

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
March 23, 1983

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. PARKER: — Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly, a group of 44 students from Moose Jaw. William Grayson Public School grades 4 and 5, who are with us this afternoon, seated in the west gallery. They are accompanied today by two of their teachers, Steve Coffin and Pat Peebles. And I'd like to ask the members on both sides of the Assembly to join with me in wishing them an enjoyable and interesting stay in the legislature and a safe trip home.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SUTOR: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through you to other members of the Assembly, 24 grade 6 students from Judge Bryant School, along with their teachers and chaperones. Thelma Haug, Larry Gates, Mrs. Temple and Colleen Copeman. I'd like to advise them that I'll be meeting them after question period, and I'd like to ask all members to join me in welcoming them to the Assembly this afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce and to the members of this Assembly, approximately, I believe, 26 students from the Allan High School, sitting in the Speaker's gallery. They are accompanied with their teacher, Ernie Melnyk, and Russ Lindberg. I ask all members of the legislature to join with me in welcoming them to the legislature. We hope that you have a very prosperous and enjoyable day in the legislature today. And I'll be meeting with you later for drinks and a time of, I guess, drinks in the basement. Thank you very much.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Student Employment Program

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Culture and Recreation. Let me say, by way of background, Mr. Minister, that last fall when the name 'Youth' was dropped from the name of your department we thought the change largely irrelevant. Little did we realize how symbolic that change was. Further, by way of background, Mr. Minister, let me remind you that on March 12 you told a provincial meeting in Moose Jaw that the student employment program would be included in the throne speech. My question, Mr. Minister, is: just what page on this long and rather verbose document did that promise appear?

MR. SCHOENHALS: — Mr. Speaker, the member again has his specs a little bit out of whack. The announcement regarding the youth employment program will be made

in the budget speech.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Well, let me say, let me say by way of background, Mr. Minister, that that is not how you were, that is not how you were reported in both of Saskatchewan dailies, and if you want to hear it I'll repeat it for you. But let us get to the substance of this thing, Mr. Minister. In a few short weeks, ten of thousands of students will be joining tens of thousands of people who are already unemployed. And the deadline is fast approaching whereby some decisions have to be made. Will you give this Assembly your undertaking that the program which will be announced will be along the lines of the previous programs your department has administered, such as STEP and PEP (Positive Economic Program)?

HON. MR. SCHOENHALS: — Mr. Speaker, as the . . . To repeat the words of the Premier yesterday, I don't propose to scoop the Minister of Finance. The program will be announced next Tuesday. We realize that the time-line is tight. In reference to your initial comment about the change in the name of the department, there have been some rather unique and first-time things taking place with the youth of this province since we became government, one of which is obviously, obviously, the Premier's advisory council of the youth. We have spent considerable time with this group discussing some options regarding the program. We have considered it, and an announcement will be made next Tuesday.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Student Bursaries

MR. KOSKIE: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Continuing Education. As the minister will know that the Minister of Labour has indicated that times are tough in Saskatchewan. And I want to say that times are particularly tough for the young people of this province. In February, about 16 per cent of the young people were unemployed. The prospects for summer employment is not very healthy. I want to ask the minister: does, do you expect that this coming fall that there will, in fact, be more students seeking financial assistance by way of bursaries and students loans at the universities and the technical schools? Do you expect more?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Speaker, in reply to the hon. member from Quill Lakes, it is, I would suggest that it is rather a hypothetical question . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I, I, yes, well if you'll be patient for a moment, I would . . . In connection without concern about the projected, as you say, the projected increase in enrolment, we have discussed the situation with the presidents of the universities and with the administration at the technical institutes. And to quote from the average projection from these people, I would say that their feeling is that at no time in the past has it been more difficult than this year to really predict exactly what the enrolment is going to be next, next year.

However, having said that, I think that I personally believe and expect that there will be an increase in enrolment this coming year.

MR. KOSKIE: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. As you have indicated that there is likely to be an increase in enrolment, and as I indicated, Mr. Speaker, there's likely more — or Mr. Minister — likely more students seeking financial assistance. The thing that I want to ask the minister: in view of that, why did he, on February 24, indicate that what he will be doing in fact is tightening up the criteria for student bursaries? Why are you

tightening them up, when in fact the need is increasing?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Speaker, the objectives that we had in mind was the opposite that the hon. member is inferring. On the contrary, we anticipate . . . Because we anticipate that there will be an increase in enrolment, we are planning on increasing the total amount of bursary help available for students, the total amount in the province of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Now if I could try to answer what I think you're getting at — the proportion of loan as to bursary — this is what we are presently considering changing, so that we can use this amount of money in order to help more students, because of the fact that we feel that we should make university and technical institutes and all post-secondary education accessible to as many people as we possibly can.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KOSKIE: — Well, Mr. Minister, if in fact you are tightening up the criteria for students bursaries, and you have indicated in your statement you are, will you not in fact be eliminating assistance to some students who would have qualified, indeed, indeed for help under the same program this year? In other words, by tightening the criteria, students which would have qualified this year for student loan and bursaries will not in fact qualify under the new tightened criteria to the same extent.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Speaker, I don't think that . . . I think that that is an assumption that the hon. member is making based upon little or no knowledge.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. CURRIE: — What I am saying is: we are going to make more bursary help available and — maybe I shouldn't be saying this with the Premier here — but in accordance with socialistic principles, we're going to be reaching out to give more and more people the opportunity of having accessibility to university through having the opportunity of getting bursary assistance.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KOSKIE: — New question. A new question to the minister. Mr. Minister, I want to read to you the statement which you made on February 24:

While we are pleased to have met the needs of increasing number of students this year, and expect to increase our assistance again next year, growing demand for a limited fund may force us to revise our criteria for bursaries, to ensure that those with real needs can continue to receive adequate student aid.

Now, that's fair enough. But what you are saying in that statement, Mr. Minister, that you are going to tighten up the criteria and automatically that leads to students who would qualify this year will not in the same degree qualify under the tightened up criteria.

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not doing a very good job of articulating this.

First, first of all, you are, you are quoting from something that I said that may happen. Secondly, I want to reiterate what I originally said. We are in tending to provide more bursary help for Saskatchewan students than we did last year, and please keep in mind that we increased the bursary assistance to Saskatchewan students this past year by something like 2 point some million dollars over the previous year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Now, now, Mr. Speaker, unless I'm very badly mixed up, I would hope to make as much money available to as many people as possible, and that's what the basic principle of our assistance is.

MR. KOSKIE: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the minister then: will the minister guarantee that any students who qualifies for university and technical institutes enrolment, and whose only obstacle to getting higher education is the financial need, will not be turned away by his government?

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Speaker, I'm, I'm not sure that I have the right as the Minister of Education and Continuing Education . . . I'm am not sure, Mr. Speaker, that I have the right as the Minister of Education and Continuing Education to guarantee what is going to be spent by the Government of Saskatchewan. So, the answer to that is, no. But, I will say this: that we will be offering more assistance than you have ever offered in the past.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

SGI Rates

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Minister of Industry and Commerce, and the minister in charge of SGI, the agency which administer The Automobile Accident Insurance Act.

By way of background, my question is going to be concerning the deductible, and I have a press release, 83-1-21 issued by the minister on March 2, indicating that the deductible would increase from \$350 to \$500 under The Automobile Accident Insurance Act, effective March 15.

I have a copy of the *Hansard* of March 4, in which I understood the Premier to say that the deductible would increase effective on or about July 1, and I have a copy of the *Saskatchewan Gazette* dated March 11, 1983, at page 65, wherein there are gazetted the regulations which increased the deductible, effective March 1, 1983.

Now we have the *Gazette*, the official *Gazette* saying March 1, 1983; the minister in his press release saying . . . I'll give them in chronological order: the minister in his press release saying on March 2 — March 15, the Premier on March 4 — July 1, the *Gazette* on March 11 — March 1.

Would the minister care to indicate what the date of the increase in the deductible is, and on what basis he makes that statement?

HON. HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Speaker, we are aware of the statements in the Gazette. Steps are being taken to correct the date. I will tell you that the date that the \$500 deductible will begin will be July 1.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. The minister will concede that as of now, the law of Saskatchewan is that the deductible is . . . There is \$500 effective March 1, 1983?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Mr. Speaker, an OC has already been passed, and that the . . . The changes will be made. The law is \$350 at the present time, and it will change in July of this year to \$500.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Would the minister give us an indication . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . It would be difficult not to be on it . . . I mean, three dates in, in, in 10 days from three ministers . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Does the hon. member have a question?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — My question, not in answer to the Attorney General but directed to the minister in charge of SGI, is as follows: on what date was the order in council passed, so that the public may know?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — This morning, Mr. Speaker.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the minister in charge of SGI. Would the minister advise whether or not notification has gone out of substantial increases in Auto Pak rates for the forthcoming period?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — If they've gone out to agents? I'll take notice; I'm not certain what's happened in that situation.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question to the minister in charge of SGI. Mr. Minister, in your absence when you were in Los Angeles, the chairman of the public utilities review commission expressed doubt about the legality of increasing the deductible without sending it to public utilities review commission — the sort of doubts which we expressed to you in this Chamber and which you rebuffed so quickly. Further, by way of background, let me tell you, Mr. Minister, that I don't know of any member of the legal profession who does believe that that increase was valid. Will you, Mr. Minister, undertake to withhold the implementation of the deductible until after its legality is determined in a court of law?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well we've indicated that already, Mr. Speaker. We put the 90 day . . . The Premier recently announced a 90-day freeze of the implementation of the \$500 deductible. I'm not about to get into a hassle with the public utilities review commission or with any other body. I'm prepared to accept that they want to review it. The act has been introduced in this legislature by the Attorney General; it's very specific as to what it says. The public utilities review commission will want to review it as they've indicated they want to do. I believe I'm correct in what I'm saying, what I said two weeks ago; however I'm prepared to wait. As I come back again and say that we've announced the policy that is going to be, and that will be that it will be changed on July 1 of 1983.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Government Insurance. The minister has now just reaffirmed his belief that the Saskatchewan Government Insurance has the legal right to adjust the premium without the prior approval of PURC, and that the act does not require that prior approval. Would he equally agree that if the rate adjustment made by PURC is not acceptable then the Saskatchewan Government Insurance equally has the right to

change the deductible after the rate adjudication is made?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not too sure what the Leader of the Opposition is referring to. I've indicated my, I've indicated my belief in what the act says. The act was introduced in this legislature by the Attorney General. If there's a legal interpretation to be made of the act, I'm prepared to allow, or to ask, or to invited the Attorney General's department to give us legal opinion on it, and I'm not prepared to debate the question of whether I'm right personally, or whether the Attorney General's department is right, or whether the public utilities review commission is right. All I'm saying is' the way I have read it and the way the officials of SGI have read the interpretation is we believe the SGI has the right to change the deductible. We're prepared to wait for a further legal opinion or a legal judgment on it without getting into a long debate as to whether who's right — and time will tell. It's going to be reviewed by the public review commission. I'm sure the Attorney General's department will do the same.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Well, let me, Mr. Minister, repeat for you the concern of the chairman of the public utilities review commission who I would remind the chairman is an eminent barrister in Saskatchewan. He is former chief justice of the provincial court, and he was your choice as chairman of the public utilities review commission. His is a former chief justice of the provincial court, and he was your choice as chairman of the public utilities review commission. His concern is that the powers of his board may be rendered meaningless if you can change the deductible. Mr. Minister, would you not agree that this matter should be laid to rest and determined before you change the rates which you're going to charge drivers and before you change the kind of coverage you're going to give drivers?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well, Mr. Speaker, obviously the member opposite, both of them, as a matter of fact, happen to be lawyers themselves. I am not one. I am not . . . As I said I do not intend to get into a legal dispute or argument about this situation. If you're looking for an answer to that, then I will ask the Attorney General to reply to the legal interpretation of what you're talking about.

HON. MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has made some comments about the chairman of the public utilities review commission. WE await the response from the chairman of the public utilities review commission as to what interpretation he may get on the, on the legislation. I'm more concerned, I'm more concerned, Mr. Speaker, about the image of the public utilities review commission when the members opposite, of course, didn't want the public utilities review commission. That does far more discredit, that does far more discredit, Mr. Speaker, to the image of the public utilities review commission than a government that is prepared to . . . that has the public utilities review commission gets its own legal opinion. If they have a difference we would be prepared to look at it again.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I direct this question to the Premier. Reference has been made to the comments of the chairman of the public utilities review commission, adversely commented upon, as I understand it, by the minister of justice or the Attorney General. Is the Premier of the view that the comments of the chairman were chintzy and unprofessional?

MR. SPEAKER: — Order please. The members have asked a question, and I think it's only courtesy that you give an opportunity for an answer.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my conversations with the minister, and with the Attorney General, and with the head, with the head of the public utilities review commission, it was jointly agreed that the public utility review commissions, or similar bodies across Canada, always have difficult times when we're dealing with a question of policy. It's a question of a grey area. If a deductible is part of policy or part of rate. I think the public utilities review commission wants time to review that. As a result, I agree with the head of the public utilities review commission that you should have the time, you should have the time to review this to see if it's in the question of policy or if it's a question of rates. After you've had time to review it, and he appreciated the fact that he now has until July 1, we can make the decision and go from there. So he . . . There is no conflict. It's the first decision that they have made. They want to look at it, given full opportunity decide whether it's an area of policy, because they are not in the business of managing SGI or any other crown corporation, but making decisions on rates. And the question is: how much should they, should they say about policy and how much should they say, and say that policy has an influence on rates? And that's a very grey area and they appreciated the time. And we were glad to give it to them.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to ask the Premier if the . . . (inaudible) . . . were productive although that might be a fair question. I am going to ask the minister in charge of the SGI if he won't do something to limit the fiasco which has surrounded the introduction of the raise in the deductible. I would remind the minister in charge that you began, first of all with a confused announcement. Then you have an OC path which is apparently in, at variance with what you plan to do. And finally by way of background, I would remind the, I would inform the minister that I have a copy of the increase in the Auto Pak notice sent to the agents. Will you please at least limit the fiasco which is surrounding the introduction of this deductible by not introducing the deductible until its legality has been determined, because if you don't the fiasco's going to be complete? Will you not at least limit the fiasco?

HON. MR. ROUSSEAU: — Well, Mr. Speaker, now things . . . I think it's fair to say that it would only take a lawyer to consider this at being a fiasco or confusing . . . an NDP lawyer, it's said. Now, Mr. Speaker, I've said it again, many, many times. There is no confusion in the minds of the people of Saskatchewan. There is no confusion in mine nor the members on this side of the House that the, the, as the Premier announced very recently, I believe it was about two weeks ago, that the deductible will change as of July 1. Whatever happens in the interim with the decisions brought down by the public utilities review commission or a change of the act or whatever it might be, at that point in time, as of now, as of today, I'm looking to July 1 for the introduction of the \$500 deductible. Meanwhile it's going to stay at \$350.

Now, if for some reason the utility review commission should bring down a different decision or someone else, then we'll review it at that time. As of today, the decision is, and it was stated by myself, by the Premier, by everyone you've asked, that the deductible will change July 1, the \$500 deductible. Until that time it will remain at \$350 and between now and then, it would reviewed by many departments and those involved — the public utilities, the attorney general's, the SGI and everybody concerned.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

Address in Reply

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Dutchak and the amendment thereto moved by the Hon. Mr. Blakeney.

MR. DOMOTOR: — Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be able, on behalf of the constituency of Humboldt, to speak in this debate on the Speech from the Throne.

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake on his recent victory, and welcome him to this Assembly. He is a welcome sight.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. DOMOTOR: — He is a welcome sight on this side of the House, and Prince Albert-Duck Lake will have a worthy representative expressing their views and concerns in this government.

I would like to commend the Speech from the Throne on its objectives and trust that it will be setting the pace for the province in years to come. The objectives are there, Mr. Speaker, and they are clear. That is an outline of the thrust that this government is going to continue to pursue. The opposition would like to have all the details written in, but true to the spirit of co-operative action and democratic organization, we intend to continue to have input as policies are formulated. And this represents flexibility, Mr. Speaker, flexibility in approach — and always, Mr. Speaker, always respecting the view and aspirations of the people of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. DOMOTOR: — The Leader of the Opposition came out being critical of the freeze of funds to the Canadian International Development Agency. He mentioned that \$2 million was ordinarily provided by the Government of Saskatchewan, and I had a couple of letters regarding this. I spoke to these constituents and stated that we did not want to see that money sold to guerrilla warfare and cause havoc in some of these poor states, the money we wanted to see earmarked for research and education where it belongs.

Referred to the arms race and cruise testing. No one in government, Mr. Speaker, wants war, no one. The plain fact of the matter is that defence is required to keep out aggression, and if there is a void or lack of a capable deterrent, then we leave ourselves open to enemy forces. We would like to see all weapons done away with that are used for warfare; however, there are too many nations who will welcome that so that they could take over. Therefore, we require defence, and if we rely on someone else, then we have to accept some of the responsibility, and some of that responsibility, Mr. Speaker, is testing by the United States, our ally to the south.

Yesterday we had the member from Shaunavon speaking on the Crow rate. The Leader of the Opposition spoke on the Crow rate. They say that the CPR have given so any contributions and are now trying to get their return on investment in our party. I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that the CPR is in the opposition hands, not ours, who offered to buy the CPR. What was their solution, Mr. Speaker — to buy CPR; and then what would happen? With their purchase the farmer would have had to pay more through taxes or increased freight, because that would have become another crown corporation to the

existing . . . to add to the existing family. Who, I ask would then have been taken to the cleaners? The people of Saskatchewan, that's who.

You know, it never ceases to amaze me as to how the members opposite continue to talk about fuel prices. The member from Shaunavon referred to Alberta's fuel rebate and made comparisons across the border of \$1 to our \$1.35 (and I believe that's on page 153 in the records). Where were the members when they were in government? If that would have been a genuine concern, they would have kept the fuel reduction cost to farmers throughout their term. But what did they do? Instead, they placed it in legislation whenever it would suit their purposes; then they would take it off.

The hon. members must still have their baby teeth, because I've heard, time and time again, about the poor, unfortunate four-year-olds who aren't on the denticare program. I don't know, Mr. Speaker, but if you look around at most people, they didn't have denticare and, looking at their teeth, I really don't see much wrong with any of them. Don't parents have some responsibility in this?

The members opposite continue on the same program they have been on since day one. They want big government, Big Brother, to look after them from baby to grave. Lord knows, if they'd have been re-elected, we'd probably have funeral care today, body shop care, housing care, clothing care, etc.

We were given a list of profits made from the multinational companies, from the members. If Husky Oil made so much money, and he's referred to as one of these multinationals, then how does the members opposite square that with the former premier and leader of the NDP as one of the board of directors, if they're so bad?

I believe the member opposite farms. There must be some profit made that he made over the years. What does he do with it? Did he give it to his neighbour who was less fortunate, or did he re-invest it? The same applies to corporations. They don't know what corporations are, I believe. Many of them work on 5 per cent to 10 per cent on their investment, and either they pay their shareholders (who are people) their creating new jobs, wealth and new energy supplies (in the case of oil companies), or whatever.

The member talks about the seniors being deprived. Well it just so happens that money is invested in renovations to many senior homes and in helping, as the Minister of Health has said in his excellent speech yesterday, referred to money being spent in hospitals. Is this a government that is not caring? This is a government that does care, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a government that cares for the individuals in our province. Some of this equipment that is in some of the hospitals is so old, and a lot of money is going to have to be required to bring it up to date. Where was the former government when it liked to brag about its medicare? Was it number one then? I submit it was not.

Further, Mr. Speaker, the member from Moosomin has completed an estimate report on the ambulance service. This is a reflection of the government in keeping with its promise to make health care number one in the province of Saskatchewan. And under the capable administration of the Minister of Health it will be number one.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. DOMOTOR: — The hon. leader across the way harangued about the minimum

wage. Has he spoken to small businesses about this? I submit not. People who do a good job and work ahead usually get more than the minimum wage. If the employer refuses to give them an increase, then they have the opportunity to move to another job.

I noticed the member yesterday from Shaunavon was also speaking about the minimum wage, and he's referring to not being able to buy new cars. Well, surely an individual that starts out working at minimum wage is not going to be able to afford a new car. You have a start from the bottom up, not come from the top down.

If McDonald's is able to operate on account of this, the minimum wage that they're talking about, then I would suggest that minimum wage earner is in luck. For 2.35, or somewhere in that neighbourhood, he can have a hamburger and chips and still have a \$1.90 left over after that hour. That's not bad.

Now I would like to address some comments with respect to the content of the throne speech. Reflecting on the Saskatchewan economy, it has held its own, has been relatively better than any other province. Inflation has been the lowest because of bold initiatives, and by this government such as the gas tax being dropped. And the mortgage interest rate reduction plan has helped not only small business but the average consumer in Saskatchewan. The effect of this was to bolster confidence in the province to investors.

The housing industry has been strong, and particularly helped by the grant available to new home buyers. The construction industry and jobs were thus helped by this plan. I am happy to see that the priority of the government is to lower taxes as much as possible. Under the former administration, they liked to tax, tax, and tax. This is a step in which various industries will be happy to hear, for it gives them confidence in being able to invest without fear, and gives them initiatives so that they can go ahead and feel that they are part of Saskatchewan, not that they are going to be driven out of Saskatchewan.

Assistance to small business contractors by way of simplifying procedures will be welcomed by contractors. Too often times that the former government, a bureaucracy was set up, and red tape. And getting rid of this is certainly a step in the right direction and follows with our open for business concept.

The farm purchase program has resulted in people being able to purchase land and start with a capital investment at a reasonable rate of interest. The NDP have frequently referred to the success of the land bank, with 1,400 farmers being lost between 1972 and 1982, and rural population declining from 438,000 to 405,000 in the same period, is that a measure of success, I ask?

When the NDP took over in 1971-72, the surplus they obtained was approximately \$2 million. What, what did they leave, Mr. Speaker, when they completed office. They left a deficit. And yet what did they leave, Mr. Speaker, when they completed office? They left a deficit. And yet the members opposite feel sacrosanct in criticizing the throne speech for being devoid of ideas. I would think that the people being devoid of ideas sit across from us today, Mr. Speaker, because when in power their objective was to purchase businesses. That is all. No new initiatives. The objective reminded me of the Soviet bloc where the government owns everything. That was the objective, Mr. Speaker: to control everything — farms, businesses, homes. And then, Mr. Speaker, this was a, this was a theme, they would be able to control the people.

That way, Mr. Speaker, everyone is dependent on government and no one can deviate

from this fine line. The master-servant concept was one that fit completely in their plans. What was the opportunity in this great province for future development under the former administration? None, I suggest.

The member opposite speaks of the number of farmers who have applied, for example, with respect to our farm purchase, farm purchase program. Well I assume from listening to him that everyone that would apply would automatically get on that program, and I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that this was not the case. It was never intended for every farmer to be able to get on the 8 per cent mortgage program. There are some that . . . There are certain qualifications. Certainly the members opposite don't suggest that a person that has 20 sections or some should be able to apply for that 8 per cent mortgage reduction.

There are many who automatically thought that they would qualify but were not able to on account of that.

The 10-year natural gas program for farmers will assist farmers in the energy cost. Twenty-five thousand farms and 10,000 residential customers is no small undertaking when you consider \$340 million will be spent, and the benefit and spin-offs that this can provide.

I was pleased to see that the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, phase 2 Lanigan expansion, will have \$80 million invested this year. This will certainly assist my area, since Humboldt, Guernsey, Watrous and Viscount areas have employees working at that mine. They'll be all pleased to hear that it's translated into jobs and into extra income for the businesses that surround that area. The streamlining of taxation of Saskatchewan's mineral resources will be welcome, as not only Lanigan mine is in my area but also Noranda Central Canada Potash Mine at Colonsay, who have been from time to time overtaxed. As a matter of fact, as high as 120 per cent. Now how can any business operate on that kind of a tax? And I know that for a fact, because the fellows from that particular mine were over to see me one day. One hundred and twenty per cent tax dropped down to 80 per cent, 80 per cent tax. No one can operate underneath those conditions.

To allow initiative, investment taxes must be reasonable; something the previous administration knew nothing about.

In education, it is welcome news to have new initiatives for our adult education system. This is reflected in development of the increases in technical program and technical institutes. These skills can be taught, and if these are brought to local areas the benefits will be enormous.

In Europe, skills are learned, and many of the people who come here are highly trained and can have several trades. We can do the same, and the increased emphasis on technical schools will provide this opportunity to our citizens.

Many of the people who have come over from Europe have had not only one skill but two or three or four, and when they've come over to this province or to Canada generally are able to pick up on a trade without any problems. They don't have to wait for any line-ups, and I think that this is a step in the right direction.

The measures to bring all water-related legislation and services under one body will help cities and municipalities. Another step in the right direction, something that the previous government never did. Probably the problem they had was that they couldn't

cope with the whole problem. The bold initiative was taken and resulted in the fact that our ministers of environment, urban affairs, rural affairs, and the member for Arm River, Mr. Muirhead, who did an excellent on the Muirhead report, went to communities on a fact-finding and input session from the public who were invited to give their ideas and search for a solution. This is the democratic way, Mr. Speaker. This is what you call "grass roots government." Not from the top down, but from the bottom up. These are some of the initiatives referred to in the throne speech, and it's fresh, and will open ideas. In Vonda, Rock-o-Matic Industries sold stone pickers to Russia and have been shipping rock pickers to the Soviet Union as a result. This is a type of industrial strength and commercial enterprise that is a welcome sight to Saskatchewan.

Small businesses have much to contribute. In Viscount, for example, we have a flour mill that makes stone-ground flour. Two privately owned flour mills. Viscount Flour Mills and Humboldt Flour Mill, have been operating giving service to Saskatchewan residents for many years.

These are businesses that have not only helped the communities surrounding them, and they've also contributed to helping Saskatchewan farmers. For example, Humboldt Flour Mills contracts mustard, and has export sales to the United States and overseas. The reason I gave these particular examples is to show the entrepreneurship that some of our people in this province had. This is the type of entrepreneurship that we welcome. But I know full well that the socialist fervour in the ranks opposite would like to come in to own all these industries, if given the chance.

I'll give you a couple of other examples: Brockman's Service in Humboldt supplies and manufactures parts of potash mines. It shows initiative. Del-Air industries, for example, they're just . . . The fellow that owns it, or is part partner in it, is over to the States trying to move some of the equipment and sell it across the border. These are the types of things that we can do in Saskatchewan and that is Saskatchewan people. The initiative, Mr. Speaker, is that they've gone out on their own without any major government subsidies. They've done it because they have fortitude.

And we are referring to the . . . some of these speeches we have heard, and some of the comments. I remember reading the paper the other day and I see that the member from Pelly has taken to letter writing in the local newspapers, and I'm wondering whether he is trying to be a Mark Twain of literary prose. He's writing about Sask Tel. He's talking about the increases in rates. Well, where were they when they were in government? Every year, ever six months they'd increase the rate, and then they complain about the public utilities review commission. You know they were sitting in the House when that was passed. I wonder where they were, Mr. Speaker. If they would read the annual report, 1982, from Saskatchewan Public Utilities Review Commission, and turn to page 3, it says:

The public utility, utility regulation. The areas of jurisdiction for the commission of regular services are as follows: Saskatchewan Power Corporation; Saskatchewan Telecommunications; Saskatchewan Government Insurance. (And it says at the bottom, in effect the Saskatchewan legislature has given the commission quasi-judicial powers.). The commission may hear and determine all questions of law or of fact. While there is a provision for the holding of proceedings in camera, the normal course of events will dictate the holding of public hearings, with members of the public at large being able to not only be present, but to act as intervenors and take an active part in the proceedings.

Now, isn't that a good democratic way to do it, I ask, Mr. Speaker — being able to let the public at large come in and help set the regulations?

The proceedings, themselves, will be held as informally as the circumstances permit. Written reasons will be given for all decisions. These will be available to anyone wishing a copy. How much more democratic can you get, I ask? That's what we call, as the member for Moosomin refers to it, open government. The primary purpose of regulation is to ensure that the customers receive safe and adequate service at rates which are just and reasonable to both the customer and the corporation involved. Now that is in annual report, 1982.

I would suggest to the members opposite, and that they could spread the word to the other members that are unable to be present in the Chamber at the present time, to read that report, and if they have any suggestions with respect to any increases in the future that they could go ahead and talk to public utility review commission when they have their hearings.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion and not supporting the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. HEPWORTH: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again, Mr. Speaker, it is an honour and privilege for me to rise in debate on the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. It is always with a great sense of pride that I rise to speak on behalf of the people of Weyburn constituency. Not unexpectedly, there are many important issues facing the people of Weyburn and Saskatchewan today, and naturally, as one would expect, the throne speech addresses these issues.

One of these issues that is very much on the minds of rural Saskatchewan, and as well, weighing heavily in the minds of urban Saskatchewan, is the Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin's plans for farmers' grain transportation costs. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that it is monetary madness to ask farmers to pay more by way of freight costs when in fact, commodity prices are falling and other input costs are rising. And is it not economic madness to suggest to the farmer's friends in the towns and city, as well, that this plan will be good for them? How can it be good for them when it will remove some \$600 millions from the pockets of Saskatchewan farmers over the immediate years? Mr. Speaker, I would suggest \$600 million less for farmers to spend at implement dealers, at the ladies dress shops, at the chemical dealer, the fuel dealer, the hardware store, the chemical dealer, the restaurants, and so on.

Farm incomes, given the current conditions, are fragile at best. I'm sure our farmer friends would appreciate efforts out of Ottawa that would attempt to decrease their input costs, rather than raise them. Replace economic madness with economic sense.

And I think specifically, Mr. Speaker, of the likes of removing the federal tax on diesel fuel, and adjusting the capital gains tax structure. It would seem to make eminent good sense, Mr. Speaker, to remove the fuel tax — a retrogressive tax — a retrogressive tax that takes \$4,000 to the \$5,000 out of each farmer's pocket; \$4,000 or \$5,000 that could be used to productive ends, such as purchasing fertilizers or chemicals — things that enhance production rather than a deterrent to production.

Rather, however, Ottawa prefers to tamper with freight rates and the Crow — a very article of confederation for this province. And in so doing, Pepin's plan strikes at the very heart of farm life, at the very heart of the family farm, and at the very viability of the farm communities around these farms. That is why, Mr. Speaker, on February the 26th of this year, this House had an emergency debate on the Pepin plan. That is why, Mr. Speaker, the motion proposed by the Minister of Agriculture, and seconded by the Premier, received unanimous approval.

This issue facing Saskatchewan farmers today is so important that it is no time for petty, partisan politics. This Assembly unanimously, absolutely and unequivocally rejected the Pepin plan. That is the consensus out in Saskatchewan today — to derail the Pepin plan. Rather, Ottawa's approach to the grain transportation policy seems to be one of ready, fire and then aim.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I wish to back up a little and review what has gone on in the months preceding the Pepin plan. There are some, Mr. Speaker, who have suggested that the Progressive Conservative government was soft on Crow. Let us examine the record, Mr. Speaker. Let us examine the record and see who is soft on Crow. June 28, 1982, Gilson report released — the forerunner to Pepin. What did we say about it then? Well, the Minister of Agriculture sent a Telex and, Mr. Speaker, in part this is what it said, and I quote:

It is the position of the Government of Saskatchewan that the Crow rate remain unchanged, and that the federal government is responsible for paying the revenue shortfall. (End of quotation, Mr. Speaker.)

Yet some say we were silent, Mr. Speaker, and among those who say we were silent is the Leader of the Opposition. Yet what did he say when the Gilson report was released? What did you hear on the radio of his position? Or on the TV? Did he talk to Mr. Pepin about it? Telex him? No. Here was situation with the potential to devastate the farm economy, a proposition that could cost us billions of dollars in Saskatchewan, and what was the opposition doing? I'll tell you what they were doing. They were on a crusade involving \$10,000 worth of Nimbus water purifiers, Mr. Speaker. Here were the farmers of Saskatchewan facing a potential loss in the billions of dollars, and the NDP were trying to score some cheap political points on water purifiers.

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, the farmers of Saskatchewan were not impressed. No wonder one great writer has said, "Let thy speech be silent . . . be silence . . . be better than silence, or be silent" — plenty of political rhetoric on water purifiers, but silence on grain transportation and in the fight to help farmers. Now, we would have welcomed their signature on the minister's Telex to the Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin in June, just as we would have welcomed it in February when we said in another Telex the day the Pepin plan was announced, and I quote from that Telex the Minister of Agriculture sent:

I cannot support any plan that costs the farmer \$1 more.

But what, what did they do? Did they join us? Did they back up the farmers of Saskatchewan? No. Silence. Finally, when the government introduced a motion rejecting the plan, they got onside. I would just like to refer to that debate for a moment, Mr. Speaker, the emergency debate rejecting the Pepin proposals. I could not help but be impressed with the Premier's assessment of the situation facing farmers today. His speech was perhaps one of the finest speeches I have ever heard in this House. He has an absolute command of the subject matter, but perhaps the depth of this conviction

with which he spoke was even more remarkable and more important. He spoke not only from the head but from the heart. This is the type of understanding and appreciation of their problems that farmers can relate to — not surprising, Mr. Speaker, since the Premier is in fact a farmer.

It was the initiative of this House that, once again, it was the source of imitation across the country. Provinces had followed our lead this past summer as it related to interest reduction programs for home-owners. And now legislatures were again following our lead in the fight against the Pepin plan. The Minister of Agriculture's resolution, which we unanimously passed in this House, was introduced and passed word for word in the Manitoba legislature. Once again, Saskatchewan was leading the way.

In closing off my remarks on the grain transportation system, Mr. Speaker, though, I cannot finish without a few words about the upgrading of the rail transportation system itself. I say the federal government should get on with it. They should get on with the upgrading of the system. It is in the best interest of all Canadians to have a first-class rail system. Grain exports from western Canada are the only bright spot in an otherwise dismal Canadian economy. They account for some \$6.5 billion. This is in fact the golden egg in the Canadian economy. Why is Pepin trying to kill the goose that's laying the golden egg? So I say to you, Mr. Speaker, for farmers to expect an upgraded rail transportation system is not a vested, not a vested nor a selfish expectation because it is not just in their best interest. But it is in the best interests of all Canadians to have a healthy grain transportation system. And as well, Mr. Speaker, we do want increased livestock production in Saskatchewan and processing of all commodities. And Mr. Pepin has suggested to some western livestock groups that his plan will do that. But I ask, can he be trusted? He tells the farmers of central Canada something else. And I have only to quote from an advertisement placed by the Government of Canada in the *Montreal Gazette* February 21, '83 which in part read, and I quote:

The higher transportation costs will prevent western pork and beef producers from becoming more competitive with their eastern counterparts in their traditional markets.

So what he is doing is telling the livestock producers out here that yes, we will make you more competitive and yet in central Canada he is saying, no, do not worry; we will not make them competitive. That doesn't sound like Saskatchewan is going to be getting a competitive edge as it relates to livestock development, Mr. Speaker. It sounds to me like the Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin is talking with a forked tongue.

I heard some criticisms the other day — I believe it was from the member for Shaunavon — of the Minister of Agriculture for being in Bulgaria on an agricultural trade mission. Criticism of a minister for developing markets for our farmers? Rather irresponsible criticism I must say. The implication was, I believe, that he should here, Mr. Speaker. Number one, if he needs to be home, we do have that 20th century wonder known as jet airplanes, and he could probably be here in a matter of 24 hours; but secondly, and more importantly, this Minister of Agriculture in the last few months has done more to prevent the ravages of Gilson, and Pepin, than anything the previous administration did in the last several years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. HEPWORTH: — I can recall a previous minister travelling about the province on the Crow issue, parading the Saskatchewan solution, parading it for pure political reasons,

an election gimmick. It is no gimmick now, Mr. Speaker. Farm groups all over are united in their stand. Compare that parading around the province to what this Minister of Agriculture has done.

In addition to having spoke to many, many farm groups he has met with virtually every other provincial minister of agriculture, many other legislators in Ottawa, and in other legislatures. He's met in Ottawa, he's met in Toronto, he's met in Quebec City, and he's met in Moncton. And add to that, Mr. Speaker, the Premier's trip to Ottawa, and the finance minister's trip to impress the Bay Street businessmen how Pepin's plan will affect all businesses in Canada, not just those in Saskatchewan. And I can tell you and this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Agriculture is very encouraged by the support he has received from those other jurisdictions.

I had the opportunity to share the platform at a recent meeting in Saskatoon, organized by farmers in opposition to the Pepin plan, to share the platform with a member from the Quebec National Assembly, and I very much appreciated his words of support, and their dedicated opposition to the Pepin plan. He, too, was very much aware of the impact that this plan could have on our family farms.

As well, I want to acknowledge the job done by the many government MLAs at the many, many, many anti-Pepin meetings all across this province. They have done an excellent job, along with the farm groups, at making known our opposition.

Final words, Mr. Speaker, on this issue. Mr. Deputy Speaker, rather. We will go to the wall for the farmers in Saskatchewan on this issue. We know what must be protected, and we know what they need. I would just at this point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, like to as well congratulate the hon. member for P.A.—Duck Lake . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. HEPWORTH: — . . . for his recent win in the by-election there, showing absolutely that last April was no fluke; and as well, I would like to congratulate him for the excellent job he did in moving the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne; and as well, I would like to congratulate the member for Morse, a very hard-working MLA, for an excellent job in seconding that motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. HEPWORTH: — I would like now to turn to another major issue facing Saskatchewan and Canada today, and one, too, that has been addressed by the Tory government in Saskatchewan. That is the matter of unemployment. As was noted in the throne speech, it is hardly what we'd like to see it, but much better than any other jurisdiction in Canada — better in Saskatchewan because of some programs that have been put in place by the Premier and his ministers.

I think of things like the Hon. Neal Hardy's Build-A —Home program that has really had the construction industry in my towns and cities busy, busy on the farm and in the urban centres. As a case in point, Mr. Speaker, I submit the following. It's an article from *Leader-Post* dated March 11, '83. The byline reads, "Weyburn Lots Selling Well." The article goes on to say, and I quote:

The rush is on in Weyburn to take advantage of federal-provincial grants to buyers of new homes. The sale of residential lots by the city is the highest in

six years for the first two months of the year.

It further goes on to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

The number of permits issued is also up dramatically, five times higher than on the same period in 1982.

Now, that's performance, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The highest in six years for these two months, and five times higher than the same period in 1982. They are busy in Weyburn, Mr. Speaker.

I think also, Mr. Speaker, of the employment that's being created and is once again secure in the oil patch around Weyburn. It's not perfect yet, but much better than the situation I found one year ago, one year ago today, in fact, when I was out campaigning. Time and time again, during that campaign, I would run into young people with families to support, having been employed in the oil patch for 8, 10 and 11 years, suddenly find themselves out of work. Well, compare that to the situation this year. The difference is the government and some programs that put people ahead of the state purse.

What has the Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractor had to say about the situation? I refer hon. members of the *Leader-Post* dated March 3, '83, highlighted by the byline, "Drilling in Province Bucks Trend." It goes on to say:

The plunge in oil and gas drilling activity across Canada has skipped Saskatchewan. Statistics compiled by both government and industry sources show the province is escaping the worst slump in seven years for the drilling industry.

It further goes on to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

By the week ending February 18, there were 158 wells drilled, compared to 62 in the same period of 1982.

Once again, compare the results, Mr. Deputy Speaker — 158 versus 62. It's no wonder that people are back at work in the Weyburn patch.

I refer hon. member as well to another article, March 3, '83, in the — March 11, '83 rather — in the *Leader-Post* highlighted by the byline, "Rights Sale Shows Confidence: Devine." I won't go into it in any detail, except it has further bylines, things like: "Kindersley Oil Hot"; "South-east (where Weyburn is located, Mr. Deputy Speaker), South-east Busy"; "The Deep Oil Region of Weyburn and Estevan near the U.S. Border Was Active," and so on, and so on.

As well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's a firm operating in the oil patch intending to drill some 15 wells — a smaller firm — not a multinational, but a smaller firm, planning on drilling 15 wells in southeast Saskatchewan this year as well, so they're all back at it, and it's very encouraging, and it's nice to see smiles on those families employed in oil patch this spring.

And as well, Mr. Speaker, there are other initiatives involving less people perhaps, but equally as important to those whose jobs are affected by it. I think of things here like the Saskatchewan Power Corporation's awarding of a contract to Canada Wire and Cable in Weyburn for transmission cable. It has people busy. It all counts, and I congratulate

all the ministers and the treasury benches for the initiatives.

And now for some serious stuff, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I would like to pass out a couple of bouquets, and as well, make an apology to the House.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, the apology, an apology to you and to this legislature. I may have unintentionally — and I assure you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, unintentionally — misled this House in debate on a particular bill last fall. It was a bill that was very dear to my heart, and in fact one that has become very dear to the heart of every young farmer in Saskatchewan today.

Now because of my enthusiasm for this particular bill, I may have made statements that have turned out to not be absolutely correct. I said in debate on the farm purchase program bill, bill No 45, I said then that more young farmers would be helped on their way to owning their own farm in one month under this program than the land bank did in 10 years of operation.

Well, Mr. Speaker, Deputy Speaker, I was wrong, I apologize for that. What I should have said to be more correct is this: more people will be helped on their way to own their own farms with the farm purchase program in one week, rather than one month.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. HEPWORTH: — More young farmers have been helped in one week to become owners of their own farmland than land bank did 10 dismal years.

I apologize for my incorrect statements, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I apologize for the fact that this program has been more successful than we could ever have anticipated. This is a program that assists in the intergenerational transfer of farmland by rebating interest payments on farm credit corporation mortgages on amounts of up to \$350,000, so that the farmer pays an effective rate of 8 per cent for five years, and 10 per cent for five years, a program that addressed a critical situation facing young farmers, high interest rates.

When we took office, interest rates were ranging between 16 and 20 per cent and even more, for farmland mortgages. Eight and 12 per cent looks very good to these farmers. I assure you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So good, in fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to report to this Assembly the line scores, the statistical results to date, on the farm purchase program, and the most recent data I have been able to get, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is to March 18, 1983, and farm credit corporation has interviewed some 5,655 young farmers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. HEPWORTH: — And of those, nearly half, 2,488, appear to be potential rebate clients . . . 2,488 young farmers looking at putting a land deal together. They've already been in and enrolled, and in fact, some of them are getting appraisals, and some of them have got appraisals, and have got all the i's dotted and the t's crossed. And in fact to date, there are already 478 that have got all the i's dotted and all the t's crossed, and they will be enjoying rebates on mortgages totalling some 58.1 millions of dollars.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER: — Now what of the land bank? Tell us about the land bank.

MR. HEPWORTH: — Interesting you should ask the land bank. Of all the people receiving rebate assistance from the farm purchase program, none was happier than a Mr. Steve Bekker, the 152nd rebate client. Mr. Bekker farms with his parents out in the Gravelbourg area, and I, along with the Minister of Agriculture, was very pleased to be able to have coffee with this young farmer — in fact, a fourth-generation Saskatchewan farmer. Mr. Bekker was the 152nd rebate client, and what makes that number so special? Well, it took 10 years for land bank to facilitate 151 owners . . . 10 years to get to 1-5-1. In 10 weeks, the farm purchase program helped that many, and many more, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The results speak for themselves, I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move to a couple of bouquets. And my first bouquet, naturally, is to all the farm credit corporation management and staff across this province. Because this program has been so popular and so well accepted, they have been just super-busy. They were hit with a tidal wave of clients, and as I have pointed out, have done some 5,600 interview. But they have delivered; they have worked their hearts out to handle this tremendous work-load; they continue to work their hearts out to expedite the transactions that farmers place before them. I appreciate their co-operation and their tremendous effort. I thank them very much. They are truly professionals at their job.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. HEPWORTH: — My second bouquet, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is to the city of Weyburn, the mayor and his aldermen; and as well, to the R.M. of Weyburn, the reeve and his councillors. They have just successfully completed negotiations on the land site for the city's new sewage lagoon storage cells.

As a bit of history, the protracted negotiations stem from a desire by both groups to look after their constituents; interests in a responsible fashion. The city wanted a site that would be . . . place a minimal financial burden on their taxpayers. The rural municipality, of course, wanted to be able to assure their farmers that prime agricultural land would not be compromised, and both jurisdictions wanted to be ensure, assured that the environment would be safeguarded. Now because they both believe in and respected each other's rights, they had meeting after meeting after meeting, until finally they worked it out. The temptation to turn to Regina, to big government, to solve their dispute was might at times, I'll admit, but ultimately the local jurisdictions, who knew the situation better than anyone else, worked it out. Co-operation and conciliation, rather than confrontation solved their problems. I am so very proud of them, because I know what a big job it has been, and I congratulate them all.

And because of their efforts all of the province will benefit. Their agreement forms a bench-mark for other jurisdictions locked in land use disputes. They have shown that the age-old adage related so often by our grandparents is still true in this province. That adage was repeated by Reeve Pulfer at the signing of the agreement. It is: "good fences made good neighbours." How true. It is this kind of co-operative spirit that pioneered this province, and it is still evident today as this province continues to develop.

In closing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would just like to say, certainly we are facing problems in Saskatchewan, in Canada and, in fact, in the world today. But they are not

insurmountable. They were faced by our pioneer ancestors some several years ago and they didn't walk away from them or roll over and die in the face of adversity. They carried on. Compare today with the situation facing our ancestors. A clipping from an old newspaper recounts the problems facing Walter Scott who, in fact, was to become first premier of this province, and I don't have the date from this newspaper clipping; it was obscured. But I can quote from it. When (and they refer to Walter Scott) first went to Ottawa (and this was in the time before he became premier):

The West was tied, hand and foot, in the grip of great monopolies — railway monopolies, land monopolies, elevator monopolies. Development of the West had been retarded by unwise legislation and vicious administration.

I see something of that today, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The Pepin plan, no doubt, has to be an example of some very unwise legislation. This old newspaper clipping went on to recount, and I quote again parts of it, issues facing Walter Scott, premier of the day, and I quote:

The creation of a system of provincial telephones, the establishment of a provincial university and agricultural college, the passing of laws in the interests of the artisan and workman, the hail insurance problem, railway extension, protection of public health, creation of rural municipalities, organization of high schools and collegiates . . .

And it went on, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I see today we still are facing some of these same issues. Telephones, 75th anniversary of Sask Tel. They've moved ahead undoubtedly. And fortunately, they've had some help from the Tory government. Now we no longer have the stigma, as it relates to telephones, when you read through the catalogues — "Not available in Saskatchewan." No we can buy the phones. They are available in Saskatchewan. We've come of age in this province. And today, and I would like to congratulate the Attorney General, the Minister in charge of Sask Tel, on the Sask Tel's announced commercial videotex service, a system that provides farmers with access to regional, national and international data bases over regular telephone facilities.

The agricultural industry would be able to access informational services, such as grain prices, farm management programs, investment analysis and current weather forecasts. So telephones, definitely very much the forefront in today's technology.

And mention was made in this newspaper clipping of public health. And I am so encouraged by the moves made by the Minister of Health and in fact his Legislative Secretary in that regard, with the completion and the laying on the table of the ambulance committee's report that will rationalize the delivery of ambulance services in this province. A good job, well done, and taking Saskatchewan back into its rightful position of being number one in medicare in the country.

And high schools and collegiates were on the agenda of the day, some 75 years ago, and I can think only of the numerous references in the throne speech to education that was just recently delivered by His Honour.

This province is great because of its people and their dedication over the years, not merely the dedication of a handful of legislators, but the dedication of all the people of this province. And so I invite you, in opposition, to join with the people of Saskatchewan and with us in government to formulate policy that is in the best interests of

Saskatchewan. Enough of doom and gloom. We invite you to come forth with some constructive criticism. Kick forth some ideas. Your rhetoric has been absolutely barren of ideas. You have criticized irresponsibly the Tory administration and the throne speech for being barren. I would suggest you, Leader of the Opposition, it is your party that is barren of ideas. I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have hit a nerve. It is their party that is barren of ideas. It's been bankrupt of ideas for some time now. And that bankruptcy of ideas finally came crashing down around their shoulders last April 22.

We, and the people of Saskatchewan, have been and always will be open to sensible ideas. The people's ideas as it's related to high interest rates resulted in the mortgage program and the farm purchase program. We welcome your ideas, but we can't implement them if you don't have any. Join us and all the people of Saskatchewan in making this the great province it can be. Therefore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it will be with great pleasure that I join in supporting the motion before us on behalf of the fine people of Weyburn constituency, and I cannot support the amendment, for it is bankrupt of ideas.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MAXWELL: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and thank you to members on both sides of the House for the resounding welcome. It's certainly appreciated. It's always a pleasure and it's always a privilege to be able to take my place in the House.

AN HON. MEMBER: — His light's not on, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

MR. MAXWELL: — Can I start all over again, Mr. Deputy Speaker? I would like once again to thank members on both sides of the House for the resounding welcome. The good people of Turtleford will be delighted to now that the respect accorded to me is not only from our members, but also from her Majesty's loyal opposition.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MAXWELL: — Always a pleasure, always a privilege to be able to take my place in the House, particularly on this occasion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because I'm participating in the address in reply to an exceptionally fine throne speech, the likes of which we have not heard in this House in the past 11 years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MAXWELL: — On this side of the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as backbenchers, we just don't get too many opportunities to participate in debate and speak, but that is because of the people of Saskatchewan who had enough confidence in us to eliminate the NDP almost entirely and return 56 Conservative members.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MAXWELL: — So naturally, naturally I welcome this opportunity to get the message back to my constituents that this government is working very hard on their behalf. To that end, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I may add that I have resigned my position as principal of Spiritwood High School so that I may devote my time and my energies full time on behalf of my constituents.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MAXWELL: — I was fortunate enough, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to be honoured by the Premier, being given the position of Legislative Secretary to that very courageous and excellent gentleman, the Minister of Labour, and those duties have kept me extremely busy. Besides these duties, Mr. Deputy Speaker, like colleagues on both sides of the House, I have much committee work to attend to, and I'm happy the committees on which I sit reflect my interests — for example: labour and education, community and cultural affairs. But probably the most rewarding committee has been being a part of the minister special advisory committee on liquor licensing laws, because work on this committee has entailed meeting with people from all over the province, from different backgrounds and different interest groups.

I, too, would like to join with colleagues on both sides of the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in extending my congratulations to the fine new member, Mr. Dutchak, the member from P.A.-Duck Lake.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MAXWELL: — I know he is going to be an excellent member of this Assembly. Judging by his performance so far in the House and in the caucus meetings, I know he is going to give strong representation to his constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the good people of the constituency of Turtleford for according me their trust and confidence. The constituency which I represent features some of the prettiest countryside and definitely some of the friendliest people to be found anywhere in Saskatchewan.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Now, don't be biased.

MR. MAXWELL: — My loud friend on the right has suggested that I might be biased. My loud friend is still recovering from an injury from ice fishing last week when a Zamboni ran over him, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MAXWELL: — I'm very proud of my constituency, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I'm happy to be able to serve those constituents since last April. I'm particularly proud that the natural gas program had a big impact on my constituency. Out of 30 communities that went into that program last fall, four of them, four of them, were from the Turtleford constituency. The good people of Edam, Mervin, Turtleford town, and Spruce Lake are now all serviced with natural gas. And I know I can speak with confidence when I say there's more to come for the folks back home, and the folks up there in Medstead and Glaslyn, please be a little patient. You waited 11 years from the election, and I'd like to tell you that I think in 1984 I can give you some good news regarding natural gas in your area.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MAXWELL: — The family farm purchase program has also stimulated great interest in my constituency. I know a fair number of the 5,000 people who are being considered for financial assistance in the purchase of farmland are from the Turtleford constituency. Also want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, since April 1982 the rural

municipalities in my constituency have benefited to the tune of \$1.8 million in direct grants from the Department of Rural Affairs, and the towns have benefited to the tune of almost 700,000 — real assistance, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the people of my constituency.

Perhaps the one incident that has given me the most pride in the last couple of months has been the announcement that close to \$1 million, close to \$1 million, is being given to the separate school in the town of Spiritwood for reconstruction. The hard work and the tenacity of a lot of people has paid off as we see this project finally getting off the ground.

These are just a few of the measures, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that have been taken on behalf of the citizens of the Turtleford constituency, and I want to assure them that in the years to come I will be fighting to the utmost of my ability on behalf of each and every constituent in that area.

Last Friday, March the 18th, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that erudite gentleman, the Hon. Leader of the Opposition, joined in the debate in responded to the Speech from the Throne. In his remarks, he said he was searching for a suitable title to describe the Speech from the Throne. Well, in a witty and amusing preamble, the Hon. Leader of the Opposition demonstrated his knowledge of current popular movies, finishing with the thought that perhaps the best title to describe the throne speech should be “Missing” as we know the title of a current film. I thought about the Leader of the Opposition’s remarks for a couple of days. And I thought about what he said was missing from the throne speech and you now, for once I find myself agreeing with that gentleman. Perhaps there are some things that were missing from the throne speech. And I’d like to mention a couple of them. I perused the speech thoroughly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and nowhere in that speech did I find mention that this government would buy one more acre of farmland, not one more.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MAXWELL: — So that was one thing that was missing, Mr. Deputy Speaker: that this government will not indulge in state ownership of land.

Another thing that was missing: any reference to implementing a 20 per cent sliding gas tax which would increase the cost to school boards to operate their school buses, increase the cost to small business for trucking and hauling of goods, increase the cost to the many people who must drive and travel for a living in this province, which in turn, in general terms would raise the complete, the consumer price index for this province. Now, Mr. Speaker, that kind of repressive measure was definitely missing from the throne speech.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MAXWELL: — Another item that was missing: we are not threatening, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to get into the life insurance business. I’m sure the people of Saskatchewan were extremely happy to see that those measures were in fact missing from that throne speech.

What is more relevant and what is much more important, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is what was included, what was included in the Speech from the Throne. And one major item appeared under the heading of agriculture. That was in reference to the Crow rate. Now

much has been said in this Assembly regarding the Crow rate and much has been said by our member, and it was most eloquently expressed in tremendous details where we stand in this government by my colleague who spoke before me, the member from Weyburn.

Well the Speech from the Throne reaffirmed, Mr. Speaker, our total and unanimous opposition to the current federal plans for replacing the Crow rate with a new freight rate structure. The new Pepin plan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, would impose impossibly high costs on Saskatchewan farmers and it is totally unacceptable to this government. I know that my constituents were very, very happy indeed to see that a commitment was made in this speech that measure, if required, will be placed before this Assembly to keep Saskatchewan grain and livestock farmers competitive with those in other parts of the country.

Early last week I met with a group of pool members in Spiritwood to discuss our opposition to the Pepin plan. This was the first time I had met with the pool members since a couple of months prior to the April election. And they were very happy to hear that my position and our position has not deviated on iota in that time. I said before the election, I said during the election, and I've been saying since the election, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the railways need upgrading by the cost must be borne by the federal government and not, not on the back of Saskatchewan farmers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MAXWELL: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to touch on a couple of other items which I consider to be highlights of the throne speech. First, the new vehicle act, because I have had many concerned constituents contact me, concerned because they are alarmed increasing incidents of impaired driving. I want to assure my constituents that the government, and in particular the Minister of Highways, shares their concern for the safety of both the travelling public and pedestrians; and "I'm glad that the Minister of highways has joined us again in the Assembly because I wish to complement that gentleman on the fine stand he's taken.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MAXWELL: — Consequently, Mr. Deputy Speaker, new measures will be introduced to stiffen the penalties for impaired drivers.

The natural gas distribution program, to which I referred earlier, will be continued over a ten-year period — a cost of \$340 million. Not only does this supply a much needed commodity in our rural areas, but it also creates 300 man-years of work for the next ten years, and that is equally important.

But, one of the most significant announcements in the throne speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker, concerned education. The Minister of Education, the fine member, the fine member from Regina Wascana, has said many times that education is an ongoing process from womb to tomb. That attitude was reflected in the comments that were contained in the throne speech. Sixteen years ago I attended an education convention in the city of Yorkton, and the theme was: "Teaching Students How to Learn." Teaching students how to learn. On the surface this looks like a self-evident statement, teaching students how to learn; but so much has changed in the last decade, Mr. Speaker, and so much is going to change in the years ahead, that what we need to do is to teach students to learn to live with change, to learn to adapt, to learn to be flexible, and how to

learn new skills.

And looking ahead, looking ahead to a new Saskatchewan, high technology and advanced technological research are going to be exceedingly important. The future is high technology and we have to have a trained manpower, a trained labour pool, a flexible, mobile labour pool, capable of satisfying the needs, and indeed, the demands of industry and business both in the private and in the public sector. Reference . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MAXWELL: — Reference was made in the throne speech to high technology, and I know we can expect soon details of a major high technology development strategy to be announced. Allow me to quote from page 3 of the throne speech, Mr. Speaker. I quote:

The strategy will include the provision of support and the financial services to inventors and entrepreneurs, the establishment of industrial high technology research and development centres, the linkage of industrial services with the training (the training) of highly skilled manpower, and the co-ordination of the provincial agencies and departments to provide industry with an advantage in this vital segment of economic development.

And how will it be accomplished? Through education, Mr. Deputy Speaker, “High technology services will be made relevant to the needs of Saskatchewan industry.”

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the future of the province lies in high technology, it also lies in education. We need programs to train our students, and perhaps — perhaps even more important — to retrain some members of the current work-force. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am extremely excited about the future of the province. I am optimistic, because as former university lecturer, a former high school principal, I have tremendous confidence in our young people, and I have confidence in our government to provide the young people with the opportunity for training in the skills that will become necessary in the years ahead. Our somnambulant opposition just woke up. The sycophants are responding, I hear.

Education remains one of the Premier’s four corner-stones for the future development of our province. Further to this, further to this, continuing education will play a vital role in providing the trained labour pool of which I spoke earlier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MAXWELL: — In conjunction with this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I see the future development of distance education in the province. A telecommunications-based distance education service cannot be fought off in the future. Many of our people, many of our people can’t leave home and travel to the institutions. So the institutions must go to them.

In Britain a successful university of the air delivery system has been initiated over the past number of years. And people study at home for credit with the aid of television. I see a similar thrust coming to Saskatchewan. In order to achieve the government’s threefold aims in adult education, which are: (1) substantially increase the range of training programs offered; (2) broaden the range, greatly increase the number of people serve; (3) increase access to credit-creating programs for young people and

adults throughout the province. In order to do that, we will have to examine, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a program of distance education.

In summary, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I see three main thrusts in the throne speech which point to an exciting future. They are: (1) agriculture, because farmers are the backbone of this society; (2) education; and (3) the future high technology.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, some of my colleagues who spoke before me could not help but pick up on the theme of the opposition throughout this debate. We've had doom and gloom, negativism, pessimism throughout their presentations. Now, I know it's the role of the opposition to criticize. But that doesn't mean being negative. I'm sure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that some of their thinking members — the members from Shaunavon, perhaps — would like to vote in favour of the motion in approval of the throne speech. But, of course, tradition dictates that they not support the throne speech.

However, I've been concerned as a new member, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I've been concerned about just how negative the opposition are about everything that happens here. Imagine, imagine, if we found a way to eliminate income tax entirely, and still deliver, still deliver all the programs to the people of the province, and all the benefits to which they've become accustomed, the NDP would still find something to criticize in that. And I can imagine just how depressing their caucus meetings must be.

The member from Regina Lakeview had referred earlier to the Hon. Leader of the Opposition as Allan in Wonderland. Allan in Wonderland. Perhaps, to borrow the title of Mr. Fotheringham's book.

I would like to follow through a little bit on that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and follow the Leader of the Opposition into his wonderland, his caucus meetings. And I can just picture this depressed group sitting around a table conjuring up scenarios whereby they might sneak back into power, a scenario like perhaps maybe we could have a drought this year, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's what we need; we need a drought. Or one other member says, "No, a drought won't do it alone. Darn, we've got to have a depression before we get back into power."

They are not working to produce positive, constructive comments or suggestions, Mr. Deputy Speaker, ideas that we could taken and use for the betterment of everybody.

As I said before, however, the big team, the A team, went down to defeat in the last election. The people, people like the former attorney general, the former minister of agriculture, they were the A team, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and they went down to defeat. And what the Leader of the Opposition has left is his B team. The B team — the would be's and the has been's, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MAXWELL: — In his speech on March 9, the Leader of the Opposition made a derisive comment about us because he was being mean, and he said and I quote, "There is so much more we can be, bub, and the b-u-b stands for broke, unemployed and bankrupt." I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he was describing the NDP party — broken party, broken in spirit; unemployed form NDP candidates; a party bankrupt of ideas. "There is so much more we can be, bub."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MAXWELL: — Now, the leader, the Leader of the Opposition is fond, he is fond of movie titles. He gave us “Jaws II” to describe the throne speech. I would like to leave everybody here with one movie title which I feel, more than any other, adequately sums up the entire session right from the election. And that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is “Rocky III,” “Rocky III” because we beat the stuffing out of them last April, we beat the stuffing out of them in P.A.-Duck Lake, and every day in the House we beat the stuffing out of ’em.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MAXWELL: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, this has been more than a pleasure to participate; this has been an absolute delight to take part. I am proud to say, if you had not gathered from my earlier remarks, that I shall be opposing the amendment and I’ll most definitely, absolutely be voting in favour on the main motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ENGEL: — Thank you, thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am happy to take part in this throne speech today. And when I listened to the Speech from the Throne when it was delivered and read, I couldn’t help but think of the vents over the past year. A year ago the Progressive Conservative Party lured the people of Saskatchewan with their siren song, “There’s so much more we can be.” “There’s so much more we can be.” It sounded so good to the people of Saskatchewan that they actually decided to give them a chance. They actually believed it. Those words today, those words today, those words today sound pretty hollow. The people of Saskatchewan today that I talked to are worried not so much about where we can be, Mr. Speaker, but rather about where are we. Where are? Since the Conservative government took office almost 11 months ago, this province has been on a steady downhill slide, on a grease slope, Mr. Speaker. The situation has been getting closer and closer to a tail-spin, Mr. Speaker, but Premier and the Minister of Finance keep telling us, “Hang on. We’ll bail you out. We’re open for business. We’re just pulling out of it. We’re just pulling out of it.” Somehow this government has the notion that the open-for-business philosophy will really save the day for them. Well, I’ve got news for them, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They’re on the wrong track.

In the first place, their slogan starts out with a false premise. When was Saskatchewan ever closed for business? When was Saskatchewan ever closed for business? Saskatchewan’s had a healthy private sector for a long, long time. The previous government welcomed, private activity that helped and served the people of this province. The government’s slogan ignores the history of this province. Sooner or later they will learn that every government in the history of Saskatchewan has had to adapt a mix of both public and private activity to improve the well-being of the entire province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ENGEL: — I find it interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that while the government has implemented a number of promises highlighted in the campaign the province is now worse off than it was when they took over. They can’t blame it, they can’t blame it on the recession, Mr. Speaker. The Premier said that Saskatchewan declined to participate in the recession. That leaves only one thing. That leaves only one thing. The bungling and mismanaged of this government has already wreaked havoc, have wreaked havoc and hardships on many Saskatchewan people. On the basis of their record in their first year I shudder to think what lies ahead in the next three years. Certainly, the throne speech gives no cause for hope. It was a document consisting of three main

elements: excuses for what went wrong, bragging about what a great job they were doing, and a considerable amount of housekeeping legislation. Those were the three elements of the throne speech — a considerable amount of housekeeping, bragging about what a great job they were doing, and excuses for what went wrong. A new government fills the order paper with housekeeping legislation when it hasn't really got figured out what to do and what it wants to do.

There's one more element, however, Mr. Speaker. A number of references in the throne speech sounded very innocent but could be a cover for things the government is afraid to unveil yet. For example, the section on labour relations sounded very interesting, very innocent — no mention of the Trade Union Act. Other references such as streamlining crown corporations could mean a little more than it said, could mean a little more than it said. Last night, Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the member for Shaunavon, and myself went down to attend a meeting in Val Marie. The member for Turtleford that just sat down was talking about how beautiful his riding is. I'd like to say that beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder, and I think some of the most beautiful landscape and most beautiful country in Saskatchewan lies in the area that's encompassed by the proposed grasslands park. And why, why isn't the grasslands park proceeding, Mr. Speaker? why, why is the program on hold? Is it a matter of funding? Is it a matter of funding that they couldn't come up with \$300,000 for some seismic work that needed to be done last winter? Is that why they stalled the grassland park? Or is it the reference to streamlining crown corporations? Is it possible that, who had the contract for doing the seismic work, that they weren't going ahead with it? Did they turn down and look in the eye and say, "no, thank you" to the federal's \$20 million expenditure down there because they were afraid to let SaskOil do some seismic work? Is that why this government was afraid to proceed with the grasslands park?

I think when we look at what their intentions are, and when we look at what they're trying to do when they're trying to do when they talk about streamlining crown corporations, they're saying more than what is in the printed page. I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that members of this opposition are going to be watching these matters very closely, and we will call the government to account for its action.

Mr. Speaker, an area that really puzzled me in this throne speech was the section on agriculture. Here we have a government here we have a government that says it places great stress on the importance of agriculture. We hear a great deal about their rural roots. I can only conclude, after hearing and reading the throne speech, that those roots are pretty shallow. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid that the seed, the Tory seed, fell on some stony ground.

The speech listed several pieces of housekeeping legislation. It talked about the Crow situation in watered down terms, that this government issuing more and more.

And today I listened carefully to the member for Turtleford and the agricultural secretary, the member for Weyburn. They talked about total unanimous opposition to Pepin's plan, the impossibility of high costs in the measures that were there. He didn't say one word about the statutory Crow rate — not one word. They're willing to deal with it, to tamper with it, but they're not talking about . . . Now words were said today by either the agricultural secretary or, or, or the little member from Turtleford, who is going to so powerfully underline it. Not one word was said about the statutory Crow rate. They list several pieces of housekeeping legislation but nothing concrete that the farmers wanted to hear.

Finally they talked about their farm purchase program as the saviour of the family farm, the saviour of the family farm. They didn't mention anything about the 2,700 family farm units created through the land bank program which they have destroyed . . . Not a word about the 700 land bank applicants who they left out in the lurch last spring.

There are many samples of injustices being posed on land bank leases. Just the other day I talked to a lessee from the Minister of Rural Affairs' riding, and he wanted to buy a quarter of land he was leasing from the land bank. He wanted to buy a quarter he was leasing. The price he's quoted for this quarter was \$58,000. Now, some of you will say that's a reasonable price, but the assessment of that quarter was \$1,450. That's 40 times the assessment this government is asking that young fellow to pay for a quarter of land he had leased — 40 times the assessment.

Mr. Speaker, what happened . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Do I have to compete? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker, in 1979 that same young farmer bought a quarter of land from the land bank. Do you know how much he paid? Mr. Speaker, 19,000 — not 58,400, but 19,900 from the land bank commission. How much was that quarter assessed for? \$1,450? No, 1,600. Today he was told that 58,000 was the price, on sales based in the six or eight months. But the only sales he knows of are \$3,500 and \$3,800 quarters of land.

I know the government doesn't like the land bank program. I know they hate it with a vengeance. They have done everything possible to misrepresent it. Every time the Minister of Agriculture talks about it, or his Legislative Secretary talks about it, they claim it's only helped 151 farmers, 151 farmers, I'm quoting you, you said today, were set on the road to ownership, and say it was failure.

Mr. Speaker, that's a blatant dishonest approach. The minister knows, and his Legislative Secretary knows, that 2,700 farmers were established on viable farm units, on land bank land, and that another 700 were ready to go last spring, and that were put on the shelf. The decision whether they bought it or they didn't buy it was left up to them. It wasn't forced on them like this government is doing. Now, they've not only destroyed the program, they are taking it out on the lessees such as the case I have just noted earlier.

This afternoon I want to review the state of agriculture and discuss some of the things that we can do about it ourselves. Agriculture, as far as I'm concerned is still the most important industry in this province. All of us know that many things affecting the well-being of agriculture are beyond the control of this province. In those areas our efforts have to be feared to influencing others to do what has to be done, but there are still things that we can do for ourselves.

Our own capacity, our own capacity for solving our own problems is infinitely greater than it was back in '70 or '71. The immense strides made by Saskatchewan during the 11-year tenure of the NDP government totally changed in the agricultural face in Saskatchewan. At the beginning of the '70s there was only a limited amount of initiative we could take ourselves this has changed. The hard work of the provincial farmers, together with the imaginative programs of the NDP, and also some good luck, changed things, Mr. Speaker. Such things as the land bank, FarmStart, beef stabilization, hog stabilization, Farm Lab — and I could go on to name many, many other programs — simply could not have been handled by the province only a few short years ago.

Between 1971 and 1982, Saskatchewan was transformed from a have-not province to a have province. The Tory government seems bent on making us a once-was province. Saskatchewan agriculture got through the gate in 1982 because of the basic strength that was already there, as the Speech from the Throne noted. But there are ominous signs, and we may not be as lucky in 1983. These people opposite are saying we're being negative. There's been some increase in bankruptcies though, but we have not as yet seen as many as in other parts of Canada.

What are some of the signposts, Mr. Speaker? Farm cash receipts in 1982 are down by 3 per cent. I would like to tell the member from Regina North West that he might have a chance to speak on his feet, and you did have that chance. So now I'd like my turn. Farm net income, farm net income as a consequence is only about two-thirds of the 1981 level. Prospects for 1983 are not good. Hazen Argue has already argued hinted that the initial price of wheat might be as much as 70 or 80 cents lower in the current year. The prospect of a final payment next January looks pretty slim. The prospects for our transportation system are also poor. Much higher costs for shipping grain are in the works if Pepin gets his way. Some farmers will face even more staggering costs if branch line rehabilitation programs are cut back, and if more branch lines are abandoned, as Mr. Pepin would like to see.

Interest costs also constitute a staggering burden for many farmers during the past year. In analysing farm affairs, Mr. Speaker, it is important to make a distinction between well-established farmers who've paid off their debts and the one hand, and on the other hand young farmers and other farmers who have recently expanded who have a heavy debt load, and consequently high interest costs. Well-established farmers will for the most part, in spite of difficulties, be able to get by, but young farmers are in a very precarious position, and other farmers who have expanded their operation in recent years are also facing some serious problems.

I would urge the government, Mr. Speaker, to review its debt adjustment and debt protection legislation, not to ensure that it is now — to ensure that it is updated and can cope with any problems that may emerge. If necessary, I would urge the government to introduce legislation at this session. It's along time, Mr. Speaker, since we've had to talk about farm affairs in those terms . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . This is a measure of the gravity and I'm sure it has been at least 11 years — 12 years to be exact. This is a measure of gravity of a situation that farmers and agriculture are, is facing, Mr. Speaker. In the face of this looming crisis, what is this government going to do? It is introducing a horse-racing commission act, and amends to The Horned Cattle Purchases Act. Beyond that, all we have are some vague reference about some great things the government might be going to do.

Then, of course, the government also has had to crow about the Crow rate campaign and throne speech. This afternoon, Mr. Speaker, I intend to show while this government has been putting on a great show about its defence of the Crow, what it really has been doing is pulling the feathers out of the Crow one by one.

Farmers today are facing a giant cost-price squeeze that threatens the very life of agriculture in Saskatchewan. And what is our Minister of Agriculture doing about it? He's selling bulls in Bulgaria. I would like to examine both sides of the cost-price squeeze, Mr. Speaker. Grain prices are, of course, key to the well-being of

Saskatchewan farmers. Orderly marketing by the Canadian Wheat Board has given prairie farmers more marketing power, and has brought about more stability in grain markets. There are, of course, some people who would like to undermine the Canadian Wheat Board and return to the open market system; the jungle of the open market. I have good reason to think that some people support the party now in power in Saskatchewan and that they have some influence with the Conservative Party.

I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that the New Democratic Party supports the Canadian Wheat Board system of marketing and we would like to see all grains marketed by the Canadian Wheat Board. We will fight any attempt to erode that position of the board.

There are two particular matters I would like to pursue under the topic of grain prices. The first has to do with the initial price set for grain each year. The initial price is in fact the only guarantee the farmer has for grain. In fact, an attempt is made to set the price so it falls within the range of anticipated selling prices. I was surprised to hear the Hon. Hazen Argue say that it could be 70 or 80 cents lower than it was a year ago. He was probably setting a stage for somewhat smaller reduction. Nevertheless, it is regrettable to see that the federal government is unwilling to stand behind the farmer, even at the level of the present price of 4.75 to no. 1, which are already far below the cost of production. At least the farmer would have some protection against the vagrancies of the international market. What is needed is a system of basic guaranteed prices for the farmer that take into account the cost of production.

The second matter I would like to raise, Mr. Speaker, is the domestic price of wheat used for human consumption, the so-called two-price system. The price has been in place since the early '80s in a range between \$5 and \$7 bushel. A price increase is long overdue, Mr. Speaker, especially when you consider the cost of wheat accounts for only eight cents in a loaf of bread.

The NDP government introduced stabilization plans for both beef and hogs. They were new plans designed to bring some stability to our livestock producers and to encourage more livestock production, more livestock production. No doubt some improvements and changes were needed in both plans. But they still, but they are still sound plans. It is my, in some consolation that the Conservative government at least hasn't dismantled the plans entirely. But I do find some of the changes being made very disturbing.

The NDP government gave smaller producers the opportunity to roll an additional 50 feeders are getting a start. Not only did the Conservative government stop this plan, they wouldn't even honour contracts that these young farmers had signed. At the same time, they were able to help the big feed lot operator. The hog stabilization program is also being steered toward more help for the larger operator. This sort of thrust is directly contrary to the government's professed commitment to the family farm.

Turning now to the farm's cost side of the picture, I would like to deal with several items of particular concern to farmers in my area. Number one, I've already talked about the interest rates. The second one is fuel prices, farm machinery costs and services, land prices and transportation costs or the Crow rate.

On the subject of fuel price, I want to reiterate the comments made by my leader. Fuel prices for farmers have risen by as much as 23 per cent since the Conservatives have taken office. Removal of the gas tax has been of very little help to farmers. All the government can say in answer is, it's all because of the energy agreement the NDP

signed in Ottawa. The federal government should remove some of its taxes and they brought in a 10-year rural natural gas program. That's their answer.

I say in response, it was your pal Peter Lougheed who set the stage for the energy agreement. In fact the NDP, the NDP government had negotiated a much better deal than he got. And regardless of what Ottawa should do, you are the government here and it's up to you to do something now. It's going to be a long, long time before farmers are going to get the benefit of natural gas in my area. Even longer as result of the Tory government's stalling of the '82 program.

My colleague, the member for Shaunavon yesterday made a comparison on, of fuel prices with our neighbouring, our neighbours in U.S. and Montana. During the election we were promised a 40 per cent reduction and what did we get? A 23 per cent increase. What happened in United States in the same time? In April 1982, diesel fuel is . . . Our colleague informed us as \$1.16 a gallon and today it's down to a dollar. But what happened in Saskatchewan? In April of '82, it was \$1.33 and today it's around \$1.66, a 23 per cent increase. So we actually lost a 35 per cent advantage of what our farmers got. That's the 40 per cent we were promised by the Americans got it. We couldn't get it.

But what did they do for our trucker friends, Mr. Speaker? What did they do for our trucker friends? A Kenworth costs about the same amount of money as my farm tractor does. A Kenworth is about the same of money. The difference is that the Kenworth runs year round. My tractor doesn't even run a half a year; six, seven hundred hours a year. Some of the larger operators, Mr. Speaker, have as many as 100 tractors. I have a friend that has 100 tractors. He runs an efficient operation. Do you know how many miles he makes with each Kenworth? Two hundred thousands miles a year. Did you ever calculate what he saves because of your government's measures to reduce the gas tax? The owner of that Kenworth saves \$15,000 a year because of your measure to lower the gas price — \$15,000 a year. And what do I get? A \$5,000 increase on my tractor. That's what I got. That's what I got. The farmer is asked to take less for his grain. He's told he's going to have to pay a little more for his freight. That's what the minister of Agriculture said in Melville, "He can afford to pay a little more for his freight." He's told he's got to pay 23 per cent more for his fuel, and now to make that Saskatchewan farmer really number one, Tory style, he pays this extra 5,000 bucks compared to the trucker . . . (inaudible) . . . and nothing for the farmer.

This is one area where this government, if they would want to put their hearts in saving rural Saskatchewan and saving the farmer, could take some action. It has a responsibility to do something, and it's a way of returning some of our resource revenues to those who need it most. Better to do that than to give even more back to the resource companies as you've already done.

On the matter of farm machinery costs and service, I think this is a matter that deserves special study, Mr. Speaker, by the government, to determine what action can be taken. Farmers are still seeing the cost of machinery and parts of going up. Many dealers are having a touch time staying in business. Some are going broke, some are going out of business, and farmers have to drive further and further for parts and service. Machinery companies with their large, computerize, centralized operations are providing poorer and often more expensive service to farmers. Many parts are flown in air express, often to replace the parts just sold. The legislation now in the books has helped farmers, but the situation keeps evolving and new steps must be considered, and I would like to see 'em considered in this legislation.

Land prices were the subject of some discussion when the land bank legislation and farm purchase legislations were under debate. I won't go over the ground again this time, Mr. Speaker. The basic problem with our present system is that as soon as that farm income goes up it immediately becomes capitalized in higher farmland prices. We find ourselves in a vicious circle. The land bank was an effort to deal with that problem. It helped many farmers, but no one claimed it would solve the entire problem. The farm purchase program is bound to exert upward pressure on land prices. The only thing countering this pressure is that there are already some farm distress sales taking place, which exert downward pressure on the land price.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I wish to talk about transportation costs. I wish to talk about some transportation costs. The key issue is the survival of the Crow rate, and as I mentioned earlier, I listened to my colleagues, the members — not my colleagues, but the members of the legislation from the government — both the agricultural critic and member for Turtleford. Not one word about the survival of the Crow. They talked about farmers can't afford to pay more. They talked about destroying the Pepin, or derailing the Pepin plan, but not a word where the issue really is. The key issue is the survival of the statutory Crow rate. The Pepin plan is going to result in the largest single increase in the costs for Saskatchewan farmers in the history of this province. The freight bill farmers will have to pay for shipping grain will go up over the next 10 years from 100 million to over \$500 million a year. We only have from now till the end of June to stop this plan.

In the midst of this crisis what did the Minister of Agriculture do? The man who our leader called the general that's supposed to be leading this fight, what did he do? He went AWOL. He stole away to Bulgaria to sell some bulls. At least the bull he's selling is a better quality than the bull he's been spreading in Saskatchewan. Maybe he's trying to establish . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ENGEL: — Maybe he's trying to establish, Mr. Speaker, and I say this seriously, the Bulgarian connection in trying to save the Crow.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important that the people of understand . . . Saskatchewan understand fully how their government has been undermining the fight to save the Crow. Mr. Pepin first announced his proposal in February of '82. The NDP government made it clear that they opposed the Pepin . . . opposed the plan to destroy the Crow, and launched a campaign. The opposition criticized the \$180,000 we spent on that campaign. During the subsequent election campaign, the NDP made it clear it would fight strenuously to save the Crow.

What did the Tories do? What did the Tories do? At that time they were trying to get elected. So they said, "Me too. We want to keep the Crow. We don't think farmers should have to pay any more." You can remember all the sloganeering they did. But after the election they fell strangely silent. Even when the Gilson report came out at the end of the June, they refused to support our motion, and rejected it entirely. Their silence was very eloquent. It told Jean-Luc Pepin he didn't have to worry very much about the Saskatchewan government. After all, the second happiest man last April the 26th (and I said this before in this House, Mr. Speaker) was Jean-Luc Pepin. All through the summer the government refused to commit itself.

Fall and winter came. And the Minister of Agriculture spoke to some farm meetings: the Sask Wheat Pool, the National Farmers' Union, the Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture. And he made some outstanding statement. He said, "Frankly, our caucus is split. As soon as I get our position figured out, I'll tell you what it is." Finally, after the Pepin plan was announced on February 1, '83, the minister made a firm statement. He condemned the proposal and said the proposal and said the provincial government's contention that any difference between the current Crow rate and any new rate should be paid by the federal government as valid as ever. At least he seemed to be on side. What he did do on February the 22nd? The government introduced an emergency resolution which listed nine reasons for rejecting the Pepin plan. It was a rather strange formulation, because it left some loopholes, and it said nothing about what should be done.

So the opposition attempted to strengthen the motion with an amendment. It was turned down unanimously by the government. Having done that, we still supported the motion, because it correctly analysed some of the deficiencies in the Pepin plan, and because the government spokesmen were still saying the right things. But then something happened. The Minister of Agriculture fell off the wagon, like I mentioned in the question period. Behind a smoke-screen of activities he began to shift his stance. On March the 9th, he unveiled Saskatchewan nine-point plan. He said, "Any change to the farmers' grain freight rate must be made by introduction of legislation in parliament. And the farmers' grain freight rate shall not exceed any historical relationship to the price of grain."

Both comments accept the principle that farmers will pay more. The minister's plan said nothing about opposing variable rates or the payment of the Crow benefit should be made to the railways. He concluded that his plan represented a consensus. It appears he gave equal weight to the views of the small commodity groups and his friends in Palliser, alongside the views of the major farm organizations like the Sask Wheat Pool, SARM, NFU, and Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture.

Then on March the 15th, he said in Melville, and I quote from the *Leader-Post* report: "Saskatchewan is prepared to pay more to move its grain." It is clear why the government didn't want to strengthen that resolution. They are prepared to see the Crow rate go down the drain. Even after the minister made his statements, he's still having backbench government MLAs going around the province telling farm meetings that the government doesn't want to see any change in the Crow rate. The government is saying one thing and doing another. I call that deceptive leadership, Mr. Speaker. Many farmers in Saskatchewan will call it a double-cross. Mr. Speaker, there is nothing worse than a wolf in sheep's clothing, and that's what we're seeing in this government today.

The government made a commitment to the Crow rate; Saskatchewan farmers expect the government to stand by its commitment. The government has betrayed the trust placed in it. The government stands condemned for this betrayal. The minister said he is prepared to go to the wall on the Pepin plan, but he's driving the farmers up the wall, that's what he's doing.

Now while the minister's off on his junket to Bulgaria, his Tory friends in Alberta have kicked over the traces. They wouldn't even accept the watered-down resolution that was introduced in this legislature.

I remember just several weeks ago and I was pressing the Minister of Agriculture to talk to his friends in Tory Alberta, talk to the minister of agriculture, and talk to some of his

buddies over there, and make sure that they are on side. And what did he do? “What’s the rush? Don’t worry. Everything’s all right,” he said. And the member for Moose Jaw . . . So what did I do? What did I do? I made sure that our two colleagues introduced the motion, and they were the only two in Alberta that supported it.

Now what’s he doing with his federal friends? Are we going to get the same response from his friends in Ottawa? We’ve been urging the government to make sure they fight the Pepin plan all the way in the House of Commons. As the official opposition, they play a big role in Ottawa. The NDP in Ottawa can’t stop the bells. The NDP in Ottawa hasn’t got the whip, but their opposition members and their Leader of the Opposition has. They have the muscle in Ottawa, and if they want to, Mr. Speaker, in the few short weeks that lie ahead, they can stop the Pepin plan. They have the power and they have the ability to stop it.

The NDP’s position is that the Crow rate should remain as is in law, non-negotiable. It is part of our confederation bargain. The railways have an obligation to invest in their system to meet future needs to the extent of their resources. If more money is required, if more money is required . . . And I was really pleased to read the results of a meeting in Weyburn.

The idea of nationalizing the CPR found hundreds of supporters here Monday night, attacking federal proposals to scrap the Crow’s Nest Pass Rate. They voted unanimously to completely reject, completely reject the plan changes.

They said. That’s a meeting at Weyburn.

What’s this government doing? What’s this government doing? Our position has been non-negotiable from day one. It is part of our bargain. The railways have their obligation, and if more money is required, it should come from the federal government as a public investment.

I’m not ashamed of that statement. Some of the Tory members opposite are trying to make a joke of it, but I think it’s the only way we’ll ever get control of our freight rate problem here in Canada.

I find it interesting that farm meetings are demanding this nationalization of railroads. We oppose variable rates. We believe federal payments should go to the railways. We believe a good branch line system brought up to a good standard is the most efficient grain-handling system.

Mr. Speaker, this government is mismanaging the economy. It is discriminating against those who are weaker in our society. It has betrayed the trust Saskatchewan placed in them in defending the Crow, and for these reasons I support the amendment and oppose the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENT BY MR. SPEAKER

Broadcasting Proceedings of Legislative Assembly

MR. SPEAKER: — With leave of the Assembly, I would like to make a statement at this

time. Is leave granted?

Members will be aware that the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly have been televised and distributed to Saskatoon and Regina citizens by means of broadcasters and cable-casters. The cable channel in Regina has been channel number 5, the channel formerly used by the Public Broadcasting Service.

It is my information that the Public Broadcasting Service will likely return to full service tomorrow and thus pre-empt our signal. We and Cable Regina have been negotiating with the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission in Ottawa for permission to carry the legislative broadcasts on cable channel 3, the community programming channel. These negotiations have been ongoing for nearly a month. Broadcast time on this channel is available each afternoon. CRTC permission is all that is needed to distribute our signal on channel 3. To date, CRTC has not granted this permission. It is therefore my duty to advise all hon. members and the viewing public in Regina and area that our signal will likely not be distributed on cable in Regina after today. I should add the fortunately distribution in Saskatoon will not be disturbed.

Public reaction to the legislative telecasts has been very positive. I believe members and the public realize the importance of as many citizens as possible being able to view their elected members in session. It is for this reason that I felt an obligation to advise the members and the public of this disruption in service until CRTC will grant required authorization.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

Address in Reply (continued)

MR. KATZMAN: — Mr. Speaker, I take my place to speak on the throne speech who was delivered by His Honour the other day. And as I sat in my place and listened to the member and opposite speak nothing but doom and gloom, negativism, and praying for everything to go wrong, he wasn't talking about the things the people of Saskatchewan need. He was talking about what they need, so they hoped that things will go wrong so that little red rump of a Liberal party might have an opportunity to be government again.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KATZMAN: — That member wasn't even proud enough to lift his head as he spoke. He held his head down the whole time. That's the kind of attitude they have.

Mr. Speaker, I've been in opposition for many years, and I'm now on the government side. We were suggested while we were in opposition that we were a opposition that was credible. What we recommended and suggested was always suggested to be credible by the former attorney general. He used to say to me, "Ralph, hey, when you're in opposition, demand the world. When you're in government you say things have change; you can't deliver." Well, that's not what we did in opposition. We promised the things we could deliver — credible, positive things — and what happened? We were elected in April, and we have delivered those positive things.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KATZMAN: — You know, it's interesting. I had the privilege of writing a weekly newspaper column back home, and that was my first column that I wrote about after watching the opposition — the negative opposition — talk. That's all they are, is negative. They see no future, and they're right. There is no future for them. They're finished in this province. The people have had enough of your political gamesmanship. You've never been straight up. You always did the political thing, not the thing, the thing that was necessary.

You know, the member talks about the gas tax and the farm fuel. You know, the rip-off artist is that friend of yours in Ottawa — Pierre and his boys. They're taking more tax off that farmer than this province takes. The people in Ontario take more off than the producers get. Who should be rebating the producer? We've asked, our Premier has asked for the federal government to remove the tax on farm fuels. No, no. No, they want that money. What about the production that brings the bonuses to Canada, the trade balance? That's what our wheat board does when they sell our grain. That's the biggest exporter we have for the betterment of Saskatchewan.

You know, a member says they were open for business. Does he not forget that when a potash plant, a private owned potash plant, asked for permission to expand, they denied them the permission? That's open for business? Your own history shows that you talk in twisted tongue and out of both sides of your mouth.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KATZMAN: — Your own record shows what you're demanding in opposition, you were never prepared to give in government. That's not responsible, and that's why you'll never be the government of this province again.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KATZMAN: — You know, Brazen Hazen, your NDP-Liberal friend, the fellow that wants the grain prices down . . . If he got out and did his job like our minister does and sold the grain, like he's out selling some bulls, and like he goes and visits all the other agriculture ministers in Canada, despite the Pepin proposal, we'd get somewhere. No, he's staying home. The only time they sent Brazen Hazen anywhere is when Pepin wants the air clear, so he sends Brazen Hazen to France or somewhere to get rid of him. You know, you are ashamed of him and so are the Liberals, and the farmers of Saskatchewan are even more disappointed in him all totally. You know, I sat and listened to that doom and gloom, and doom and gloom. The only thing I've discovered is for sure the NDP know how to chase their own tail, because they go in circles and circles, and then they stop and go the other way. I mean, that's all they do. You know, I heard the member complain about no comments, or what we are doing in labour relations. I'll take that one comment of yours and do to the third page of the throne speech. And it says if you look very closely, that we need co-operation to management, unions, for the betterment of all. That's not how you played the game. You wanted them fighting all the time. You didn't want them working to the betterment of everybody. And that's what's important.

The member that spoke just before you talked about the importance of education, and training our people of the jobs that are going to be available, caused by a government that's open for business, not a government that demands to own every business. That's what you did. If an industry came into Saskatchewan while you were government, you said, "We want our hand in the pocket. We want our hand in there." If somebody wanted

to develop in the North, “Well, they can do the work.” And then once they discovered there was something worthwhile you had legislative right to take part ownership. You didn’t go in with the risks in the first place, but when it looked good you took over part of the profits.

You know, we heard the leader of the Alice of Wonderland crew talk about what you’d call the movie, what you’d call the speech. And everybody’s put their label on it, so I guess my chance too. There’s been a program on TV on Saturday afternoon in Saskatoon. And it happens to run live in Regina on Tuesday nights. It’s called “Stampede Wrestling.” And some of your members over there remind me of Sweet Daddy Siki and Goldie Rogers — all kinds of are and flamboyancy, but no substance and no ability. You know, that’s a little scary to consider.

Let’s get into agriculture. While you were government you did everything in your power to convince the beef farmer that there were no industry for him, and no future. You did everything in your power to say, “Grow grain. Don’t diversify in agriculture.” And what did you do? You accomplished that. We slowed the closing up of meat-packing plants and other things. What’s happened since? You’ve seen the papers. There’s a suggestion of a new packing plant in Saskatchewan. There’s a suggestion from the producer’s they’re going to keep more of their cows and breed them. We may build an interest in agriculture diversification by the farmer.

You know, it’s interesting for long-range planning is what’s starting to happen. We had a meeting in Saskatoon with the agriculture industry, and we listened to their ideas. Not we telling them; they told us. They told us what they thought and what could be accomplished. Since then, the Minister of Agriculture, myself and others have sat down with part of the agriculture industry to look ahead, to see what we can reasonably move ahead step by step for the betterment of the producer, for the betterment of the citizens of Saskatchewan, and for the betterment of Saskatchewan. That’s what’s important. We as a government cannot do it alone. But we will do it with the assistance of the people of Saskatchewan. We will not do it on their backs. We will do it hand in hand with them for the betterment of all people.

You know, credibility, responsibility and reasonability are three key words. Credibility you have none of; you lost that in April. Your wish-washy stand and as the election came on, your give-away per day. You said the Conservatives couldn’t do this and they couldn’t do that. But we’ve done it, gentlemen. When in opposition we said we would. In government we did. We have credibility. Reasonability. We were reasonable in our criticism and reasonable in our suggestions and we’ve taken them forward and developed them into sounds, reasonable policies. And we’re being responsible because we’re listening. We’re listening to everybody, not just our friends like you did. You’ve just listened to your friends. And if you weren’t in that group, you weren’t worth listening to. That’s the way you treated the public of Saskatchewan. We listened to the NFU. We listened to the pool. We listened to the Saskatchewan livestock.

We listened to . . . We listen to everybody. And why do we listen to everybody? Because everybody has something to contribute to the betterment of this province — everybody does. And they are only the ones that have discovered that they have something to contribute and never will have anything to contribute is you guys because you’re negative. You’re down, down, down. You’re below a snake’s belly, you’re so low.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KATZMAN: — You know . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — You should help them up.

MR. KATZMAN: — How do you help somebody up that doesn't know that he's so far down that there's no up? You know my . . . the fellow member for Weyburn spoke earlier about the family farm purchase. You told us we couldn't do it. You told us we couldn't do the removal of the 20 per cent gas tax. "You can't do it." When you brought it your home protection plan, we stood up and said, "Put some cash there. Don't just put up fancy words." No. You said the words would work. That's what you did: put up words. We said, "Put up cash." You said you couldn't do it. When we in the election said we would do it, you said you couldn't do it. We did it. And do you know something? Everybody else in Canada followed us because it was a good, positive idea not negative like everything you think of.

You know, I've been in this House now since '75. I've sat in opposition when we were seven. I remember the days when we came in here and between you and your red, the Liberal friends you used to have, you used to aim every shot-gun and cannon you could at us. And I'll tell you, she was pretty rough some days. We were all green. We didn't know the rules of this place. And we really thought that the rules would be followed and all the way through. But we got an awful lesson. For the first week or two, we used to walk out that door through the crack we felt so small when you got done with us. But hey, didn't take us long to figure out we were the positive guys and you guys were scared of us. That was why you were attacking us. You know, you were scared of us. Why? Because we represented reason, credibility, responsibility and you had proven you didn't look that way. Between you and your Liberal friends, the same as you and your Liberal friends in Ottawa got rid of the Conservatives, you attempted to get rid of us in the '78 election with your little . . . It didn't work. That little seven group grew to 11, it grew to 15 and today it's 56 because the people have found we're reasonable and responsible and positive, not negative like you only seem to be.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KATZMAN: — You know, the mover of this throne speech, brand new member, elected just a short while ago, delivered a credible address. The member for Morse seconded an excellent address, but let's go to why the member from P.A.-Duck Lake is here. He is the first test of the Conservative government after our big win, and, you know, P.A.-Duck Lake is known as a tough riding. It's had some very tough elections and I've been into a few of those, being that's my neighbouring riding, and I've knocked a few doors. And, you know, it was nice to knock the doors this time cause the people were positive. They knew that the government was positive, and they were upbeat and prepared to move with the government forward, not to sit there and shrill down and say, "We . . . (inaudible) . . . do something about it, we're in trouble, we're going to get beat."

No, they were positive, prepared to move forward. They moved forward by showing their faith in their government and electing Sid Dutchak as their member from Prince Albert-Duck Lake.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KATZMAN: — And they, the government's had it's first test; we may have one or two more, who knows. But, that's okay because we know what the people think of us. They

think, “Hey, they listen, they’re responsible, they’re credible, and there’s a positive, and they have a positive attitude. Attitude that says that mountain may be high, but we’ll lick it. We do it together.”

And, that’s what you fellows haven’t figured out. You’re totally out of step with reality. You haven’t realized the people want to go ahead, they don’t want to think negative. They want to accomplish, step by step over that mountain, but you’re not prepared, and weren’t prepared to do it unless they did it on your terms. We’re prepared to do it with them. Hand in hand together, listening to them and taking advice and moving together as a group, the whole province together, not for just the betterment of them or just the betterment of us, but for the betterment of all. Where, when you were in government, it was for the betterment of your political party and nothing else mattered.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I’ve taken part in, I guess, every throne speech since 1975. I guess I’m pretty proud to be taking part in this one. As Legislative Secretary to the Deputy Premier, I have got a lot of responsibility and I’m enjoying the responsibility that I have working for a better future for Saskatchewan. And that’s important, and, I thank the citizens of my constituency for sending me here for the third time, and I thank them for the faith they put in me by the percentage of vote that I was able to receive. And it’s pretty nice to remember that from 38 comes 54 and from 54 comes 74, and that’s pretty nice to remember that your people back home believe that you are trying to do a job for them be being positive, credible. And, that’s what our government will be — positive, credible, and move forward for the betterment, and, obviously, you can tell that I wouldn’t support that . . . Well, I don’t know what to call that amendment except negativism, but I will support a positive throne speech and that motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. PETERSEN: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to enter this debate on the Speech from the Throne. I’ve listened to various comments from various MLAs on both the opposition and the government side of the House. Some of them have been short. Some of them have been rather long. Some of them have been eloquent. Some of them have even been entertaining. Some of them have been ludicrous, as a matter of fact.

I’ve heard stories, and I’ve heard little quips about movie titles, fairy-tales. You name it; everything’s been injected in here. A little levity is needed, but we’re about a serious business here. We’re not here to be entertained or to entertain. We’re not here for personal gain. We’re not here to simply further the fortune of any particular political party. We’re here to do what’s right and what is best for the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

Now I’ve heard also some positive and some negative speeches. Mainly the positive ones come from the government side, and the negative ones come from the opposition side, the same negative attitudes that we hear everyday in this House. Some of these attitudes . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . True, I hear them on the street too. You walk out and you ask a person, “How are you doing? How’s business?” And they’re liable to say, “Oh, it’s not so good, not so great, but I’m getting by. But it’s really not all that good.” And you say, “Why?” And they’ll turn around and they’ll say, “Oh, it’s the government,” or “It’s the economy.” They’ll blame somebody else. They’ll turn around and blame the government or blame the economy. Then again, the economy’s like the weather. It’s become a non-sense, abstract subject. Everybody can talk about it. Everybody can enjoy it. Everybody can agree about it. It’s become a habit. You blame the economy, and

you sit back, and you let somebody else do something about it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we as a government are doing something about it. We are working to improve the economy, and those measures are outlined in our Speech from the Throne.

Doom and gloom's a very, very popular subject these days. You know, Mr. Speaker, I really, really like the heckling I'm getting from the opposition. They do a much better job of heckling than they do of speaking. Doom and gloom is a saleable item these days. You took a look in your newspapers, the headlines read, "Twelve killed in disaster," "Floods kill hundreds," "Nation on the brink of economic collapse." They remind me of the end-of-the-world-type of prophets, the prophets who foretell doom and gloom, just as our opposition does over there.

I can see it all now, the Leader of the Opposition walking up and down the streets of Regina with a placard over his shoulder, saying, "The world will end at 12 o'clock, 12:30 Newfoundland."

The opposition members in the media constantly reinforce the doom and gloom attitude. They're hoping to make it a national pastime, I think. They're almost mesmerized by thoughts of disaster. If the opposition and the media spent as much time promoting the positive aspects of this province as they do expounding loud and long on the negative side, they would be doing this province a much greater service.

Can you imagine? We're trying to move the products that we have in Saskatchewan. We're trying to bring business in here, and there we have the foretellers of doom and gloom saying, "oh, no, don't come here. Don't come here. It's terrible here. Look what's happening. Everything's going wrong."

Can you imagine, Mr. Speaker, what would happen if one of our machinery manufacturers, if one of our car manufacturers, went out and advertised in that fashion? The headlines could read, "Manufacturer sees certainty of transmission failure before 200 hours of operation." How many cars do you think they'd sell? How many tractors do you think they'd sell? Not too many, Mr. Speaker.

I am appalled at the total negativism of the opposition. As the former speaker said, total negativism, not one positive thing has come out of that sorry little corner over there.

Oh, I was listening. I assure you I was listening, and I didn't hear very many positive things coming out of there. I'm surprised at it, though; I'm surprised at the total negativism, but maybe I shouldn't be. Their party thrives on negative attitudes. The idea that their party lives on is that if you make people lose confidence in themselves, you make them dependent on government. If you make them dependent on government, that party over there will again have control. If people have positive attitudes, they'll have confidence. If they have confidence, as individuals, in their individual abilities, they'll be successful. If they're successful, there won't be a need for the helping hand from the big government. And if there is no need for the helping hand from the big government, they can't be controlled. And that's what the previous administration wanted — total, absolute control. Maybe that's why they are again trying to sow the seeds of doubt in the minds of the people of Saskatchewan, so that once again they may be able to gain control.

But I have more faith in the people of Saskatchewan than that. They'll see through that

façade.

I'd like to give a couple of examples of positive programs that have been developed by the government. They're especially important to my constituency.

Just a little while ago, a few weeks ago, the New Democrats were threatening that they were going to really pound us on our farm purchase program. They were really going to hit us hard. Well, I haven't heard too much lately. They're not so keen to ask those questions now.

And you know what the reason for their reluctance to ask those questions now is? They don't want to know the answers. You remember how they howled when our government predicted that in the first three months of the program's operation we'd service 1,500 rebate clients with mortgages totaling 150 million? They said our projections were grossly inflated for political reasons. They boasted the program would be a flop, and it would be seen to be a flop when they compared it to the success of their land bank program. The facts are quite different. By January 31, one full month in the program, some 1,485 rebate applicants had successfully passed the first two initial interviews and been deemed as initially acceptable for the program.

And you heard my colleague, the member for Weyburn, bringing you an update on that. Almost 4,000 people are now involved, and the stream of potential applicants shows no sign of slowing down. I went to my local farm credit corporation office, because I deal with them and the people there are the people I have dealt with for a number of years. I couldn't get through the door. The office was plugged with people — young farmers wanting to own their own farmland, not rent it.

Let's take a look at the NDP land bank. As has been pointed out numerous times, it was so successful that it only helped the 151 people own their own land, own the land that they had worked. And yet the program was supposedly designed to turn tenants into farmers. I remember when it first came out. I was just newly out of high school. I supported the plan. I thought it was a good idea; I really did. I was rather young and naïve. I believed that their government was trying to help the people of Saskatchewan. I thought that that was a great plan; it would help the people to win their own land. The government would hold the land for them in trust, as it were, and at the end of five years when they had got on their feet, they would turn it over to them. Unfortunately, that did not happen.

In a single month our farm purchase program gave the opportunity to almost 1,500 young starting-out farmers to become the owners of the land they worked.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. PETERSEN: — Ten long years the NDP land bank managed just 151, and yet the New Democrats condemn our concept of 8 per cent and 12 per cent money. I don't understand why.

The silence from the NDP benches is deafening, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps it's because of the staggering success of the farm purchase program. It's a success the NDP could never match.

I'd like to give you a little personal experience. I went back farming in 1975; I gave up my job as a mechanic. A friend of mine came home the same year. His father sold land to the land bank, and he rented it from the land bank. With my father's help, I purchased

some land very close to the old family farm. Three years later my friend on land bank land gave up farming — he had to. In three years he had gone broke. He had a couple of tough years, a couple of frosts, low quotas, low prices for grain, and he had nothing to fall back on. He had no equity base built up. He didn't own anything. He couldn't go to the bank and say, "Look, I've got this quarter of land here and it's worth so much. Lend me something against it." He had nothing to mortgage. He had nothing to help him.

I suffered the same types of hardships. I suffered the same frosts, the same droughts, and the same low quotas. I'm not ashamed to say it. The fourth year farming I had enough equity built up that I could go to my local bank and I could borrow money to keep operating. I continued to operate, and I own my own land. I have been farming for seven or eight years now.

My friend has been gone for four years. But does he show up in their statistics anywhere? No, he didn't, because there was another young fellow that was willing to step up and rent the land and give it a try. He's fortunate; he's made it. He's planning on buying that land today with our farm purchase program. If only a program like that would have been in effect in 1975 and 1976, maybe my school chum might still be farming around where I am. That's very sad, very sad.

The other positive program that I would like to comment on is the rural gas distribution system. I want to deal with this \$340 million natural gas program that was announced on February 14th by our government, only briefly. The program will see the installation of natural gas service to farms and rural communities in accessible areas of the province. Installation will begin almost immediately, and will take approximately seven to 10 years. It's a very expansive program. During 1983 natural gas service will be extended to 23 communities, and approximately 2,000 farm customers at a cost of \$37 million. Overall, approximately 25,000 and 10,000 urban families will be linked to enjoy the economic benefits of natural gas services when the program is complete.

The natural gas program will not only benefit the users; it will also provide jobs for the province of Saskatchewan. During the course of the installation, Sask Power will require the services of 10 to 20 local contractors per year. The tendering process is being structured in such a way as to allow smaller Saskatchewan contractors to bid competitively on installation work. Now, we've changed to have proposed changing the bonding regulations. And it's here in the throne speech to allow some of these small contractors to more easily bid on government contracts. That is a positive step. As well, each of the contractors are going to require 10 or so workers to handle the constructions work, in addition to the consulting, surveying, and engineering that will be required.

It's estimated that in any given year the natural gas distribution program will provide up to 400 jobs in the private sector, approximately 300 man-hours of work per year. That is a definite positive step. And what's going to cost us? What's it going to cost that person out in the country? Is it going to cost him \$20,000 or \$18,000? Has it been quoted to him previously under the previous administration when they wanted to put gas in? No, rural customers will be assessed a one-time fee, around \$2,600 for natural gas consumption. That's positive; that is not negative.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on at some length about the throne speech, but I believe it's been covered in great detail, and as it nearing 5 o'clock perhaps I should conclude Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the main motion. I will not be supporting the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MS. ZAZELENCHUK: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to again participate in a throne speech debate. Because it is getting late in our day, I won't speak very long, and my colleagues have made some excellent comments already. I want to begin by complimenting my colleagues from Morse and Prince Albert-Duck Lake in excellent speeches. I also want to mention that it's a pleasure to have my colleague from Prince Albert-Duck Lake join our caucus. He's very welcome.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MS. ZAZELENCHUK: — The opposition member, well, they can usually rise to any occasion, but as we've all seen they don't know when to sit down. The Leader of the Opposition began his throne speech debate by characterizing the throne speech according to movie titles. He failed to mention that his government was rated both PG and R: PG for poor government and R for ridiculous.

However, Mr. Speaker, I'm more musical than I am theatrical, and I find the collaboration of our facts with their sanctimonious virtuosos . . . find the throne speech more similar to the song "Bye, bye, Blakeney."

In June 1982, I had the honour to second the address in reply to the throne and the throne speech and my speech outlined the new government's aspirations for this province. Now the beginnings of an economic turn-around are evident, there seems to be a s many different forecasts as there are authorities. Then there are the opposition members who miss what's been happening altogether, and everything that the western world is experiencing is our fault.

Although there are many different forecasts, there's one important consensus among them: that survival alone is not enough to guarantee an economic upswing. Those aspirations outlines in our first throne speech have already transpired into legislation, and already some real benefits to the people of Saskatchewan, such as the mortgage interest reduction plan and the farm purchase program. Some programs only a government can initiate have already set Saskatchewan on the road to recovery. Others will give our producers a competitive edge. This is the reason we will be implementing rural gasification: so that our reserves of natural gas can bring low-cost energy to the farmers of this province.

The NDP constantly laugh at our slogan, "there's so much more we can be." They laughed when we said, "There's so much more we can be," and removed unnecessary taxes on the price of gasoline. They laughed when we said, "There's so much more we can be," and made housing more affordable through our mortgage interest reduction plan and our more recent Build-a-Home Saskatchewan program

Again, they laughed when we said, "there's so much more we can be, " and introduced the farm purchase program and gave farmers a break on interest rates. Of course, the NDP laughed when we said, "There's so much more we can be in the field of health" and increased that budget by \$26 million.

Obviously, the NDP find it easier to criticize he product than produce the goods. It's interesting to note the former administration decreased — decreased the percentage of the total budget for public health in four budgets. The NDP stop laughing, though,

when you mention this in the House, and when you mention their proposal to use tax dollars to advertise the 30th anniversary of medicare in Saskatchewan. After 30 years of medicare in Saskatchewan, to the NDP, medicare isn't something you improve; it's such a novel phenomenon you have to advertise it here.

Mr. Speaker, our Minister of Health has personally visited many of the hospitals, and has met with various groups and individuals involved in health care in order to familiarize himself with the programs and to listen to their ideas. I, myself, have met with the acting director of St. Paul's Hospital in my constituency quite soon after the election. These meetings have resulted in such things as grants totalling \$2 million for the City and St. Paul's hospitals in Saskatoon to meet their capital need.

Other specific steps which have been taken in response to immediate needs include implementation of an improved construction grant formula for community and regional hospitals. An extra \$500,000 has been allocated for municipal ambulance services. It is the opinion of every government member to continue this type of co-operation among various groups, and, indeed, make Saskatchewan number one in health care.

Yes, the NDP laughed when we said, "There's so much more we can be," and introduced all those good things. Let's remember their campaign song which said: "Every day we're getting closer to the goals we're working for," and we know a million young people left Saskatchewan. We led the nation in the loss of farms, and although many were mesmerized by the former premier's activity on the national stage, what did we get from this activism? The opposition members, federal colleague helped deliver the Pepin plan to Saskatchewan by expressing non-confidence in federal ministers from the West.

The former government was considering involvement in such things as life insurance and retail drug stores. And there would have been a lot more of those things coming down, because every day they are getting closer to those goals they were working for. This government tends to simply bidding procedures for small Saskatchewan contractors, some of which are located in Saskatoon Riversdale. This will make it easier for small contractors to supply their services to the government and not have their services become part of government.

The NDP believe they can solve the problems of the province if they are allowed, only allowed to spend enough money to hire enough people, and to acquire enough control. History has proven time and time again that the state, or agency for the state, are incapable of coming, driving forth of economic development. With the NDP, their function was that crown corporations are good, and more crown corporations must be better.

Mr. Speaker, our government has made a commitment to provide better direction for the crown corporation. We do not see crown corporations as disguised tax collectors. Our government will not subsidize the crown corporations to provide unfair competitions for private investors. We want to attract investment, not discourage it. In other words, we will give the crown corporations every opportunity to show that they can make an efficient and essential contribution to our economy without constant subsidization by the government. Only if they fail this test would I assume that their future would be directly called into question.

Mr. Speaker, with regard to labour, our unemployment rate is the lowest in Canada, but it's still not an acceptable rate. Situations world-wide such as lack of demand for our

products have been contributors to unemployment. However, where provincial government has the opportunity to offset world-wide recession conditions, we have done so.

Saskatoon Riversdale is a labour-intensive constituency and many of my constituents will benefit from our efforts. The natural gas program will not only benefit users, but also provide jobs for the province. Saskatchewan Power will require the services of 10 to 20 local contractors per year. Also, each of the contractors will require approximately 10 workers in addition to the many consultants, surveyors and engineers that will be needed. It is estimated that in any given year the natural gas program will provide approximately 400 jobs in the private sector. It is estimated that two to four jobs are created with each housing start. With the assistance of our housing program, housing starts in Saskatchewan have increased 14 per cent, while in all of Canada they have decreased 29 per cent.

We are the first provincial government to sign with the federal government for a joint job creation program for the winter months. And changes in the royalty structure and the oil industry have increased exploration and production. We'd also like to exploit Saskatchewan's reserves of conventional and heavy oil to attract industry. The north-western part of the province has reserves of oil estimate of 25 billion barrels. With improving recovery techniques, and the potential for local upgrading, this resource can make a major contribution to our economic growth in self-sufficiency. This approach is an alternative to pouring heritage funds in crown corporations as the former administration did.

To begin my closing, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say that when I spoke in the House earlier, I've never talked about women in particular. However, I feel it deserves mention here, because the opposition quite frequently brings it up in the House to criticize the government that women don't occupy 50 per cent of the top positions in government, or in government agencies. Although women represent approximately 51 per cent of the work-force, as many choose to stay home with their families, and the women in the work-force they do represent a small percentage of those who have the most business in government expertise, although gladly in the upcoming years we'll probably see that increase.

The decision of the public to decide who they want to represent in this Assembly is the decision of the NDP party to choose its candidates. So from what the opposition members have been saying, you'd expect that 50 per cent of their candidates were women. Only 7 per cent were women. Here we have an example of NDP philosophy at work. Instead of demonstrating the goals of government, they ask for government intervention in our in our lives. The opposition leader himself provided you cannot legislate respect. He stood in this House last December during the farm purchase program debate, and challenged all government members to stand up like a man in this House. I want to tell the opposition leader that women, by virtue of their sex, are not less respectable, less capable. And let us remind the opposition leader that women, by virtue of their sex, are not less respectable, less capable. And let us remind the opposition leader that when the electorate wanted to, wanted to change from his top ministers, they chose PC men and women to do it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MS. ZAZELENCHUK: — It concludes my speech, Mr. Speaker. I just want to say I'm looking forward to this session and the implementation of legislations directed from

the throne speech. And I naturally will not be supporting the amendment, but will be supporting the main motion. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. CURRIE: — Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, it is a good throne speech but I have more to say and beg to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

MOTIONS

Hours of Sitting

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Yes, Mr. Speaker. Prior to adjourning, I have three motions, and I believe I have discussed them with the members opposite. With leave of the Legislative Assembly, I move:

That notwithstanding rule 3, this Assembly shall, on Thursday, March 31, 1983, meet at 10 o'clock a.m. until 1 o'clock p.m.

Motion agreed to.

House Adjournment

HON. MR. ANDREW: — With leave of the Assembly, I move:

That when this Assembly adjourns on Thursday, March 31, 1983, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, April 5, 1983.

Moved, seconded by the Minister of Education.

Motion agreed to.

Order of Business

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Yes, one further motion, Mr. Speaker. With leave of the Assembly, I move:

That notwithstanding of rule 8(3), the order of business for Tuesday, March 29, 1983 will be the same as Monday; and the order of business for Wednesday, March 30, 1983, will be the same as Tuesday.

By way of an explanation, that simply means that we would do government business on Tuesday, which would be the normal private members' day. Should government business complete, then we would then revert to the blues and private members' day for the balance of . . . till 5 o'clock on Tuesday; and that Wednesday would then be private members' day, and we would deal with it as if it was Tuesday.

I so move, seconded by the member, Minister of Education.

Motion agreed to.

March 23, 1983

The Assembly adjourned at 5:12 p.m.