes on and on. A strong economy, steady in substantial population growth and bright prospects for the future, is what the current provincial budget provides for our province.

From time to time, we hear from members opposite as to the number of people leaving this province, which, I would suggest, is a myth. There are no facts to substantiate that. No longer, Mr. Speaker, are our young people leaving the province. No, they are staying here because they want to be part of this great province, because the benefits of staying here are greater than those which could be attained by moving to other provinces. They are staying here for various reasons, but among others, they are staying because our educational programs are designed to meet the needs of all Saskatchewan people. They are staying because our health and social policies result in programs which mean

that young people can raise their children in the knowledge that their health care needs will be met. And the creation of healthy lifestyles is the high priority of our government. These facets will be emphasized in all of our programs.

Our buoyant economy is continually creating new employment and jobs. In 1980, a total of 8,000 new jobs were created in the service, construction, mining and manufacturing industries. Total wages and salaries increased by an average 13 per cent and total personal income rose by 11 per cent. With continued investment in the potash and uranium industries, good agricultural returns and a steady demand for Saskatchewan's exports, we can look forward to a progressively bright future. We have the foundations, Mr. Speaker; we have the leadership, and we have the opportunity for enormous progress.

Now these things do not happen by accident. So let me just briefly indicate my views as to why I feel that this has come about. Crown corporations play an important role in developing our provincial economic potential. The Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation and SaskOil have grown into major participants in the exploration and the development of our mineral resources. In 1981, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan will pay a substantial dividend to the heritage fund — in the neighborhood of \$50 million. This is the first dividend to be paid by a resource corporation and also the first dividend to be received by the heritage fund.

Our Crown corporations employ more than 12,600 people, some of them in head office jobs that would otherwise be located outside this province. And I want to underline this point, Mr. Speaker. I think we can all be proud of the fact that the Saskatchewan potash corporation has as its president a young man from Saskatchewan. When we look at the major resource industries in Saskatoon, it is evident that a large number of high-level management jobs are held by Saskatchewan people. Opportunities like this would not be possible without our public sector approach.

These opportunities would not have been available before the Blakeney government assumed office. In 1981, capital investment by the Crown corporations will increase by 46 per cent and will generate 4,000 construction-related jobs. Crown corporations are also building for the '80s, with the potash corporation undertaking a \$2.5 billion expansion program, including one new mine. SaskOil will participate in drilling more than 90 exploratory and 180 development wells in the heavy oil regions of this province and will participate in oil-enhancement recover projects. The Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation is a major participant in the exploration and mining of uranium in the northern part of our province. This includes a 50 per cent joint-venture holding in one of the world's richest uranium ore bodies at Key Lake.

Mr. Speaker, I want to briefly make some remarks about uranium development. I do this because of the options we face in considering the future with regard to energy. As I mentioned before, with regard to uranium, I raise this quite deliberately because of the occasional negative press and consequences of that that we observe.

I take this point of view for two reasons. First of all, there are two extremes with regard to this question, at least as it appears to me. There is the approach in which some people advocate the development of our resources at any cost, and when I talk about cost I'm referring to the social and economic costs. Then you have the opposite extreme, what I would term the antidevelopment or the antiuranium lobby. I submit that the wiser

course of action should include the development of many sources of energy, combined with the appropriate conservation programs. And I say this for two important reasons. Only this kind of approach will assure society of an energy-secure future and at the same time provide economic activity for the creation of jobs and the support for social programs.

One of the sources of energy that we must continue to develop, as I've been suggesting, is uranium. This point of view was supported by the Cluff Lake Board of Inquiry following quite an extensive array of public hearings. Our uranium deposits are extremely high in quality, and estimate indicate that they constitute about 50 per cent of Canada's uranium reserves. The Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation currently operates the largest uranium and hard-rock minerals explorations program in North America, participating in over 200 joint ventures.

I was particularly pleased with the recent recommendations of the Key Lake Board of Inquiry. The Key Lake mining development, in my view, is crucial because of the social and economic situation in the North. I believe that these resource enterprises will have a major impact and will contribute to a more stable and positive social environment. People in the North have the same right to benefits enjoyed by all people in the province, and it is important that we establish a firm economic base so that employment is available on a solid basis. Opportunities provided by uranium mining in the North will further strengthen our economic base and will enhance the provincial economy as a whole.

It should also be noted that this government is firmly committed to the protection of the environment and other safeguards related to the uranium industry. This is clearly demonstrated by some of the following mechanisms and provisions. We have used the approach of boards of inquiry to conduct hearings, and get information from experts across the world. We have occupational health and safety provisions in this province. The Department of the Environment has very stringent requirements. There is the area of employment goals and job training, and the budget just introduced has money assigned for research and support regarding waste disposal. And I think that's an indication of our commitment. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I am sure it is fair to say that Saskatchewan's Department of the Environment has the most stringent environmental protection legislation in this country.

With respect to energy security, the budget and an array of government programs provide for a number of initiatives in the area of energy supply and conservation. One could list many examples but I will simply identify three or four. The proposed ethanol plant and the associated research with that is one example. There is a support for a variety of renewable energy projects. We have energy conservation programs and incentives.

Before leaving this topic of energy, I want to indicate that I strongly support continued efforts for the location of a uranium refinery in Saskatchewan, so that we can realize the major benefits of uranium in an even greater degree. Besides the very obvious economic benefits involved in such a venture, there are the important social benefits provided in the creation of additional employment. It is also consistent with my strong view that initiatives must be taken continually to expand secondary industry and the processing of our resources in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I now want to make some brief comments with regard to our social programs. In the 1978 campaign, I pledged to work for the lowering of personal

income taxes which could be made only as a result of our growing resource revenues. This budget provides 55 per cent of Saskatchewan businesses with \$3.6 million in benefits in 1981. This budget also reduces the personal income tax rate in Saskatchewan by 2 per cent of the basic federal tax. Now, that is an interesting area to look at. I believe it was yesterday that the budget was introduced in British Columbia. Although it was balanced — and I commend any government for balancing a budget unless the situation is unusual, where there may be reasons for providing for a deficit budget — it contained a vast array of taxes. I think their list of tax increases is probably longer (and it's a very long list) than our list of very good programs . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . \$600 million, my colleagues are suggesting. This budget, Mr. Speaker, assists social programs across a broad spectrum, just as we had pledged continued leadership in health.

Now, with regard to health, I am pleased that the health budget has an increase that affects all segments of Saskatchewan society, from newborn babies to senior citizens. The cancer program has been considerably strengthened, with increased grants of something in the tune of 30 per cent, to a total of \$10 million. This will supply needed equipment and construction of new facilities. About \$285,000 has been allocated to launch a multiyear program of cancer research. During the past year the cancer foundation has been successful in recruiting highly qualified experts in the field of cancer chemotherapy and radiology. And I should mention here that many of these recruits are Saskatchewan graduates who have returned to the province to practice their profession.

The 1981 budget also provides a 16 per cent increase for the Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan in order to meet increased operating costs. It includes funding for an additional 24 beds in Saskatoon, and \$6 million from the heritage fund will go to the University Hospital, also in Saskatoon. This will benefit not only Saskatchewan residents, but Saskatchewan as a whole because over 70 per cent of the patients served at the University Hospital are from outside the Saskatoon area.

I am also pleased, and I wish to commend the Hon. Mr. Rolfes for the moves made in terms of the total budget. A new 238-bed chronic care facility will be built in Saskatoon to replace existing facilities, providing for a substantial net increase in beds available. This will relieve, no doubt some of the pressure which is current on the acute care hospitals in Saskatchewan. This budget does not neglect preventive health. It introduces a number of community-based pilot projects and health programs for young people such as sheltered housing projects, in total providing over \$600 million for health programs in 1981. That amounts to a 156 per cent increase over the budget of last year. Saskatchewan continues to be the leader in the area of health care in all of Canada.

I should like to make some brief comments, Mr. Speaker, in the area of education. During 1978, the government pledged more technical programs on a widely decentralized basis. This has come to pass with the 1981 budget. The budget emphasizes a decentralized outreach program which is more flexible and makes training programs readily accessible to people outside the larger centres. Now, all of the young people in Saskatchewan will have more equalized opportunities in the area of education and in that regard I want to commend the Minister of Education and Continuing Education and the department officials involved. I'm sure it was a fairly difficult and complex program to arrange.

Outreach programs will be converted to meet specific needs of individuals, enhance on-the-job training, introduce expanded institute programs and, overall, increase

outreach training by nearly 70 per cent.

Since the Blakeney government took office in 1971, there have been improvements and enrichment in all aspects of the school system in Saskatchewan, and this year again, is no exception.

Operating grants, Mr. Speaker, will increase by almost 12 per cent per student for a total of something like \$260 million. This budget provides \$48 million for the teachers superannuation plan, an important component in retaining our teachers in Saskatchewan.

Community college support has also been increased. The universities have not been forgotten, Mr. Speaker. In order to meet the expanding resource sector, the new geological sciences building at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon will improve opportunities available to Saskatchewan young people, many of whom will find jobs in our province, given our resource boom. The student bursary program increase of 19 per cent enhances equalized opportunities for young people who desire further education regardless of their financial status.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take this budget to the people of Saskatoon Eastview. I was interested in hearing the hon. member for Moosomin. He said he didn't hear too much about the budget when he was home this weekend. I believe he said something to that effect. Well, I had a very warm reception regarding the very careful and thoughtful deliberations on the part of the government with respect to the constitutional question — not just the debate here and the resolution, but also the action that had been taken during the number of weeks and months prior to that. It was probably the sanest contribution in all of Canada and it came from this province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. PONIATOWSKI:** — This is the budget, as I said before, Mr. Speaker, that I will have great pleasure in taking to the people of Saskatoon-Eastview. The strides made in bringing about greater economic equality and social justice for all are great. Our government's sound resource and fiscal policies, the creative and innovative programs, our strong commitment to the social area, the economic growth and resource development are the envy of many people in Canada. We can point with pride at the stature, credibility, and dignity of this province, which enable us to look forward to the continuance of excellent social programs and the enjoyment of a high quality of life. All of these improvements and programs, Mr. Speaker, have been provided in a balanced budget.

In conclusion, on behalf of the people of Saskatoon Eastview. I applaud the minister once again, for this very strong budget. I comment our Premier, also, for providing an example to all of Canada of what good government can provide in the way of improving economic and social justice by the prudent and wise use of the resources of this great province.

Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the main motion because I certainly cannot accept the amendment. However, there will be some brief comments that I will want to add to my remarks tonight and I beg leave to adjourn debate.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

The Assembly adjourned at 10:08 p.m.