

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
March 22, 1982

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition I want to table in this House this afternoon.

The residents of the town of Elbow and district would like to petition the Government of Saskatchewan to put Douglas Park east of Highway 19 into permanent controlled grazing.

I also would like to say that the four people who brought it are sitting in the Speaker's gallery.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through you to the Chamber, 20 adults from the Regina Plains Community College, who are here today hopefully to see some of the debate. They are sitting in the Speaker's gallery. I think we would want to wish these people double congratulations. They just officially opened their new community college centre this morning. I think members would want to join with me in congratulating them not only on being here but also on their new centre as well.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. BANDA: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, and members of the Assembly, I would like to welcome and introduce to you, on behalf of the member for Weyburn, Mr. Auburn Pepper, who unfortunately is unable to be here today, a group of grade 8 students, approximately 54 in number, from the Weyburn Junior High School. These students are sitting in the west gallery. They are accompanied by their teachers, Jim Nedelcov and Sid Trepoff. I'm sure it is our wish that their visit here in their provincial capital and the Legislative Building will provide them with knowledge and will be pleasant. I look forward to meeting with you at 2:45 in room 218. I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, all members of the legislature would want to welcome them here and wish them an enjoyable day and a safe journey home.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and to the members of this House a group of 23 grade 8 students from Rosetown. They are accompanied today by Mr. Cranston and Mr. Ford. I hope they will have a very enjoyable time in the Chamber and will learn something about our legislative process. I will be meeting with them later for drinks and to answer any question that they may have.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Alleged Interference Concerning Egg Marketing Board

MR. ANDREW: — I direct this question to the Premier in the absence of the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Premier, I've obtained a confidential file regarding a producer, the Bouffard Brothers, in Kincaid. They are allegedly involved in some illegal activities regarding the egg marketing board. Indications from the file are that the Minister of Agriculture and perhaps the Minister of Social Services were personally involved and took action to try to prevent these charges from being laid, and after the charges were laid before the court became involved in attempting to try to have that action stopped.

First I have a copy, Mr. Premier, of an information laid against one Joseph C. Bouffard. I also have a copy of a letter directed to the Minister of Agriculture from the Saskatchewan Commercial Egg Producers' Marketing Board, and with the indulgence of Mr. Speaker I'd like to read a clause from that letter:

This board has been concerned over the recent apparent political persuasions that have been used by members of your ministry in attempting to keep this issue out of the public forum and before the courts.

Now this letter was written after, Mr. Premier, the charge was laid before the court. I wonder if I could direct this question to you? Is it the practice of your government, in marketing boards, to interfere, or to have the minister interfere with matters that are before the court and before the judicial process?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — The answer to that is no.

MR. ANDREW: — The supplementary question to that, Mr. Premier, is this. When you have a letter from the chairman of a marketing board, in this case the commercial egg marketing board, alleging political interference by one of your ministers, does that not concern you, and do you think that calls for investigation by you, as Premier, as to potential charges of interfering with the administration of justice?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I have no knowledge of the letter from which the hon. member is quoting. It may well have been directed to me. I don't know. But it certainly has not come to my attention. Accordingly, I wouldn't be able to respond to the contents of the letter or to any questions which are framed by reading the letter which the hon. member has and I do not have.

MR. LANE: — I'll direct a question to the Premier. This is a confidential memo to the board of directors from the manager of the Saskatchewan Commercial Egg Producers' Marketing Board referring to this particular matter, and referring to the actions of both the Minister of Social Services, the member for Shaunavon, and the Minister of Agriculture. Referring to departmental officials, Department of Agriculture. They were concerned and were reacting to concerns of MLA Dwain Lingenfelter.

Our premeeting research (this is internal of the board) indicated he won the seat in the last election by less than 400 votes on a split vote.

I wonder of what concern it is to any marketing board as to the plurality of any government members?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I haven't the slightest idea. I don't know who the marketing board is that you refer to and I wouldn't be able to possibly speculate on what may have gone through the mind of whoever the hon. member says wrote that memo.

MR. LANE: — Would the Premier agree that it is no concern of any marketing board in the province as to the plurality of any cabinet ministers or members of the government?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — The hon. member is asking a great number of hypothetical questions and I suggest that he let me have the material from which he and the hon. member for Kindersley are quoting. I will ask the Hon. Minister of Agriculture to look at the material and have a more comprehensive answer in due course.

MR. LANE: — Is it a matter of policy of the marketing boards to do premeeting research into the pluralities of cabinet ministers or government members?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — If it is, I have no knowledge of it and so I very much doubt whether it is the policy of the boards, but once again I invite him to let us have the material and the Minister of Agriculture, the responsible minister, will, I am sure, reply in due course.

MR. ANDREW: — A new question to the Premier. The information from this file, Mr. Premier, indicates that about two years ago this particular egg marketing board did some investigation and this particular farmer was well over his limit and therefore was required to have a licence. For a period of two years they tried to bring this man before the board to have him buy a licence and pay his dues, etc. Now this matter dragged on as late as November 1981. The RCMP was present at this particular man's farm and did the count to lay the charge. The marketing board, in a confidential memo, indicates that they obtained a letter from one D. Krueger, solicitor for this particular person, admitting that he was in fact over the limit and in violation. The people, again from the marketing board, requested and requested these people to come in and each time they didn't show. In January they decided to lay charges in this particular case and in fact charges were laid against this particular person.

Now I also have a letter signed by Mr. MacMurchy, Minister of Agriculture, to the marketing board, after the matter is before the court which says:

In this particular dispute I am disappointed that the board proceeded with court action.

He also goes on to say that he would urge the council in effect to reconsider and try to settle the matter. Now this is at a time, Mr. Premier, when information has been sworn before the court, when these particular people are before the court on a charge of violation of the particular regulations of that act. Now do you think that it is proper of a minister, once a matter is before the court, to interfere in that particular regard, to try to talk the people who are prosecuting into stopping the prosecution and trying to get a settlement?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I simply do not know the facts that the hon. members rely upon and accordingly simply cannot give views as to what is proper and to what is improper. He has had the advantage of looking at the file. I have had the

advantage of looking at nothing, and I suggest that he make the material available. I will see that the Minister of Agriculture looks at the material and responds to the hon. member.

MR. LANE: — A question to the Attorney General. Can the Attorney General advise us whether or not he or his officials have any knowledge of the prosecution itself, or was it taken without your knowledge or the knowledge of your department?

HON. MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I have no personal recollection or knowledge of the file. Again, I would want to make absolutely certain by checking with my own office on this, but just sitting here listening to the question, I have no recollection or knowledge of it. As for the officials in the Department of the Attorney General, of course I can't answer that. I haven't spoken to any of them about this, this having been the first time that it has been brought to my attention.

MR. ANDREW: — A question to the Premier. Reading again from the letter to Mr. MacMurchy from the Saskatchewan Commercial Egg Producers' Marketing Board, it goes as follows:

The entire situation has been prolonged and muddled by his (the accused's) conversation with members of your department. They, in turn, have informed us that this case is in political hands.

Can you tell me, Mr. Premier, in what situation, when a matter is before the courts, does a matter all of a sudden fall into political hands?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — The hon. member is busy taking one statement and applying it to another situation. I don't know the facts, but just hearing the man read it, there is not a shred of evidence to suggest that anyone . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — Those are pretty serious allegations, Al.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — If there were serious allegations, you would have given the facts to the minister and allowed him to respond after he had seen the material, as you have seen the material.

MR. LANE: — It's unfortunate, and I'm not imputing anything from the fact that the minister is not here to respond. We had hoped that he would be here. I fail to see why the minister has need of copies of correspondence which he has signed, when they make for what could potentially become very serious events here. In fact, I think the Attorney General and the Premier know full well the consequences if these letters, which are confidential to the egg marketing board, are verified as being accurate. The charges are serious and involve at least two cabinet ministers in the government opposite.

I'm asking the Attorney General, the minister responsible for the administration of justice, will you immediately undertake an investigation to review this correspondence and the material thereon?

HON. MR. ROMANOW: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I will not undertake that to the hon. member at this time. I think the responsible and reasonable answer is the one the Premier has indicated in response to the questions from the member for Kindersley and

the member for Qu'Appelle. I think the government (or at least the Premier or I) has to see the file. I can't give any answers or responses based on what obviously are, as the Premier has described it, selected — I'm not saying anything is particularly improper about it — quotations. I just simply want to keep my options open until, and unless, this matter is brought to my attention and to the department's attention.

MR. LANE: — A question to the Minister of Social Services. A confidential memo from the manager of the board to the board of directors makes reference to concerns that the Department of Agriculture was reacting to concerns of MLA Dwain Lingenfelter. My first question is: what concerns did you express to the Department of Agriculture with regard to the Bouffard Brothers' investigation and charges? Secondly, did you supply the Saskatchewan Commercial Egg Producers Marketing Board with political information as to your plurality and your concern about this matter?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, I must tell the member that I gave no such information about plurality and vote, or any such information, to any board or anyone. As to the first part of your question, I don't know from what letter you are quoting, and I would like to see a copy of it before I would make any comment on it.

MR. LANE: — I asked you a very simple question. Did you express your concerns . . .

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Are you asking me or the Premier?

MR. LANE: — I am asking the hon. member. What concerns did you express to the Department of Agriculture, or to anyone else in government, with regard to the prosecution of the Bouffard Brothers?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, in my duties as an MLA for the constituency of Shaunavon I have no responsibility to answer the member for Qu'Appelle on a problem which is brought to me as an MLA. I think the member realizes that. When the appropriate minister is in the House to answer it, I'm sure he will do so.

MR. LANE: — You're refusing to answer the question.

MR. ANDREW: — A question to the Minister of Social Services. Are you suggesting in this House, Mr. Minister, that as a member of the treasury benches, when there are allegations that you have in fact interfered with a court process, you do not have to stand in your place and answer before this Assembly? Is that what you are saying?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, what I am saying to the member for Kindersley is that the simple fact is we are discussing a matter that has to do with an egg marketing board. That is the responsibility of the Minister of Agriculture and henceforth I will await his reply to you on that question.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! I want to keep the question period going on the right track and in order. I want to refer to one of the rules which govern the question period. I am quoting from Beauchesne's and the ruling is:

To ask a solution of a legal proposition such as the interpretation of a statute or a minister's own powers . . .

I think we don't want to get into that area. That's information that is equally accessible to all members of the Assembly. We can't question the member for the actions of a private

member of the Assembly. Only members of the Executive Council can be questioned at this time. If the member is questioning the minister in charge of the department on the basis of his department, that is quite in order.

Provincial Auditor's Statement

MR. SWAN: — My question is to the Minister of Finance. Mr. Minister, the Department of Finance complains loud and long about the lack of federal government funding and yet according to the provincial auditor's statement, the government neglected to apply for a \$1 million from the disaster aid fund of the federal government. What is your department doing to assure that the Saskatchewan government indeed does receive all moneys owing to it by the federal government?

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Speaker, I know of the provincial auditor's report. I can assure members that we have had discussions between federal and provincial officials and to date there is every indication that, in fact, money will be coming as a result of the claim which we have put in. The provincial auditor has indicated that there need to be some other systems in place. We can't put them in alone. It take the federal government to put them in as well. We have taken the advice of the provincial auditor and are proceeding to do what we can about setting those systems in place.

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Minister, the consolidated fund exceeded its borrowing authority set by cabinet in 1980 and a number of other departments of government have spent beyond the authority given to them by the legislature. What is your department doing, really, to see that the different departments of government stay within the spending limits and the borrowing limits set by this legislature and by cabinet?

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — The departments have not exceeded the expenditure limits that have been set by this legislature, as the member well should know. There are expenditures that sometimes departments make which come out throughout the period of the fiscal year. Those, then, become supplementary votes. They are then brought to this legislature and they are then voted by this legislature. So overexpenditures in the way that the member opposite describes them do not happen.

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Minister, indeed the overexpenditures have happened and the auditor's report shows them thoroughly. Is the Minister of Finance prepared to support the legislation requested by the provincial auditor to set up a separate office as a provincial auditor, independent of you?

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Speaker, there now is a separate office of the provincial auditor that has always existed as long as there have been provincial auditors. The request by the provincial auditor is to establish separate legislation, removed from legislation which is quite adequate but which is incorporated into The Department of Finance Act. I have indicated already in this House, Mr. Speaker, and in other places that we are reviewing the legislation that applies to the provincial auditor. I have asked the provincial auditor for some suggestions. He has provided me with those suggestions and when we have had an opportunity to consider all of them we will announce in due course what our proposals will be.

MR. ANDREW: — Supplementary question to the Minister of Finance. This matter has been, of course, before this Assembly I think every year for the last four years. And every year when a request is made for independent legislation to cover the office of provincial auditor, the same answer is always forthcoming from either you or your predecessor:

that we are having this under investigation, we are studying it, and perhaps down the road we might look at introducing legislation that would make the auditor not only be but manifestly appear to be independent of the Department of Finance — a situation that exists in every other jurisdiction . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — The member's giving information. He's supposed to be seeking it.

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt in my mind, or in the mind of anyone who wants to look at it objectively, that the office of the provincial auditor has been, and is, independent. He has never questioned it. It is true that there have been suggestions that we should change the legislation, that possibly it needs some amendment. I have never disagreed with that. In fact, as I have indicated, I am in the process of reviewing that legislation. It has also been suggested that that legislation should be separate legislation. It has nothing to do with the independence of the provincial auditor or his office. That has always been clear to everyone, but certainly the question of whether, when we change the legislation and bring in the amendments, we will make it a separate legislation is one that I'm prepared to look at. In fact, I'm doing that now.

Athletic Awards

MR. PICKERING: — Mr. Speaker, I will direct my question to the Minister of Culture and Youth. The University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon have patiently waited for some announcement in the budget as it relates to athletic awards. Would you inform the Assembly today why such awards were not announced in the budget?

HON. MR. WHITE: — Mr. Speaker, no final decision has been made one way or the other on the question of athletic awards or athletic assistance. There have been requests made of the department from certain individuals and groups outside. I took the matter to the special select committee of the legislature, which has been arranged under the new rules, to have a select committee set up to examine the desirability of instituting a system of athletic awards or athletic assistance in the province of Saskatchewan. I will be urging that committee be set up as early as possible, that it fully examine the matter (there are a number of questions which I think should be looked into), and that it report to this Assembly as soon as possible.

MR. McLEOD: — Supplementary question to the Minister of Culture and Youth. I'm interested in the minister's comments regarding requests made to the government from outside this Assembly (I know that is the case), not only to you but to your predecessor in your department. Requests have come from this side of the House. In the four years that I've been here, I know there have been three for sure. The requests have been made through all avenues open to us: in question period, committee of finance, culture and youth, in the form of a motion and amendments to your motions.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! Does the member have a supplementary? I'd like to hear it.

MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Minister, my question to you is this: will you not admit now that this committee you made reference to is nothing more than an election ploy to try to appease this group when, in fact, what you should be doing is putting money on the

table for our student athletes in this province because the other provinces in western Canada that they are forced to compete with all have a system in place?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. WHITE: — Mr. Speaker, I certainly would not agree with the position of the member for Meadow Lake that this is an election ploy. I just picked up the matter after I took charge of the department. I have been examining it very carefully, meeting with people who are interested in the matter. I came further and further to the belief that there are a variety of questions that need to be examined in respect to this matter. One is that there are a number of provinces that have set up an awards system. They have picked certain amounts of money as the suitable size of awards — out of the air as near as I can see. I am not certain that those are the right amounts. There are other matters that have come to my attention. I could go through a whole lot of them. When I look at the distribution of awards it is about one-third female and two-thirds male, and I think it is worth while looking to see if that is the right distribution.

There are matters as to what sports should be included — in the CIAU (Canadian Interuniversity Athletic Union), non-CIAU, and so forth. There is the question of where awards should be tenable — simply at educational institutions and, if so, at university, at technical institutes or what? Should we also be considering awards to people who are working — take a very good athlete and perhaps pay him to learn welding or something at some industry in the province? So there are a variety of things like this. There is, I think, too, if you set up a system that helps athletics in the cities, the problem that it could potentially lead to raiding. So I think there are these and a variety of other questions that certainly merit study before a system of awards or assistance is brought in. Thank you.

MR. McLEOD: — Mr. Minister, very shortly, can I take from what you say that you are in fact against the system of awards that is in place in the other three western provinces?

HON. MR. WHITE: — Mr. Speaker, if the member understood English he would see I am not certain that those are the best systems, and I think if we establish a system in Saskatchewan it should be the best.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Saskatchewan-Ottawa Energy Agreement

MR. ANDREW: — My question is to the Premier. Mr. Premier, on two occasions last week I raised with you the concern with regard to the Saskatchewan-Ottawa energy agreement and the impact that it was in fact having, along with other events, on the oil industry in the province of Saskatchewan.

The southwest field, as you know, is closed down. The papers today are indicating that the southeastern field has not been moving at all since your energy agreement. It is still remaining at about 50 per cent production, and the rumors around the northwest area of Lloydminster are that there will probably be a further cut of 20 per cent of production in the very near future.

Mr. Premier, are you not prepared now to admit, as the Premier of Alberta has, that perhaps the energy agreement is not what it should have been and probably requires renegotiation at this point in time?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I think all of us are fully prepared to admit that the development of the oil industry has not proceeded up to this time as was anticipated when the agreements were signed last autumn. For the most part, it does not appear that the difficulties stem from the agreement but rather from circumstances throughout the world in the oil industry. No one, I think, suggests that something might not be done under the agreements which would assist the oil industry, but basically the problem stems from the much publicized oil glut throughout the world and the purchases made by the Government of Canada in order to assure itself of oil at a time when the oil glut was not appreciated.

Certainly those are real difficulties for the oil industry, but are unlikely to be in any way ameliorated by a renegotiation of the oil agreements. However, I noted the comments of the Premier of Alberta before the Progressive Conservative Party convention with interest and will have an opportunity to study his views on this matter when more detailed reports are available.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATE

MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE (BUDGET DEBATE)

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski that the Assembly resolve itself into the committee of finance.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is the third time I have had the honor to stand in this Assembly as finance spokesman for the opposition and reply to the budget of this province. Next year, Mr. Speaker, I am certain that will be the responsibility of some member opposite. The budget speech itself will have been delivered by a member from a Progressive Conservative government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Last Thursday, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance delivered his budget speech, a speech which contained many Conservative promises, or so it appeared. "People come first," he claims. "Our society was built on co-operation and sharing," he expanded. These, Mr. Speaker, are noble thoughts clearly reminiscent of our program for economic common sense, which I outlined last year in reply to the budget.

People come first — that was his claim, Mr. Speaker. The budget delivered here last Thursday is sheer hypocrisy and sheer deceit. What really did we get in the budget? Well, first of all a \$200 million increase in personal income tax. That is the reality of this budget. Personal income tax increased from \$409 million to \$597 million, a 46 per cent increase — \$800 for every family in this province. What did the people get in return for this rip-off which the minister did not even have the courage to mention? First of all, \$2 a month, if you are a renter. That's 7 cents a day. If you own a home, \$3 a month, Mr. Speaker, that's 10 cents a day. Even a businessman got \$40 to \$60 a month if he owns a business. And, Mr. Speaker, \$1.50 to \$2 a day for small businessmen.

Mr. Speaker, people did not come first in this budget. Rural families were ripped off, and if that were not bad enough, the NDP family of Crown corporations got \$2 billion —

salt on the wounds of every person in this province.

There is no cohesive plan in this budget. People come first — that is the claim of this budget. I agree that people should come first. However, it is not the reality of this budget. The reality is that once again the family of Crown corporations comes first. Where is the challenge, the incentive, or the opportunity? I see no co-operation or sharing with real people in this budget.

In addition to all that, Mr. Speaker, it was the most mishandled and misrepresented budget ever presented in this legislature. It would have been mishandled if only one leak of its contents had occurred. The fact that there were two leaks demonstrates just how much contempt the NDP government has for the traditions of this legislature. However, I have no intention of dwelling on this issue. The people of Saskatchewan will judge for themselves the incompetence of this government in allowing this travesty to occur. They see the leaks; they know the ship is going down. They know that the NDP ship is going down.

The budget read by the government is deceitful and dishonest for many reasons. The highlights of this budget were ideas stolen from the Progressive Conservative platform. However, what they stole were simply the concepts of our platform. While they were at it, they omitted the blueprints. In fact, what it was was a bungled burglary, even to the degree of stealing our theme. Our "People Count" become "People Come First" in the budget document.

They have stolen the trappings of our platform but not its substance. The Progressive Conservative platform was developed with a true sense that people count, that people must be relieved of the excessive burden of taxation and mismanagement, that people must be encouraged to develop this province for themselves and their families. That, Mr. Speaker, is what we mean when we say that people count.

The NDP does not trust the people. It relies on its family of Crown corporations. This is a budget of deceit and members opposite must be warned that the seeds of deceit will lead to a growth of cynicism.

This budget, Mr. Speaker, represents the worst kind of hypocrisy — hypocrisy befitting Pierre Elliott Trudeau. How well we remember Trudeau's position on price and wage controls. How well we remember his position on an 18-cent increase on gasoline. He said he would not do that, but he did. Now, we see the Premier of Saskatchewan using the Trudeau trick.

How well we remember members opposite last year criticizing, ridiculing and voting against rural gasification, mortgage assistance for home-owners, removal of sales tax on children's clothing, a public utility freeze, use of purple gas for farm tandem trucks, and a public utilities review commission among others, Mr. Speaker. This year these concepts are in the NDP budget. They are philosophical friends, Trudeau and the Premier. Mr. Speaker, this is Trudeauism at its best, or perhaps I should say, at its worst.

Speaking of the Trudeau-NDP philosophy, the people of Saskatchewan will not forget that Mr. Trudeau and our Premier removed the rights and freedoms of individuals — the rights of individuals to own property — from our bill of rights.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to put into perspective the highlights of this budget and what it really means to the individual, the citizen, the taxpayer of Saskatchewan.

First of all, there is the mortgage interest relief program. To begin with, it does not apply to those people who renewed their mortgages last year at rates of up to 22 per cent interest. They have been left out. These people, Mr. Speaker, don't come first. It states in the budget speech (and I quote), "beginning with the anniversary date of their mortgage in 1982-83." Mr. Speaker, who is to know what mortgage interest rates may be in one year's time? Is the minister thinking of people first? Hardly. There is no long-term commitment in this plan. Then it states (and again I quote), "to existing home-owners." In other words, new home-owners or buyers do not qualify. They pay the going rate. Will that help to increase house-building? Obviously, Mr. Speaker, new home buyers do not come first. Then it states, "Eligible home-owners will receive up to \$2,400 in benefits." But what it doesn't say is that, in reality, if you qualify for that \$2,400 because of your income, you wouldn't have a \$50,000 mortgage in the first place. And if you can afford the house because your income is \$35,000 (which is the amount that one needs in today's economy), then you don't qualify for the program. The minister states that 25,000 home-owners will benefit. Well, I say, Mr. Speaker, that the conditions of assistance have been set so that no one will receive \$2,400. The government does not mean to provide anywhere near \$2,400 in help, and deceit should not have been used when addressing this very serious problem. In contrast, Mr. Speaker, our proposal would include all those people who had to renew their mortgages at rate of 19 to 22 per cent, in addition to those who renew in 1982. In addition, we have proposed assistance to those first-time home buyers who would be allowed to receive assistance at the same rate.

People need assurance, Mr. Speaker, not uncertainty from month to month. Anyone can see that this simply is a plan to get the NDP through the upcoming election. Mr. Speaker, I repeat that anyone can see that this is simply a plan to get the NDP through the upcoming election. If it is fortunate enough to be re-elected, it would then revert to sloughing the problem off to Ottawa.

The full details of our plan, Mr. Speaker, will be announced at the appropriate time, and the people of Saskatchewan will then see a plan where people truly count, where people do come first.

Mr. Speaker, another budget highlight is a freeze on natural gas and electricity rates until a report from a one-man review committee is received. What hypocrisy! In January and February of this year both of these rates were increased by large amounts — 18 per cent on natural gas alone. There was a further announcement by the minister that natural gas would increase by another 18 per cent in August. It's a safe bet that the report from Mr. Justice Culliton will be received before August of this year. It's also interesting to note that the freeze does not apply to telephones, that one could expect a telephone increase in the very near future.

In his budget, Mr. Speaker, the minister argued that public utilities are accountable to the legislature of this province, and the reality of that is that they are not accountable. The standard answer, Mr. Speaker, to questions concerning the operations of public utilities is that it is not in the public interest. That is not a people-first attitude, not a co-operative attitude. That is the attitude of distrust so consistently shown by this government.

Speaking of a public utilities review commission, here again the NDP gives everyone the impression that it has adopted our proposal. But let's look at what they propose, and I quote:

... a one-person commission to undertake a comprehensive review on natural gas and electricity in Saskatchewan.

They've argued for years and they still argue that it would require an army of people to properly fulfil this function. They've called it another bureaucracy. If they believe that, then why a one-person commission? The terms of reference, Mr. Speaker, you can rest assured will be predetermined to produce a report favoring the government's opposition to a review board. Finally, regardless of the findings of Mr. Chief Justice Culliton, there is no assurance given by the minister that this government would give his recommendations the consideration they deserve. That is a glaring example of an election bribe.

If they had been really serious about their review process they would have rolled back the February increase of 18 per cent in natural gas rates. They would have revealed plans to use more Saskatchewan gas. That would begin to resemble a policy where people count; a policy that fights inflation, provides jobs and that makes sense.

The Premier indicated, just last week, in this House, that he had done his best in the energy negotiations with Ottawa. Well I say that his best is a failure. The oil industry is closing down all over this province. The weekend reports in the newspapers say we are down to 14 per cent production in the Southwest and that there has been a 50 per cent reduction in the Southeast. Now that isn't a "people first" policy. Jobs are being lost and it is up to the Premier to anticipate market changes, not use them as an excuse to cover his failure.

Item 3, we have the highlight for senior citizens — a new shelter allowance program. Let me state what it says, Mr. Speaker, and I quote:

Starting in July our new shelter allowance program will provide financial assistance to 20,000 senior citizens.

The first thing I would ask the minister is: why July? Why not now? Secondly, why 20,000? Did someone forget to tell the minister that Saskatchewan has 120,000 senior citizens, most of whose shelter costs exceed 25 per cent of their income?

Mr. Speaker, let's talk about people first — about senior citizens, the people who built Saskatchewan, the pioneers of our province. Thousands of senior citizens are alone and lonely, and why? A very good reason — their children had to leave this province to find jobs. Mr. Speaker, in the last 40 years a million of them have left, 89,000 of them in the last 11 years since this government has been in power in Saskatchewan. Many of our senior citizens were left without the comfort of their children or the joys of their grandchildren. If people really counted, if they were first in the NDP scheme of things, there would have been jobs for their children and there would be less loneliness for our senior citizens. As I said a minute ago, Mr. Speaker, 89,000 people have left this province since 1971 because the NDP didn't care. The population in Saskatchewan 40 years ago, Mr. Minister was 9 per cent of the Canadian population and today it is under 4 per cent — 3.9 per cent. That's what we have left in this province . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

I am shocked that the Attorney General cannot add up one and two. Well, let me explain that to you, Mr. Attorney General. When there are 115,000 people born in this province

and the population only goes up by some 20,000, that means that 89,000 people left here. That's what happened to the people of this province. The NDP didn't care enough, Mr. Speaker, to create the jobs that were necessary to support a family. Protest as they will, the actions of the NDP betray their words.

I want to go on to the fourth highlight of the minister's budget; nursing home beds. I am intrigued by the way the Minister of Finance announced that his government was going to finally add more beds to Saskatchewan's nursing home system, and I quote:

I am pleased to announce that in 1982 we will provide funds to build 133 new nursing home beds.

I just heard the Minister of Finance say that they add some every year. I would like to tell the Minister of Finance that they haven't added one single bed in the city of Regina since the last election in 1978. So how does he figure that they are adding every year? However, I did notice, Mr. Speaker, in the budget, that they're going to be building some new hospitals, but do you know where they're going to build them? In those constituencies where members are in trouble, where their ministers are in trouble. I'm thinking of Cut Knife-Lloydminster, of Melfort, of Yorkton. Those are the places in which they'll be building hospitals. The Minister of Social Services, when questioned about nursing home beds, named several towns where new beds would be built. It is his intention, as seems implied by his answers, to include one community in every NDP constituency as another election bribe. That raises the spectre of nursing home beds scattered helter-skelter in communities across our province. As I assume that is not likely to be the case, I imagine instead that the minister is intending to either build or supply 133 new beds — I certainly hope they'll have rooms to go with them — at existing homes across this province. How callous can a government be, Mr. Speaker — 133 new nursing home beds for the whole province of Saskatchewan?

I mentioned this a minute ago, and I'll repeat it. In the city of Regina alone, this government has not added one nursing home bed since the 1978 election — not one single bed. Yet I know, Mr. Speaker, of one nursing home alone in this city which has a list of 890 people waiting for admission. I know of patients who desperately need these facilities. They have become heavy burdens on their families because of badly deteriorating health. People with Parkinson's disease, unable even to get to the bathroom by themselves, have been waiting for years — years, Mr. Speaker, not months — for a place in a nursing home. Then, even when they're finally lucky enough to get a place in a nursing home, they or their family must pay over \$390 a month to keep them there. And that is almost double what a senior citizen would have to pay for a similar bed in our sister western provinces. Money for uranium and line-ups for our senior citizens — now what kind of a social justice is there in that? I ask the minister: is that people first? "A new deal for senior citizens," the minister says. Well, I think it is more appropriately called a rotten deal for senior citizens, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Speaker, I will move on to the fifth highlight of the budget: property tax relief. Well, what can you say about that one? I think those figures speak for themselves. This new deal for the property owner by the NDP means that he gets an extra \$3 per month. Ten cents a day! This would not even cover the interest on the increase in his municipal taxes. The renter didn't even fare as well. While the renter has faced steadily escalating rents over the last year, the NDP government in its generosity has decided to give him rent relief to the degree of \$2 per month. That is less than 7

cents a day.

Yet it has allocated land bank and Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation (SMDC), two of its family of Crown corporations, \$40 million and \$108 million respectively. I think the NDP will soon rename the land bank. The next step may be a Crown corporation to make them all the more state farms.

So, Mr. Speaker, depending on where you live, the NDP has decided to give you an election present — let's call it a bribe — of \$3 per month — 10 cents a day or even less. That's some bribe — 10 cents or less per day.

Then we come to another highlight, the elimination of the sales tax on children's clothing. Now, this is a step in the right direction. We believe that all sales tax can be removed in due course in this province. However, to remove only the sales tax from children's clothes translates into a saving of \$3 per capita in Saskatchewan — \$3 per person per year. This was another idea stolen from the Conservatives, but not in its entirety.

What happened to the suggestions which we put forth to you, Mr. Minister, of removing the sales tax on utility bills to assist all consumers? What happened to our suggestion to rebate the sales tax to our senior citizens? What happened to our senior citizens . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I may add, Mr. Attorney General, who suffer the most in these inflationary times? What happened to the removal of the sales tax on school supplies? Today, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce, as well, that a Progressive Conservative government will remove the sales tax not only on children's clothing but on all clothing. A generalized reduction or elimination of sales tax is the only equitable means of helping those hardest hit by inflation and high interest rates. Only then, Mr. Speaker, will senior citizens, families with children, families without children, farmers, and small and not so small businessmen benefit. Believe me, they are all hurting.

Now, we come to the item which the budget was trying to cover up with splashy but hollow promises — \$2 billion for the family of Crown corporations. That family is the inevitable hornet in the bouquet of roses. This is the sting, Mr. Speaker. Right now at this very moment, every man, woman and child in Saskatchewan is carrying a public debt of \$3,500 per person or \$14,000 per family of four to pay for the past debts of this NDP government. In one fell swoop, one stroke of the pen, the Minister of Finance is going to increase it to \$5,500 per person or \$22,000 per family of four. This debt, Mr. Speaker, will be created to expand the corporate family, the huge business empire of the NDP.

The Minister of Finance is devious. He figures that he can't just push \$2 billion of extra debt on the people of Saskatchewan. He thinks that he will have to buy them off. It's a very feeble attempt indeed. He promises to give \$3 extra per year per person. Then he promises another \$3 a month if you own a home. Then he promises \$2 a month if you rent an apartment. This is in exchange for an additional debt of \$8,000 per family so that the family of Crown corporations can be expanded.

I don't know about you, Mr. Speaker, but that does not seem like much of a deal to me. How in good conscience could he claim that people come first? The NDP government has offered the people of Saskatchewan a bribe of \$3 per month for their votes. In return for this bribe, Mr. Speaker, it will increase by \$8,000 the public debt for every family in Saskatchewan. That doesn't seem like a very good deal to me — a \$40 gift in exchange for a \$22,000 debt. Does the government really believe or think that the

people of this province will be duped by its ploy?

But getting back to my main point, Mr. Speaker, this further investment of \$2 billion in taxpayers' money for our Crown corporations will only accomplish two things. First, it will increase the degree of state control and ownership in this province that we see growing at an already alarming rate. Second, it will further reduce people's expectations regarding fair treatment from this government. There is almost no place left for private investment in Saskatchewan that is not subject to excessive government meddling. I find it absolutely incredible to visualize an additional \$2 billion for Crown corporation expansion when these corporations are being overloaded with political appointees who cannot properly manage what they currently control.

The advertising bill will be phenomenal. Tens of millions of dollars will no doubt be spent to create a false image of the performance of public enterprise under NDP management. Right now, Mr. Speaker, the Crown corporation sector has over \$1 billion in advances from the Government of Saskatchewan, and these advances, Mr. Speaker, have been given interest free. In reality, that means that the taxpayers of this province are carrying the interest.

Mr. Speaker, at the current interest rates, the interest alone on these advances is \$160 million out of the taxpayers' pockets. If this interest saving were transferred to the taxpayers of this province, many things could be done to relieve some of the pressures of inflation on the citizens of this province.

Let me give you some examples, Mr. Speaker. If the government had this \$160 million it could cut personal income taxes by 40 per cent. If they had this \$160 million, Mr. Speaker, they could reduce sales taxes by 40 per cent. That's only on the interest on the money that they have loaned interest free to the Crown corporations. They could offer a long-term mortgage assistance program — eight times what was in the budget.

Mr. Speaker, the trouble is that the NDP believes that only the government and the Crown corporations sector are capable of economic development in this province, that only a few people in Saskatchewan are capable of thinking, and that they inhabit cabinet ministers' offices and Crown corporation board rooms. I, for one, strongly disagree. It was individual initiative and freely co-operating citizens that built the economy of this province and not government policy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: — For the New Democratic Party of Saskatchewan to believe that it has been and will continue to be any other way shows just how much out of touch with reality it really is. The Premier recently revealed his solution to the economic ills of Canada: public sector investment, he calls it; it's state capitalism in reality. That he could summon enough gall to suggest such a plan is inconceivable. The NDP has been in power for the best part of the last 40 years. Yet one million people left this province during those years because they couldn't find jobs. This is a province blessed with the widest variety of resources in abundance, and yet one million people left because there was no opportunity for them under the NDP. The Minister of Finance would have better summed up the NDP record as "people go first," and not, "people come first".

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Low-interest loans for small businesses is another highlight. Speaking of individual initiative, which is the essence of small business in this province, brings me to the next highlight of their budget. Does the government really think that \$40 to \$60 per month will really assist small businesses in Saskatchewan? It was this government that loaned an eastern developer, a large national corporation, \$45 million at nine and five-eighths per cent, locked in for 35 years. That is the position of the NDP government with respect to small business development. That is not a people first policy.

We are of the opinion that if we can subsidize large out-of-province corporations to that extent, we can do far better than \$40 to \$60 per month for our small business sector. Today, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that a Progressive Conservative government would make available to small businesses a \$45 million loan program for inventory, financing and modernization of equipment and premises. Loans of up to \$25,000 would be available at nine and five-eighths per cent. This, in my opinion, constitutes real assistance for small business development in Saskatchewan. That is people first.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: — The final budget highlight to which I want to refer relates to agriculture. I am surprised that the NDP government has finally awakened to the fact that there are farmers in this province. Why the sudden interest? Why at this time, after 10 years of neglect? Could it be the imminent election? I want to say at the outset that I find all the commotion, all the postures and speech-making, all the fuss and bother made by the NDP on the issue of the Crow's Nest Pass freight rate to be somewhat ironical. A quick glance at the agricultural scene in our province over the last 10 years under the NDP presents an interesting picture. This posture by the NDP stands out as being very peculiar in light of its past performance.

Let's consider the following facts:

1. Last year the NDP eliminated the farm cost reduction program, which was one of the few breaks which farmers were allowed with respect to the very high energy costs associated with agriculture.
2. Land bank, created by the NDP, now owns well over \$500 million worth of farmland, over 1.5 million acres that it doesn't want to sell back to farmers. It seems that only about 20,000 acres have been sold back to farmers since the program was created. Sold, I might add, for many times the purchase price — speculation by a government that professes not to believe in speculation.
3. We have witnessed the demise of nearly all of the livestock processing and packaging facilities in this province. The NDP owns Intercontinental Packers, the only livestock packaging plant left in the province, and it is under criminal investigation for conspiracy to fix prices.
4. In a province that boasts over 40 per cent of the agricultural land in Canada, we have lost a record number of farmers since the NDP came to power.
5. There has been a net decline of 54 per cent in the population of Saskatchewan rural towns and villages.

6. The NDP has reduced expenditures on irrigation after a history of drought problems including a devastating drought as recent as 1979.

7. We had the creation of a drought assistance program in 1979 only after repeated and insistent calls by the Progressive Conservative opposition and by the agricultural community. The subsequent program then proved to be very poorly managed, inequitable and insufficient.

8. We have a proposal by the Saskatchewan Minister of Agriculture to buy CP Rail shares for \$2 billion to \$8 billion of taxpayers' money while refusing to spend even a fraction of that to upgrade irrigation systems and supply natural gas to farmers to cut energy costs.

9. There's been a steady decline in the marketing of livestock since 1970. Calves marketed declined by 50 per cent. Sheep and lambs declined by 60 per cent. Hogs declined by 40 per cent.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the net income to farmers from farm production has declined by 50 per cent between 1976 and 1981. It strikes me as somewhat strange in light of the facts I have just given that the NDP should suddenly have taken an interest in the agricultural community. Or perhaps it is not so strange when we consider that the Minister of Agriculture cannot decide whether or not he is advocating straight grain or a diversified agriculture economy.

He has clearly stated his support for both, though they stand in contradiction, one with the other. I venture to say that in reality the intent of this NDP manoeuvre is nothing more than a mercenary political move to capitalize on farmers' misfortune as a political ploy.

They will try to create an election issue out of this crowrate tragedy, and then if re-elected will simply toss the farmers and the concerns aside as they give CPR billions of dollars. I wanted to watch the Premier and his colleagues summon their rhetoric for the crow debate currently in progress in this House. They have painted themselves as saviors of the rural way of life, defenders of Saskatchewan's rural communities. Did you know, Mr. Speaker, that since this government came to power in 1971, over 300 grain delivery points in Saskatchewan have been closed? Did the NDP cry out? No. Once again their actions betray their words.

The NDP is deliberately delaying a vote on the crowrate resolution, a resolution which would not be here had it not been for the public embarrassment my colleague, the member for Souris-Cannington, caused the government by insisting on a joint resolution in support of the crowrates. The NDP members do not want this vote to take place because it would undermine their political manoeuvres for the up-coming election. It's politics before people with the NDP, Mr. Speaker. They delay sending a clear message to Ottawa. They expose the farm community to unnecessary risk and, in short, they do not really care unless it suits their political purposes.

The NDP says it has a solution. Its solution is to get together with four other governments, including Ottawa, to buy the CPR. They have been taking political shots at three of these governments; nevertheless, they expect us to believe that collectively they will somehow be able to agree on how to guarantee service. It's absolutely ridiculous. Let's look at health and education, where only two governments are involved, and we will know the guarantee is worth nothing.

Mr. Speaker, there are other measures which need to be taken to reverse the decline in our agricultural sector. We need to help keep energy costs down both in general and in the agricultural industry. Energy costs are a major component of agriculture costs. A rural natural gas system would help to cut these costs — we must get more people back into farming. A Progressive Conservative government, Mr. Speaker, will establish a family farm purchase program which would grant once in a lifetime loans of up to \$350,000 at 8 per cent for the first five years, and 12 per cent or the then interest rate (whichever is lower) for the remainder of the term.

Mr. Speaker, we will revitalize rural communities through a rural community development program by giving unconditional capital grants to local governments to establish necessary rural infrastructure, and by giving tax incentives to rural industrial and service sectors.

Mr. Speaker, we want to see the return of farmer-owner farmland, and a moving away from state ownership of our agricultural sector. This can be partially accomplished by encouraging the current lessees of land bank land to buy this leased land at a guaranteed 8 per cent interest rate for the first five years, and a 12 per cent rate for the remainder of the term.

We want to see the agricultural sector diversified. This can be done through several avenues. Agricultural education and research funding will be greatly increased, and we will introduce a Saskatchewan agriculture and food processing program to provide both investment capital and tax incentives to stimulate such activities as the production of grain alcohol as an alternative fuel source known as gasohol, and the creation of secondary agricultural industries such as the processing of agricultural products in our province.

We shall significantly enhance the development of irrigation in the province through increased attention to the development of a South Saskatchewan irrigation project with assistance to farmers who wish to irrigate.

These, Mr. Speaker, are real proposals directed at helping to solve some of the problems facing our agricultural community. They recognize the importance of the agricultural community to our economy and give to it the attention that this contribution merits.

Agriculture forms a large component of our provincial economy, but obviously not the only one. A well-designed economic development strategy must consider all components. Therefore, I will now turn to manufacturing. An integrated, well-planned industrial strategy for Saskatchewan naturally includes the manufacturing sector. For too long we have simply been exporters of raw materials, of primary products. It is a structural weakness both in the Saskatchewan and Canadian economies. While not attempting to down play the importance of such export commodities as wheat, I believe we can be augmenting their contributions by building up a secondary manufacturing sector.

We have already discussed our plans to build a rural natural gas distribution network. There will be a large demand for both labor and materials, such as piping and compression equipment, while this project is being constructed. There is no reason why most or all of this equipment cannot be built in Saskatchewan.

We believe that because of the fluctuating and ever-uncertain supply of foreign oil on the market and Canada's dependence upon imported oil, we should be looking for alternatives to this source of fuel. We recognize that the production of gasoline for transportation requires a large part of our oil imports, and we know that a perennial problem with grain producers in our province is having to store grain that exceeds their allowable quota.

The Progressive Conservative Party has believed for a long time now that the time is right for a move toward the production of grain alcohol as an alternate energy source. Mix one-tenth ethanol with nine-tenths gasoline and you produce gasohol. We save energy by 10 per cent per year in transportation; we provide a new home-grown alternative fuel; we create jobs in Saskatchewan both during construction and production phases; we capitalize upon one of our traditionally strong sectors, that of grain production.

Because of recurring problems of water supply in this province the Progressive Conservative Party proposes two projects. The first I have already spoken of. It concerns the need for extensive expansion of the irrigation system in our province. We believe that if farmers were able to irrigate their lands it would help to remove a large part of the boom or bust nature of agriculture in Saskatchewan. A significant spinoff of the expansion and upgrading of irrigation systems would be the need for literally millions of dollars worth of construction material and the creation of new manufacturing jobs in Saskatchewan.

A second project which I personally feel strongly is the quality of the water supply serving the Regina and Moose Jaw areas. The current Minister of Urban Affairs, Mr. Smishek, through his deputy minister, has already told the people of the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw that the NDP government takes no interest in the quality of the water consumed by the people in these areas . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, he did. Yes he said that. I guess, Mr. Speaker, that he would rather use the taxpayers' money to buy himself and his colleagues an airline or a Marathon Oil. Now is that, Mr. Speaker, a people first attitude?

I, in contrast, believe that a high priority should be placed on improving the quality of water consumed by the people of this area. I believe that provincial development funding from the heritage fund could and should be used for such a project and I think that it should be done now. The people of this area have for too long been forced to live with water which has such a bad taste and foul smell that it has earned a reputation for being the worst water in Canada.

The completion of a program to upgrade the quality of this water will generate the need for new materials and manpower. So let's get on with the job. Between 20 and 25 per cent of the population of our province lives in this area. Gentlemen, let's get on with that job.

Moving to another related area, Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative Party has promised to provide cable television to all residents of Saskatchewan. There is still less than one-half of our population which is able to receive it. We believe that a hybrid system utilizing Sask Tel's already in-place fibre optics network supplemented by satellite receiving dish equipment is the answer. There's little economy in running fibre optic lines to sparsely populated areas. But similarly, there is no reason why people who live in these areas should be deprived of the service which many of us take for

granted. The provision of cable TV will require much new equipment that we could be building and buying in Saskatchewan: receiving dishes, cable wire, and the local expertise to install the system. Again we would be creating jobs and diversifying our manufacturing base. These are but a few areas in which economic activity can and will be stimulated when the Progressive Conservative Party becomes the Government of Saskatchewan in the very near future.

These plans demonstrate a strong change in spending priorities when contrasted to the efforts of the current government. It keeps boasting about the wealth of the province contained in our heritage fund — wealth that is supposed to be owned by the people and benefiting them. But the way we see our heritage fund money being invested just indicates how mixed up the current government's priorities really are. The main objective of the heritage fund according to its own annual report is, and I quote:

To provide a financial mechanism through which a substantial portion of resource revenue will be set aside each year and invested in income-generating assets for the benefit of future generations.

A laudable aim; a necessary priority. Taking the economic benefits of royalties from our non-renewable resource wealth and investing it in activities to create renewable economic benefits to ensure the financial and social security of future generations of Saskatchewan citizens is our priority but, sadly, this is where the system falls apart.

We have only to glance at the heritage fund to see that of the royalties collected from such non-renewable resources as uranium, potash, oil and gas, nearly \$1 billion has been dumped back into these very same resources. It is like buying stock in a company that has just declared bankruptcy. We are supposed to be creating renewable wealth but instead we are buying up increasing amounts of non-renewable resources. And to cap it all off, Mr. Speaker, the investments in these non-renewable resources are not even paying off as they should. Documents and booklets produced by the NDP government claim that markets have dropped off sharply for both uranium and potash. Uranium prices, to make matters worse, have fallen by 50 per cent in the last couple of years. Yet they continue to make equity investments or advances, as they call them, in these non-renewable resource-based Crown corporations — \$1 billion, Mr. Speaker, — in uranium and potash and oil. And they plan to spend another \$2.5 billion in further potash expansion. That, Mr. Speaker, is perverse logic.

When the market drops, they want to spend more. Perhaps it is best illustrated by another one of our family of Crown corporations. In 1981, when all other oil companies made record profits, Saskoil actually say its profits decline sharply. I predict, Mr. Speaker, when we see the annual report of Saskoil it won't just be a sharp decline. It will be a huge loss. I predict we will see that.

Mr. Speaker, the economic benefits of our non-renewable resources can be made to benefit the people of Saskatchewan. They can be used to stimulate renewable resource development like agriculture and agri-energy projects, promote water development in both urban and rural areas, upgrade our health-care delivery system, and provide more and better nursing homes in our province. (It is somewhat ironical, as I stated earlier, there here in Regina, Mr. Speaker, in the seat of provincial government where we have four provincial cabinet ministers including the Premier, not one nursing home bed has been added since 1978.) These benefits can help Saskatchewan people to own or keep the houses that they live in, reduce the cost of living for individual citizens including the cost of housing, utilities and food, and cut provincial income tax and sales tax to allow

people to enjoy a few of the dollars that they work so hard for. I remind you that for a have province our per capita income is still 10 per cent below the national average. That is almost \$1,000 per person, and that isn't people first.

Mr. Speaker, it is the people's money. The people should really benefit from it. Our young people are currently leaving the province to find jobs. Our senior citizens are being forced to live below or at the poverty line with fixed incomes of below \$600 a month while prices for food, heat and shelter are escalating dramatically and continually around them. Farmers are experiencing declining incomes and escalating costs, and the cost-price squeeze is forcing many, Mr. Speaker, to the point of bankruptcy. Small businesses are declaring bankruptcy in record numbers. Every citizen in Saskatchewan is being forced to pay for the poor management and irresponsible spending of the current government. There is a never-ending series of taxes, levies and fees imposed by the NDP to pay for their mismanagement.

Saskatchewan is blessed with abundant natural resources — resources for which there is a high world demand, resources which can provide economic benefits to the people of our province. But I stand firmly . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — How would you develop them, Paul?

MR. ROUSSEAU: — The Minister of Finance says, "How would you develop them?" I have spent the last hour explaining, as an example, irrigation on our farmlands, but he didn't hear. I stand firmly at odds with the NDP government as to the best means of exploiting these resources for the benefit of the people of Saskatchewan. They advocate state ownership. They believe in the expenditure of a huge amount of taxpayers' dollars to buy up non-renewable resource industries. They believe in and they boast about how well our Crown corporations are doing. They spend great amounts of time and money advertising the supposed benefits of these companies to the people. Once again, Mr. Speaker, the record of the NDP government betrays its words. What are the benefits to the people? The government has spent large amounts of tax money acquiring these companies — more than \$1 billion, just as much as agriculture. Although they don't like to admit it, these non-renewable resources are prone to a boom or bust cycle. We're seeing the market fall sharply for all of these commodities right now. The base line question, Mr. Speaker, is: who is left holding the bag when these resources dry up or the bottom falls out of the market? And the answer, unfortunately, is obvious: the people of Saskatchewan.

I fundamentally disagree with this idea of government ownership of our economy. Private enterprise should — and I might add, is willing to — take the risk with these business ventures. The people of Saskatchewan don't need to be left in this risk-taking position. Through a tax and royalty regimen that generates good returns for the people of this province from private sector development of our own resources, we could do better; we could be better off than we are right now and, Mr. Speaker, without the risk. If we were to follow this non-risk avenue, many benefits would accrue to the people. We would gain great revenue through royalties and corporate taxation, which could then be used to lessen the impact of inflation on all the people of Saskatchewan. We could invest part of the heritage fund assets in renewable resource industries to generate long-term opportunities for the people of the province. We could cease indirect taxation through utility rates. I want to repeat that, Mr. Speaker. We could cease indirect taxation through utility rates, gasoline tax levies, and so on to pay for these acquisitions. And, we would have much more money to spend on such programs as mortgage assistance, small-business assistance programs, programs for agriculture,

health, social programs, education, and many, many others. For too long now the people of Saskatchewan have been highly taxed, both directly and indirectly, to pay for the ruthless and endless acquisition programs and poor management practices of the political appointees heading our Crown corporations. This practice can and must end.

Since coming to power in 1971 the NDP has repeatedly and brutally taxed the people of our province to feather its nest. Natural gas rates have increased between 500 and 1,400 per cent, depending on whether you are a residential or a commercial customer — 500 to 1,400 per cent increase since the NDP came to power. Electricity rates have increased nearly 300 per cent. Insurance rates, through SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance), have increased over 250 per cent for some vehicles — not since 1971, but since 1978. Again we see its concern for the farmer: for a two-year-old grain truck, needed by farmers in this province, there has been an increase of 252 per cent — not since 1971, but from 1978 to 1981, in a three-year period. That doesn't even include the new rate. Mr. Speaker, the list goes on.

People in Saskatchewan are hurting. They are losing their businesses; they can't pay their bills; they are tired; and they are unsure of their futures with this government. What do they get from their government? Both the governments of Saskatchewan and of Canada abdicate responsibility for the terrible state of the economy by attempting to blame each other for its condition. Well, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan and Canada have grown tired of such buck-passing measures. They are no longer content to sit and listen to the NDP in Regina say it is helpless to do anything about the economy because the problems are caused by the federal government. The Trudeau Liberals, in turn, say that they are powerless to do much to turn the economy around because our economy is so closely tied to that of the U.S. and can only be cured when the United States economy improves. The whole process is nothing more than feeble buck-passing by two political parties which have grown old and tired in their positions and have lost their ability to do the job that they were elected to do. It is, furthermore, just another example of the arrogance and the disdain that these two parties feel for the electorate. They believe that the public may be duped by their posturing. The economy is in terrible shape; however, it need not be so, particularly in Saskatchewan with the wealth of the resources that we have in this province. I say the economy is in terrible shape, perhaps the worst in 50 years. But it need not be so.

Unemployment has reached record heights in this country; nearly one and one-quarter million people in Canada. Regina and Saskatoon have seen unemployment rise to new provincial highs in the last 12 months. There is no sign of a downward trend. Inflation is on the verge of destroying many families. Interest rates are still soaring and promise to return to the record highs we saw last summer. Mortgage rates follow in the wake of interest rate hikes so they too are destined to return to the record rates seen last summer. Canadians by the thousands either have lost or are in fear of losing their houses when their turn to renew their mortgages comes. Small businesses are going bankrupt in record numbers. Big businesses are laying off workers at unheard of rates. Farmers are recording record crops yet are seeing their earnings diminish.

The individual citizen is confronted, daily it seems, with an unending series of price and rate increases. Food costs more. Gasoline costs more. Utilities cost more. Insurance costs more. Where does it all end? I would suggest that it should end when these two levels of government begin to face up to the plight of our individual citizens, when they stop passing the buck on the economy and start to look for solutions to our problems, when they start to live up to the responsibilities to which they were elected. Mr. Speaker, I am afraid that this is unlikely to happen while the Trudeau government sits in

Ottawa and the NDP sits in Regina.

The problems are not new. They are fundamentally problems that have confronted Canadians for the greater part of the time that these two parties have been in power. But they fail to come up with any answers. The problems have a profound impact on the very livelihoods of all Canadians. They attack the basic individual rights of all Canadians: the right to enjoy a decent standard of living, the right to own a home, the right to be able to provide adequate food and shelter for their families, the right to enjoy peace of mind not burdened by the anxiety created wondering whether one will be able to provide these basic needs in days to come.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the individual Canadian should enjoy these basic, fundamental rights — rights which until recently we as Canadians have taken for granted. I believe that individual Canadians should be able to keep the house that they currently occupy. I believe that young or first-time potential home-owners should be able to realize their dream of buying a home. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that every individual citizen should be able to provide adequate food, clothing and energy for himself and his family, and still have enough money left over to provide a few of the pleasures of life. I believe that every individual worker should be able to enjoy the profits of his labor rather than see them stripped away by ever-increasing government-imposed taxes, charges and interest rates.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Speaker, I believe that every citizen has the right to enjoy health care and social services provided efficiently and fully for him by his government.

These are just some individual rights and freedoms which I believe the individual citizen of Saskatchewan and of Canada deserves to enjoy. These same rights and freedoms are precisely those I see being eroded daily by the inactivity of both our Saskatchewan and our federal governments. Their stick their heads in the sand attitude cannot be allowed to prevail. How then can a responsible government help the individual citizen?

Mr. Speaker, it can help by owning up to the fact that it is responsible to the people it represents to get them through economic hard times, and then, by acting on its responsibility, not with flowery, hollow, empty promises like we have seen in the current budget, not by election come-ons or carrots for the voters, but with real, substantial people-oriented policies which are aimed at curing the economic ills of the economy and increasing the economic and social well-being of all the people of our province — policies like those which have been part of the Progressive Conservative program for years.

Mr. Speaker, this budget is merely an election ploy, a sugar-coated pill which has a bitter taste, a vain attempt by a tired, old, fading party that bamboozled the voting public into voting it into office one more time. I predict, Mr. Speaker, that this ploy will fail, first, because it deserves to, and second, because the people of this province will not be duped by the Premier and his party.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Meadow Lake that the motion be amended by deleting all the words after "that" and substituting the

following therefor:

This Assembly regrets that it has no confidence in your advisors by reason of the following:

1. They have refused to accept unequivocally a one-year freeze on utility rates;
2. They have refused to endorse a concept of and a need for a permanent public utilities review commission;
3. They have ignored the effect of the high cost of energy on everyone, and have failed to take any action to freeze or roll back the provincial road taxes on gasoline;
4. They have refused to recognize the high input costs to farmers and have not announced a comprehensive rural gas distribution program;
5. They have increased individual income tax revenue by 36 per cent from \$409 million to \$596 million;
6. They are insensitive to the needs of the farmer and the small businessman, the home-owner, the youth and the seniors of this province;
7. They have shown an amazing lack of respect for those who expect consistency;
8. They have replaced care and concern with hypocrisy and cynicism.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: — I find the motion in order and debate continues concurrently on the motion and the amendment.

HON. MR. ROMANOW: — Would the hon. member accept one short question before he takes his place?

MR. SPEAKER: — Apparently not.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by congratulating the Minister of Finance on the budget delivered last Thursday. There are a number of items, far too many items, of benefit to the Saskatchewan public for me to discuss in the limited time available to me. I will only touch on a couple of areas of special interest.

Before doing so I have to comment on the rather curious address delivered by the member for Regina South. I may say that is about the most eloquent praise I've ever heard for a budget — that utter inability to launch and mount any kind of an attack on a budget. I don't think you could find more eloquent praise of what the Minister of Finance delivered last Thursday.

I note that the members opposite are again trying to suggest that we have somehow been not accountable in the area of utility rates. Somehow or other in the curious logic that seems to prevail over there a decision made by cabinet is one that we are not

accountable for; a decision made by an independent review board is one that we are accountable for. The logic of that, I may say, escapes me a little.

But the most curious, I'm sure, portion of that speech was the use of population figures. I first was a candidate in 1971. The population of Saskatchewan then was 907,000. In the year 1982 the population of Saskatchewan is 980,000. Now, somehow or other, to members opposite, when you subtract 980 from 907 you get a population loss.

We've heard of Reagan economics. We now have Tory mathematics. Only in Saskatchewan, I may say, could you have such selective use of mathematics.

I noted as well the member for Regina South was critical of the property tax rebate. The property tax rebate is of course part of a larger cost of living package. I noted the member didn't have an awful lot to say about the Saskatchewan Home-owners' Mortgage Entitlement Program and I assume that's because that program out there is quite popular. That's part of the cost of living package.

If you people want to come into Regina Centre and campaign against me on the basis of the cost of living package that was included in that budget, I may say I hope you get all the press you want, because I don't think you'll do yourselves a lot of good. First you'll have to find a candidate in Regina Centre, but when you do, I hope you get lots of coverage with that one.

The member for Regina South felt that the Saskatchewan economy was in terrible shape. He would visit upon the people of Saskatchewan the kind of economic miracle that Sterling Lyon managed to effect in Manitoba.

My guess is that the people of Saskatchewan aren't going to take any chances with that economic miracle and I doubt that that would be a serious problem.

I was also interested in the member for Regina South and his opposition to the capital program. The member for Regina South might have been more honest had he told the people of Saskatchewan that there are 18,000 jobs. If you want to campaign in the next election on the basis that you're opposed to a program which creates 18,000 jobs, I hope you get lots of publicity.

That capital program includes, among other things, the Poplar River power project. I wonder if the members are against that. Is that what they're against? Would you visit upon the Saskatchewan people the sort of brown-outs that they experience in the United States? That's a capital program which is simply providing for our electrical needs. Are you against that? It also provides for the Nipawin hydro-electric project. Are you against that?

We have heard of Reagan economics. And that seems to be what the member for Regina South is suggesting that the public of Saskatchewan buy. It seems that he would visit upon the people of Saskatchewan a sort of economic stagnation, record unemployment and other economic problems experienced by those south of the border, or the kind of de-industrialization that Britain has experienced under Margaret Thatcher. That's not the program of this government. That's not what we will be going forward with in the election. We are going forward in the election with a positive program which creates jobs and at the same time provides for the needs of the Saskatchewan public.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — The member for Regina South also decried the role of the government in participating in the Cornwall Centre. I may say that there are few things which the government has done which the people of Regina are as proud of as they are of the Cornwall Centre. The people of Regina are genuinely proud of the Cornwall Centre and they boast about it. If the member for Regina South wants to campaign on the basis of being opposed to the Cornwall Centre I hope he gets lots of publicity in the city of Regina.

We also got a glimpse of the Tory election platform. I may say that no one is going to accuse you of being ahead of the times. I heard members opposite promise a gasohol project, something we implemented some months ago. I am sure the public of Saskatchewan will be interested to know that you people are promising programs we have already implemented.

Another illustration of the same thing: the member for Regina South is in favor of better water in Regina. Isn't that a distinguishing feature? I am sure he is joined by 150,000 other people in the city of Regina. We didn't hear what he was going to do about it. Once again, I may say, the member for Regina South is promising a program which we are already implementing. The members opposite seem to be suffering from poor memories. Let me read from *Hansard*, March 19, a question put to the Minister of Urban Affairs by the member for Arm River. The question asked by the member for Arm River was, "What are you going to do about the water?" The Minister of Urban Affairs answered as follows:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member had read the budget speech he would have noticed that \$17 million is provided in the budget for urban water and sewer systems in the province through the municipal water assistance board. We are providing a 50 per cent increase in the budget this year for water for communities. In the case of Regina and Moose Jaw the hon. member may be aware (I certainly told him last year and I invite him to review *Hansard*) that the Department of Urban Affairs, together with the Department of the Environment and the cities of Moose Jaw and Regina, is having a two-phase study one on the water needs in those two communities. Phase one of the study is on the verge of being completed. After that study is completed it is our intention to meet with officials from the cities of Moose Jaw and Regina to discuss the report and recommendations.

Once again we have members opposite promising programs that we are already implementing. As I say, no one is going to accuse you people of being ahead of the times.

The remarks which I heard the member for Regina South make read like an old movie. I recall hearing Davey Steuart make much the same speech, telling the people of Saskatchewan that a vote for the NDP was a short road to loss of freedom, taking over the farms, Crown corporation's taking over the economy. We have the same speech every year. We heard it from the Liberals; we heard it from the Conservatives; we heard it from the member for Thunder Creek. We heard it from the member for Regina South last time. And we hear the same tired speech again.

I may say that the thrust of your complaints against this budget seems to be that these were some of your ideas. I may say that that's not the most biting criticism I've ever

heard of a budget speech. Indeed, that sounds to me like something of a compliment, and I think we've just witnessed history, Mr. Speaker. It's the first time in the history of the legislature, I'm sure, that the opposition has stood up and said, "Good job, well done. You implemented our programs? That seems to be what the members opposite are saying. As I say, that strikes me as being eloquent congratulations to the Minister of Finance.

I want to comment, as I haven't done so already, on the expressed intention of the federal government to change the crowrate. I didn't enter the debate. I don't have the familiarity with the issue that many of my colleagues have, and I left the debate in their very capable hands. But I wouldn't be doing justice to the interests of my constituents if I were to pass the issue by entirely. If Mr. Pepin's proposals see the light of day, it will most certainly affect the people of Regina Centre, my constituents, very profoundly.

It might at first thought be felt that the constituents of Regina Centre are as isolated from the effects of the crowrate changes as anyone. That view, unfortunately somewhat common among people of Regina, that this isn't their fight is a most unfortunate misconception. My constituents don't haul grain, and won't be shelling out an extra \$5,000, \$10,000, \$15,000 to get their product to market, but they are vitally affected none the less. Agriculture is still the largest industry in Saskatchewan, and as agriculture goes, so go the cities. When agriculture is in trouble the constituent of Regina Centre may find himself laid off. The downtown merchants find sales are down and profit margins are hard to come by. The trades find, with farmers spending less money, fewer offices and residences are being built and that means less work for the construction trades.

Are the residents of Regina Centre affected by the crowrate? Profoundly. And I sense a growing awareness of that among my constituents. There is a growing appreciation that this is an issue which can rework the entire fabric of the province. It will affect those who live and make their living in the shadows of the downtown highrises almost as much as those who live on the farms.

And what's the response of people of Regina Centre? Their response is to ask themselves who is best able to speak for the people of Saskatchewan on the issue. That person is most certainly not Mr. Goodale. The Liberal Party is only a vestigial shadow of its former self. Even Liberals admit that the party is going nowhere . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . There's not much further to go I say to the member for Saskatoon Nutana.

Just as critical to Mr. Goodale's credibility is his painful conflict of interest. The Liberal Party's only lease on life seems to be the financial and moral support from the national Liberty Party of Canada. The only way of raising money, the only way they seem to be able to mount a campaign, is to utilize the resources of the national federation. It is indicative of the desperation the provincial Liberals find themselves in that they would invite Pierre Elliott Trudeau to Regina as a guest speaker — the very man who was an anathema to western people, a lightning rod for western discontent. His appearance as guest speaker is eloquent testimony to the weakness of the Saskatchewan Liberal Party. If anyone else could have drawn a crowd he would have been invited.

For the constituents of Regina Centre, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Devine is not a great deal more credible than Mr. Goodale. True, he doesn't depend for support on Mr. Trudeau's purse strings. Mr. Devine's problem is that, like Saint Paul of old, he, too, claims to have experienced something in the nature of a blinding light on the road to Damascus. He,

too, is a new person. He's no longer the American-educated, academically-orientated spokesman for big business. Not now. Now he's a true son of the soil with a pitchfork in one hand and a permit book in the other. Where he was a sinner before, he's a true believer now. Depending on whether or not they're religious, some of my constituents believe that the incident on the road to Damascus happened as described in the Acts of the Apostles and some do not. I can tell you there are very few of my constituents who believe that this miracle was repeated a second time in Saskatchewan in 1982.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — When those whom I represent turn to a spokesman for their interests, they turn to someone with a proven track record. They turn to the man who fought the long, lonely battle against the federal constitutional proposal — a battle which at many times looked hopeless, but a struggle which eventually largely succeeded. When they're asked who it is that best speaks for Saskatchewan, the answer comes back almost as an immediate reaction: Allan Blakeney.

Back to the budget, Mr. Speaker. Regina Centre, is, of course, the oldest part of the city. Many of this city's historical buildings are situated there. One of the interesting phenomena which I've witnessed is the growth and vigor of historical societies. This hasn't happened by accident. Oh, there've always been a number of people, sometimes formerly organized and sometimes not, who possess a keen sense of history and who decry the destruction of our architectural heritage. In times past, what those people lacked was not popular support. There has always been in the public a deeply felt need to preserve some tangible reminders of our past. What those people lacked were tools to do the job, any effective means of opposing the developers. These people, like Sisyphus of Greek mythology, seemed forever destined to push a millstone up a hill only to see it roll back to the bottom when they stopped for breath. Their every effort seemed to take them back to square one.

Thanks in part to this government, the problem became acute in Saskatchewan. I say with some tongue in cheek that this government is indirectly responsible for the pressure on Saskatchewan's architectural heritage because the most effective preservation program in the world is a prolonged recession, the type of recession we experienced under the old-line parties. The most devastating phenomenon of our architectural heritage is a sustained boom. Thanks in part to the efforts of this government, the province of Saskatchewan has enjoyed of late sustained and unprecedented prosperity. So, in part, this government is indirectly responsible for creating serious pressure on our architectural heritage.

But these historical societies are showing development and a vitality that, like Saskatchewan's, is impressive. That's occurring because this government gave groups like the Regina historical society the tools they needed to do the job. By far the most important tool is The Heritage Property Act. The philosophy behind The Heritage Property Act deserves recalling. Unlike other provincial governments such as Alberta and B.C. that gave the responsibility for the preservation of heritage buildings to the provincial government, we sought to leave that responsibility with the community. We did that in part because we wanted to respond to the widely voiced opinion that governments are attempting to do too much and leaving too little to the individual and the local community. But in a more fundamental way, we realize that no building can be preserved unless it can be utilized and the best hope of making use of buildings of historic interest lies with the local community. It is they who know what the community

needs, and it is they who are in the best position to know what's feasible and what is not.

We backed up this legislation with money. We have instituted a grant program, and we will make grants available to communities to help with various restoration projects. This is supplemented — perhaps I should say, Mr. Speaker, it is multiplied many-fold — by the community in the form of municipal grants, donations of money, materials and most important, time. Our money in most of the preservation projects is just a catalyst which unleashes an expenditure of time and money that far overshadows our own grant.

We were delighted to see how fertile was the soil upon which The Heritage Property Act and this grant program fell. This program has achieved a success far beyond our wildest dreams. Saskatchewan is preserving its heritage in a way that other provinces are not. The act has been in existence for little more than a year, yet local advisory boards have sprung up all over the province. About 60 sites have been designated, and another 60 or so are in the works. I obtained from the Department of Culture and Youth a list of what has been designated as protected property by municipalities, and it makes graphic reading, Mr. Speaker. It's an apt illustration of the broad spectrum of heritage treasure which this province may still preserve and is preserving.

Arcola is preserving its town hall. Anybody who has been to Arcola and seen the town hall will applaud them in the preservation of this building. Avonlea is designating its railway station. There will be a whole lot more communities designating portions of the railway as heritage sites if Mr. Pepin has his way. Battleford is designating a bank. Battleford is also designating a town hall and an opera house. Big River is designating a school. I think I've been in most communities in Saskatchewan, but here's one, I don't know and I'm not sure I know how to pronounce it — Bonne Madone is designating a church. Is that correct? Chaplin is designating a bank. The R.M. of Corman Park is designating a bone trail. Now I haven't any idea what a bone trail is, but I'll bet there's an interesting story behind that bone trail, and the R.M. of Corman Park is preserving it for future generations.

Dundurn has designated a church. Gravelbourg has designated a college and some of the finest paintings done by Saskatchewan artists are inside that college. The R.M. of Gravelbourg has designated a prehistoric site. The R.M. of Invergordon has designated a trestle bridge. The town of Kerrobert has designated a water tower. The town of Maple Creek — the member might be interested to know — has designated a hotel. I don't know whether that's the centre of the cultural life of Maple Creek, but they're designating it. The R.M. of Montmartre is preserving a shrine. Saskatoon is designating a cemetery. I wasn't aware that cemeteries in this province were in imminent danger of destruction, but perhaps one is. Watson is designating a newspaper office; Zenon Park is designating a convent.

Perhaps one of the most ambitious projects is being considered by the city of Moose Jaw. They are struggling to preserve the architectural flavor of that city, which reflects the early years of this century. I understand from my colleague, the member for Moose Jaw North, that Moose Jaw has been designated for help by Heritage Canada, and so the project is under way. I think all of us who value our history wish them well. George Bernard Shaw once said that all we learn from history is that men never learn anything from history. That's far too cynical a view. Canada's pre-eminent historical writer, Donald Creighton, said it better. He said that for a person to live in a country and be ignorant of its history on almost every issue that comes up means that he is really walking around in the dark all of the time.

I think that history can give you a sense of courage in a difficult and dark world. You can say to yourself, "At least I know something about this world; I know how it got this way; I know where it's possibly going (not certainly, but possibly). I can stand up against the world."

History cannot be understood if it is presented as scientific, categorized, classified facts. If we are to understand history we must be able to experience and see some tangible reminders of our history — tangible reminders that breathe life and meaning into scientific information and turn that information, Mr. Speaker, into knowledge and understanding.

I want to turn to another aspect of the budget before I close. Mr. Speaker, it would seem to take some sort of a demented genius to create a housing shortage in a land covered with trees and lots of space, and yet that is what the present government in Ottawa seems close to achieving. Among nations on earth, few would seem to have the lucky combination of space and resources that Canada has to adequately house its population. Yet we have fallen far short of our potential in this area of housing, and the federal government's high interest rate policy is likely to critically exacerbate the situation.

Mr. Speaker, we in Saskatchewan stand in danger of experiencing the run-away house prices which Vancouver saw last year. Anyone who has observed the housing scene in Regina and Saskatoon must feel a sense of unease as ever higher interest rates tighten their grip on the jugular of the housing industry. As housing starts to plummet to a fraction of the real demand, it's only a matter of time before the pent-up demand breaks out and when that happens we stand an excellent chance of experiencing what Vancouver say, and to a lesser extent, what Toronto saw, when housing prices simply shot through the stratosphere. The people I represent don't want to see that; they don't want housing driven beyond the reach of the young; they don't want to see speculators enrich themselves at the expense of the ordinary person.

So, Mr. Speaker, it was with considerable pleasure that I saw the new provisions in the budget relating to housing. The capital budget for housing has increased by 130 per cent. I wonder if the hon. member for Regina South is going to campaign against that. In addition to our existing housing programs, we will be constructing an additional 1,000 houses. We will also be embarking on an additional 500-unit apartment construction program, and that's in addition to our existing program, which will see 1,000 new houses, 1,550 apartment units constructed — over 4,000 housing units in 1982.

I've done some checking and I believe that this housing program is without parallel in Canada — this, Mr. Speaker, in spite of the fact that other parts of Canada face housing problems as acute as ours. Only in Saskatchewan is there a recognition of the massive housing problems which the misguided federal interest rate policy has brought on their heads. Just one more reason I believe the people of Saskatchewan will vote in even greater numbers to retain a government which makes a genuine and usually successful effort to meet and solve the problems which affect them. It's another reason they'll reject a party whose record in other provinces has been one of insensitivity and resignation to problems which just simply should not be tolerated.

Mr. Speaker, this is not just a government with a mind to solve tough problems which are a result of the federal government's interest rate policies, the economic ones. It's

also a government with heart and courage. Mr. Speaker, among the most serious problems our society faces is the plight of natives. We could do as other governments do and neglect the problem. It is not a simple problem to face and it's a great deal more complex to juggle politically. But this government, which genuinely cares about the people who elect it, has embarked on a number of initiatives. We've tried to meet the needs in education with a 46 per cent increase in funding in the educational programs for natives. We have provided similar increases in housing and jobs. As imperfect, as ineffective as these measures may sometimes be, they are infinitely preferable to the efforts of every other government in Canada, which ignores the problems in the vain hope that they will somehow or other go away. A moment's reflection will lead any impartial observer to the conclusion that neglect will only make the problems worse.

Not only do the Tories have patently no intention of dealing with native problems if elected, but even more disturbing to native people is the willingness of the members opposite to appeal to racism in their desperate struggle to attract attention. If members opposite wish, I will recite for them from election campaigns in Pelly and Regina North-West. If the member for Maple Creek wants a full recycle of it, I will happily do it. I have a vivid memory of the advertisements which the members opposite used to try to attract votes. I am sure members opposite are as ashamed of that campaign as I am.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Don't call me a racist.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — If the member opposite wants proof, I'd be happy to relay the record of the campaigns of members opposite. Well, I hear a small clamor for more information on this. It's not by any means overwhelming so I'll forego the temptation to recite your past sins to you. I say to the member for Maple Creek who takes offence at what I've said, suffice it to say that what you did in Pelly and in Regina North-West appalled and frightened native people. The joke making the rounds among native people in Regina at the last election was that if the Tories were elected, the ovens were all ready for them. That's kind of grim humor, but it illustrates the depth of their concern should a Conservative Party ever come to power. I may say, fortunately for native people, other groups in society find the Conservative Party almost as unpalatable and it doesn't seem likely that they are going to be faced with a Conservative government. Ours is a government with the philosophical depth to create a program which unleashes the energies of the people of Saskatchewan and their desire to preserve and enhance their heritage, a government with the mind to tackle housing programs which other governments find intractable, a government with the heart and courage to face the plight of natives and call it what it is: an intolerable blight on society.

Well, I vote in favor of the budget for such a government. To ask the question is to answer it. Mr. Speaker, I really have not yet had sufficient time to analyse the brilliance and the rationale lying beneath the arguments of the member for Regina South. I therefore beg leave to adjourn the debate. I will have more to say on the remarks from the member for Regina South on the debate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 36 — An Act to amend The Education and Health Tax Act

HON. MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I move that a bill to amend The Education and Health Tax Act be now introduced and read a first time.

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

Bill No. 37 — An Act respecting the Provision of Financial and Other Assistance to Rural Municipalities for Capital Works Projects.

HON. MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the hon. minister, I move that a bill respecting the provision of financial and other assistance to rural municipalities for capital works projects be introduced and read a first time. While I do so, I beg to inform the Assembly that His Honor, the Lieutenant-Governor, having been informed of the subject matter of the bill, recommends the consideration of the Assembly.

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

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.